



National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network Commemorates World AIDS Day 2011

December 1, 2011: As we commemorate World AIDS Day, the National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network (NBWHAN), remembers all of the brave women who were at the forefront of the battle against HIV and AIDS, and honors those who continue the struggle.

According to a Vital Signs report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released in advance of World AIDS Day, nearly three out of four Americans living with HIV do not have their infection under control. The report further states that the percentage is low because one in five people with HIV do not realize they are infected and, of those who are aware, only 51 percent receive ongoing medical care and treatment.

"While we have experienced much progress in recent years against the fight of this disease, there is still much to be done," stated Barbara Joseph, Chair of the NBWHAN. "Black women continue to have the highest rates of HIV infection in this country among women. These disproportionately high rates have a profound impact on our community as a whole".

As we enter the 4th decade of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the impact of this disease on African-American women in the U.S. can no longer go unnoticed. As prevalence and incidence rates in our communities increase, so does the risk for HIV transmission among Black women. The estimated lifetime risk of becoming infected with HIV is 1 in 32 for Black females, a far higher risk than for white females.

The HIV epidemic within our communities across the United States demands urgency. As a community of Black people we need to develop a framework that will include approaches and methods that will address the issue in a context that will be receptive and progressive. To accomplish this goal our conversations have to be factual and honest.

Join us in educating our community on the plight of Black women and HIV/AIDS by sharing this information with your elected officials, houses of worships and civic groups. Share your success stories or challenges on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com-NBWHAN) or email us at nbwhan@yahoo.com. Let's not allow another 30 years to pass by without actively engaging in activities that bring awareness to the devastating impact that this disease continues to have on Black women and our communities.

About the National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network (NBWHAN)

The NBWHAN has been successful in working with many advocacy groups as well as local and national organizations to garner support for women's issues in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Founded in 2007 the NBWHAN has worked to influence the development of research initiatives and resources that will have a positive impact on program development and design for women and produce scientific based evidence of success. The NBWHAN is a community led initiative born out of the urgent need for Black women to set and implement a national HIV/AIDS agenda for Black women and adolescent girls in the areas of prevention, care, treatment, public policy and funding for all Black women and adolescent girls living with or at risk of HIV and AIDS and their families. You can contact the NBWHAN at 1-888-812-0043 or visit our website at www.nbwhan.org. Contact: Dr. Ivy Turnbull, Vice Chair National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network, 1-888-812-0043