



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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In Commemoration of March 10th's 11th Annual National Women and Girls HIV Awareness Day, Iris House, Voces Latinas and the Caribbean Women's Health Association, three women-focused organizations in the New York metropolitan area, are banding together to start "The Race to the End!," trumpeting the message that engaging HIV+ women in care and support services is critical to Ending the Epidemic!

"We've had tremendous impact on reducing the number of new infections among women of color over the last decade." Said Ingrid Floyd, referring to CDC data showing a decline in new diagnoses from 2005-2014 (42% among African-American women and 35% among Latina/Hispanic women.) "Now our work is ensuring that the women who DO test positive have the resources they need to stay healthy for themselves and their families."

"The Race to the End" is a months-long education and testing program that begins with outreach events in Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn, and the Bronx, and in Irvington and Plainfield NJ and includes Iris House's 11th Annual Women as the Face of AIDS Summit on May 2nd.

With educational support from Gilead Sciences, these three women-focused organizations, Iris House, Voces Latinas and the Caribbean Women's Health Association will be presenting a day of programming aimed at women.

"Education and outreach is even more important today as many immigrant Latinas do not access services and information due to fear around immigration laws, language barriers, and lack of health insurance. It is important that bilingual and culturally competent services be available so that Latinas can be assessed and connected to care," said Nathaly Rubio-Torio, Executive Director of Voces Latinas.

In addition to education and outreach, these three organizations will be providing HIV testing at five sites in New York and New Jersey in the days surrounding March 10. Testing programs have proven highly effective in helping to get more control over the HIV/AIDS Epidemic. Currently, 90-93% of people living with HIV in New York State know their status, compared with 77-84% of people living in New Jersey. More testing and outreach is required, as are programs offered in culturally and linguistically competent ways.

“Cultural competency is the essential foundation for serving our nation’s diverse population,” said Caribbean Women’s Health Association Executive Director Cheryl Hall, “And it is definitely one of the best ways to reduce health disparities.”

Iris House, Voces Latinas and the Caribbean Women’s Health Association are working hand in hand as critical partners addressing HIV testing, support and education programs for women of color in New York City.

These events surround *The #BestDefense Is a Good Offense*, the annual National Women and Girls HIV/Awareness Day. For more information, visit their website at <http://www.womenshealth.gov/hiv-aids/>

Events Calendar

March 8, 2016

1 PM – 5 PM Testing Event
Iris House @ 1097 Springfield Avenue
Irvington, NJ 07111

March 9, 2016

11 AM Testing and Education Event, with Lunch (offered in Spanish)
Voces Latinas
37-63C 83rd Street, Suite 1 B, Jackson Heights, NY 11372

12 Noon Testing and Education Event, with Lunch
Iris House
2348 Adam Clayton Powell Jr Blvd, New York, NY 10030

1 PM – 6 PM Testing Event
Iris House @ Plainfield Public Library
800 Park Avenue, Plainfield, NJ 07060

2 PM Testing and Education Event, with food
Caribbean Women’s Health Association
3512 Church Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11203

March 10, 2016

5:30 PM Meet guests from Doctor Oz's Charlie Sheen Episode
Learn About HIV, disclosure, stigma, PrEP and their experiences
HIV Testing, Presentation and Dinner Provided
Iris House
2348 Adam Clayton Powell Jr Blvd

March 11, 2016

3 PM HIV Testing, with gift card of food bag
Iris House at the First Unitarian Society of Plainfield
724 Park Avenue, Plainfield, NJ 07060

May 2, 2016

8:30 AM The 11th Annual Women as the Face of AIDS Summit
Iris House at the Bethel Gospel Assembly
2 East 120th Street, New York, NY 10035

About Iris House

Iris House provides services for women, families and communities infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS. In addition to providing family-centered services that promote prevention, education and awareness, Iris House also offers practical services that address the day-to-day needs and reality of living with HIV/AIDS. Iris House provides nutritional counseling and meal programs, intensive case management, scatter site housing, mental health services and support groups, and job and life skills training. Since opening its doors in 1993, Iris House has assisted more than 10,000 individuals cope with HIV/AIDS. For more information on Iris House and Iris House Programs, please visit www.irishouse.org

About Voces Latinas

Voces Latinas (VL) was founded in 2003 with the mission to reduce the rate of HIV transmission and violence among immigrants Latinas by empowering, educating, and providing leadership and advocacy trainings, which enable Latinas/os to have a voice and make healthier decisions for them and their families. Through collaborative relationships, VL also connects immigrant Latinas/os with culturally and linguistically sensitive resources and services to address their immediate needs including intimate partner and gender-based violence, mental health issues, immigration, feelings of isolation, and HIV/AIDS. The uniqueness of VL is that it serves a marginalized population facing multiple traumas {oppression, poverty, threat of deportation, interpersonal violence, sexual violence, survival sex}; specifically co-morbidity of violence against women and risk for HIV/AIDS. www.voceslatinas.org

About the Caribbean Women's Health Association

Founded in 1982, Caribbean Women's Health Association, Inc. (CWAH) is a multi-service organization based in Brooklyn, NY. Over the past 33 years, the organization has grown from a volunteer group of 12 members to fully staffed professional organization and community service center largely serving low income, minority and immigrant populations, Motivated by its mission to provide high quality, comprehensive , culturally appropriate health, immigration and social support services to its diverse constituency, CWAH's programs are delicately crafted with the intent to transform lives, strengthen families and empower communities. The core programs operated by CWAH include HIV/AIDS programs, Women's Health programs and Immigration Services. www.cwha.org

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