

# **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 3, 2021**

Contact: Nichole Benjamin

646 548 0100 ext. 222

**Dr. Oni Blackstock to provide keynote on impacts of race and health at the Iris House  
16th Annual Women as the Face of AIDS Summit  
Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup> 11 am – 5:30 pm ET  
[www.irishouse.org](http://www.irishouse.org)**

**New York, NY** – On June 7th, Iris House will host its 16th Annual Women as the Face of AIDS Summit for the second time in virtual format via the Zoom platform. More than 300 people from New York and other cities along the east and west coasts, as well as countries that span the African and European continents, are expected to attend the all-day conference, where many of the participants, presenters, and speakers are women living with HIV.

As a thought leader in the field of Women and HIV, our Summit draws participants and attendees from around the country and internationally. The 2021 Summit's theme being presented, "Women Without Bounds", will explore the global impact of HIV/AIDS amongst women, as well as the implications of COVID-19 and HIV. We will highlight a global program of AHF, Girls Act, featuring young women helping to end the epidemic around the world from Nigeria, Peru, and South Africa. The Summit will also feature a panel of women currently living with HIV including speakers from California, Nigeria and Haiti.

This year's summit will feature a morning plenary by the renowned researcher on the impact of race on health disparities, Dr. Oni Blackstock, MD, MHS, former Assistant Commissioner Bureau of HIV, NYCDOHMH. The Summit will include 11 breakout sessions by organizations including Bournemouth University of the United Kingdom, and Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health.

Another highlight of the event is the presentation of awards to three women who have made extraordinary contributions to ending the AIDS epidemic. Dr. Oni Blackstock; Kim Nichols; and Abosede "Bose" Oladayo will be celebrated for their activism and accomplishments.

Women of color, in particular, continue to be vulnerable and this event meets a great, unmet need in our community. We are continuing to keep women's health at the forefront and providing a space to discuss these issues, as well as offer solutions from across the world.

The Women as the Face of AIDS Summit is produced annually by Iris House with the financial support of dozens of organizations, including government agencies, corporations, and community-based organizations. This year's lead sponsors include the New York City Council, ViiV Healthcare, Gilead Sciences, Orasure Technologies, and Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Other supporters include AIDS Healthcare Foundation, God's Love We Deliver, and ACQC, among others.

### **About Iris House**

Iris House provides services for women, families and communities affected by HIV/AIDS. In addition to providing family-center services that promote prevention, education and awareness, Iris House also offers practical services that address the day-to-day needs as well as the 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, plus job life skills training. Since opening its doors in 1993, Iris House has assisted more than 2,000 individuals in coping with HIV/AIDS and served tens of thousands in testing, outreach and prevention programs. In 2020 IH served over 7,000 individuals.

For more information on Iris House and its programs, please contact Nichole Benjamin, Director of Development at 646 548 0100 ext. 222 or [nbenjamin@irishouse.org](mailto:nbenjamin@irishouse.org). Additional information may be found at [www.irishouse.org](http://www.irishouse.org). You may also keep up with us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

###