



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

CHIYOME LEINAALA FUKINO M.D.
DIRECTOR
Phone: (808) 586-4410
Fax: (808) 586-4444

For Immediate Release: November 27, 2006

06-78

WORLD AIDS DAY IN HAWAII
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2006

HONOLULU – On Friday, December 1st, Hawaii will join communities throughout the world in a unified observance of World AIDS Day. Annually, World AIDS Day serves to strengthen global efforts to address the challenges of the AIDS pandemic, which continues to spread throughout the world.

Since 1988, December 1st has been a day of compassion, hope, solidarity and understanding about AIDS. World AIDS Day provides an opportunity to open channels of communication, strengthen the exchange of information and experience, and forge a spirit of social tolerance.

Nancy Kern, HIV/STD Prevention Coordinator for the Hawaii Department of Health, states that, “World AIDS Day is the only international day of coordinated action to address the HIV epidemic. It is an opportunity for residents of Hawaii to learn how the epidemic affects not only people living in countries abroad hardest hit by this disease, but also how our friends, neighbors and co-workers right here in Hawaii are impacted.”

The theme for 2006 World AIDS Day in Hawaii is “HIV In Hawaii: Local People, Local Stories”. This is the title of a film that was recently produced by the Department of Education to raise awareness among youth and others in Hawaii of the experiences of local people who are HIV positive. The purpose of this film is to bring the real stories of people in Hawaii who are HIV+ to Hawaii’s public and private school students, as well as to community agencies that support HIV prevention and care. Four of the “stars” of this video are Paul Kaleolani Smith and Jaime Kahale of Life Foundation and her two sons.

(more)

This film is both factually accurate and emotionally powerful. It will be a significant resource for teachers in health and other classes in Hawaii schools, as well as for agencies statewide involved in HIV/AIDS prevention or care efforts. The film will be shown at one of the Oahu World AIDS Day events that will take place at Church of the Crossroads in Honolulu on Friday, December 1st from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm.

In Hawaii, as in many parts of the world, HIV remains a highly stigmatized condition. Twenty-four years have passed since HIV was identified and HIV-related discrimination and prejudice continue in Hawaii and around the world. It is hoped that his film will have a positive impact increasing respect and compassion for HIV positive people in Hawaii.

The following are current data that reflect the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Hawaii:

- It is estimated that there are 2,300 to 3,200 individuals in Hawaii who are HIV positive
- Since 1983, there have been 2,884 reported cases of AIDS in Hawaii (to June 30, 2006).
- A total of 96 new AIDS cases were reported during this last year (July 2005 to June 2006). Of these AIDS cases, 89 percent were among males.
- Twenty-seven percent of AIDS cases reported to June 30th, 2006, were among Asians and Pacific Islanders.
- Hawaii has a relatively low rate of reported AIDS cases among injection drug users (seven percent). This is due in part to the statewide needle exchange program, which has been in operation since 1990.

In the United States:

- Approximately 40,000 new infections occur in the U.S. each year.
- An estimated 1 million people are living with HIV/AIDS in the U.S.; an estimated 250,000 of these individuals are unaware that they are infected.
- Seventy percent of new infections occur among men, although women are significantly affected.
- There are more people living with AIDS in the U.S. than ever before. At the end of 2004, an estimated 415,000 people were living with AIDS, currently the fifth leading cause of death among people 25 – 44 in the U.S. These data reflect an increasing need for continued HIV prevention services, as well as treatment and care.

Internationally:

- 38.6 million people are currently estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS around the world.
- An estimated 4.1 million people became newly infected with HIV in 2005.
- During 2005, AIDS caused the deaths of an estimated 2.8 million people.
- Women are becoming increasingly affected by HIV. Approximately 50%, or 19.2 million of the 38.6 million adults living with HIV or AIDS worldwide, are women.

In acknowledgment of World AIDS Day, in memory of those who have passed away, in recognition of those living with HIV/AIDS, and in appreciation for the dedicated health care professionals working with those affected by HIV/AIDS, a calendar of Hawaii World AIDS Day events follows. Those interested in participating in World AIDS Day are welcome to attend these events or contact the STD/AIDS Prevention Branch, Department of Health at **(808) 733-9281** for further information.

NEIGHBOR ISLAND WORLD AIDS DAY EVENTS – DECEMBER 1ST

Information on Neighbor Island World AIDS Day activities is available by calling:

- **Maui: Maui AIDS Foundation at (808) 242-4900.**
- **Big Island: Hawaii Island HIV/AIDS Foundation**
- **West Hawaii: (808) 331-8177.**
- **East Hawaii: (808) 981-2428.**
- **Kauai: Malama Pono, the HIV/AIDS service agency on Kauai, at (808) 246-9588.**

Also, obtain information on Neighbor Island World AIDS Day events at the following website:
www.worldaidsdayhawaii.org

OAHU WORLD AIDS DAY EVENT – DECEMBER 1ST

There will be a community observation of World AIDS Day on Friday, December 1st on Oahu. Local health organizations will be setting up tables in Tamarind Park at Bishop Square (corner of Bishop and King Streets) in downtown Honolulu starting at 11:00 a.m. on World AIDS Day. Lt. Governor Aiona will deliver remarks and present a proclamation on behalf of Governor Lingle.

At 6:00 p.m., join us at the Church of Crossroads on 1212 University Avenue in Honolulu for a service to recognize World AIDS Day. This service will include:

- a special film presentation, “HIV in Hawaii: Local People, Local Stories”, a 20-minute documentary film that tells about the experiences of two people in Hawaii who are HIV positive.
- the presentation of the Suzanne Richmond-Crum Award to an individual for outstanding contribution providing HIV/AIDS services in Hawaii
- a display of AIDS memorial quilt panels
- reading of the official World AIDS Day proclamation

For other World AIDS Day events on Oahu, check the following website:

www.worldaidsdayhawaii.org/

For more information, on World AIDS Day, please call Nancy Kern at the STD/AIDS Prevention Branch of the Hawaii Department of Health at: (808) 733-9281.

###

For information, contact:
Nancy Kern
STD/AIDS Prevention Branch
Phone: (808) 733-9281
Fax: (808) 733-9291
Email: nancy.kern@hdoh.hawaii.gov

Janice Okubo
Communications Office
Phone: (808) 586-4442