



ACT!ON

September 2009

Events and Meetings:

For Sisters Only,

Atlanta, GA

September 19–20

<http://www.forsistersonly.org>

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Annual Legislative Conference,

Washington, D.C.

September 23–26

<http://www.cbcfinc.org/alc-09.html>

National Latino AIDS Awareness Day

October 15

<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/LatinoAIDSawareness/>

National Minority AIDS Council's U.S. Conference on AIDS,

San Francisco, CA

October 29–31

<http://www.nmac.org/index/2009-usca>

World AIDS Day

December 1

<http://www.worldaidscampaign.org/en/Key-events/World-AIDS-Day>

Leadership Corner

Reflecting on the NAACP centennial conference's theme, "Bold Dreams, Big Victories," I more fully appreciate your dedication to reversing the course of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the African American community. Our determination and collective actions to reduce the burden of HIV and AIDS in black communities have made inroads in our fight against the epidemic. Together, we are making progress—more awareness in the community, higher testing rates, more people talking with their doctors about HIV/AIDS, and less stigma. Although we still have a long way to go to realize greater successes, by moving forward with our innovative activities and holding fast to our bold dreams, we will ultimately achieve our objectives to reverse the spiraling numbers of HIV and AIDS in black communities and assure that our sisters, brothers, children, and friends attain the bright futures that they deserve.

Some of those bold dreams for the future were shared at the 2009 National HIV Prevention Conference in Atlanta August 23–26. Conference speakers and attendees examined successes, challenges, and innovations in HIV prevention and looked closely at where we are going with domestic HIV prevention. Representatives from federal agencies, other government officials, researchers, and people living with HIV infection and AIDS provided perspectives on the paths that still need to be charted to have an impact on the epidemic. More than 3,000 people came together to share stories, to reflect on past successes, and to focus on a future where HIV/AIDS takes less of a toll on our communities.

All of you—our *Heightened National Response* (HNR) partners and those of you who are also *Act Against AIDS Leadership Initiative* (AAALI) partners—are vitally important in the fight against HIV/AIDS. You are mobilizing your communities to act against HIV and AIDS, you are providing life-saving information to them, and you are encouraging community members to get tested and into care if they test positive for HIV. You are the future of HIV/AIDS prevention. And you are creating that future through your hard work and dedication now.

Remember that each individual and each organization is critical in the fight against HIV and AIDS. In this issue of the *ACT!ON* newsletter, you'll read about our esteemed colleague, Dr. Wilbert Jordan, and his contributions to understanding the epidemic among blacks; you'll learn about another phase of the *Act Against AIDS* campaign—*I Know*—a phase specifically directed to the African American community with a primary focus on young adults between the ages of 18–29; and you'll read about how barbers, beauticians, and cosmetology students at the Bronner Brothers International Hair Show in Atlanta were taught how to integrate HIV education and outreach into their conversations and relationships with customers. We think you will find these and other articles in this issue useful as we continue to engage people and partners in the fight against HIV/AIDS.



Kevin Fenton, MD, PhD, FFPH
Director, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention





Earvin "Magic" Johnson, from The Magic Johnson Foundation, speaks at the opening plenary session of the National HIV Prevention Conference (NHPC) on August 23.



John Lewis was one of the distinguished members of Congress who spoke at NHPC's closing plenary session, "The Power and Politics of Prevention."

HNR Partner Focus: Dr. Wilbert Jordan

Internationally known as a community-based practitioner with a long history of researching infectious diseases, Dr. Wilbert Jordan is a leading researcher on HIV/AIDS in the African American community.

In 2008, Dr. Jordan attended the second HNR Partnership in Action meeting, lending his expertise to discussions on sector-specific ways to boost HIV prevention efforts within the African American community. However, long before racial disparities in HIV/AIDS diagnoses became mainstream news fodder, Dr. Jordan was concerned about the menacing impact this new disease could have on all populations.

In the early 1980s, as more heterosexual African Americans became infected, the lack of response from most black communities—and the stigmatizing stance of the black churches he had experience with—spurred Dr. Jordan to action.

“No one was talking about it,” says Jordan. “And I didn’t like the way the church [in his area] was reacting. HIV-infected members were being cast out, and the behavior of other members was decidedly un-Christian.”

Soon after, HIV struck closer to home.

“At the time there were very few physicians who were actively diagnosing and treating heterosexuals,” he continues. “A good friend got sick and called and explained his symptoms. I knew that his wife and children were in the room so I told him I would be asking him a few questions, and to just reply yes or no. I asked him if he was bisexual, and he said yes; then I asked if his wife knew, and he said no. I referred him to a good doctor I knew in the Washington, D.C., area where he was diagnosed with HIV.”

Over the years, HIV outreach has been a primary interest for Dr. Jordan, and his contributions have had an impact on the reporting of HIV/AIDS in minority populations and recognition of the disease’s disproportionate burden on African Americans.

Over his more than 30-year career, Jordan has received awards from the Surgeon General, *Black Entertainment Television*, the *Los Angeles Sentinel*, the National Association of Medical Minority Educators, and numerous other honors, including an induction into the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame. Additionally, the Harvard graduate has served on numerous boards and is a member of several professional organizations.



Dr. Wilbert Jordan

Today, Jordan divides his time between directing and working to expand the OASIS Clinic of King/Drew Medical Center in Los Angeles and working weekly at its companion Early Intervention Program. Dr. Jordan started the OASIS Clinic to provide care to patients and their families regardless of their ability to pay. In addition to the care they provide their patients, OASIS also provides free HIV testing and case management services.

In addition, he is a frequent contributor to several medical journals and local newspapers and serves as chair of the Standards of Care Committee of the HIV Commission of Los Angeles County and several other local organizations.

When asked about the progress we've made in talking about and treating those with HIV infection, Jordan feels that while we've made strides, we're still not where we need to be.

"We don't address the personal issues of why people do what they do, and a lot of it has to do with how they were raised and what they missed," says Jordan. "We spend a lot of time on programs that help people living with HIV and AIDS, but we need to focus more on what we can do to keep people HIV-negative... It's up to the private sector and leaders in our community to do that."

CDC Introduces Another Phase of Act Against AIDS at 2009 National HIV Prevention Conference

I KNOW

In April, officials from the White House, Department of Health and Human Services, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced a new 5-year national communication campaign, *Act Against AIDS*, which aims to reduce HIV incidence by combating complacency about the HIV/AIDS crisis in the United States, raising awareness of the severity of the epidemic, and highlighting the alarming statistic that every 9½ minutes another person in America becomes infected with HIV.

This fall, the *Act Against AIDS* campaign moves into another phase called *I Know*, which will address myths and misperceptions that hamper prevention efforts through the development and dissemination of HIV education and prevention messages via diverse communication and partnership channels. *I Know* will target the African American community with a primary focus on young adults between the ages of 18–29.

The 2009 National HIV Prevention Conference (NHPC) featured the session *Act Against AIDS Campaign Overview: Current and Future Strategies*, which provided attendees with a panoramic view of the *Act Against AIDS* campaign, as well as information about campaign phases, strategies, and tactics. At the session, presenters also highlighted information about what partners can expect in upcoming months, how partners can participate in and support the campaign, and what types of CDC support are available.

The session allowed CDC to leverage the NHPC platform to foreshadow the upcoming *I Know* phase, generating early buzz and identifying future partnership opportunities.

For more information on the campaign, visit www.actagainstaids.org.

National Association of Black Journalists and CDC Bring Act Against AIDS to NABJ Convention

To engage the media in the *Act Against AIDS* campaign, CDC is holding a series of local roundtables for journalists who report primarily on the African American community.

Given that the majority of African Americans identify the media as their primary source of information about HIV/AIDS, CDC representatives are traveling around the country to enlist the power of journalists to increase media coverage of the epidemic specifically targeted to the African American community.

In August, the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) helped to bolster the effort by partnering with CDC on a special session titled *Reporting about the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in the African American Community* during their national convention in Tampa, Florida. Led by former host of National Public Radio's *News and Notes* show Farai Chideya, now of Diaspora Farms, LLC, the roundtable featured panelists from CDC, *Essence* magazine, and the Black AIDS Institute.

The session featured an interactive brainstorm on a variety of topics, including

- Examining trends in HIV/AIDS coverage
- Identifying challenges and opportunities in reporting on HIV/AIDS
- Doing more with less: how to expand and translate HIV/AIDS stories across traditional and social media platforms
- Avoiding HIV/AIDS information overload/fatigue
- Sharing story or reporting ideas and brainstorming perceptions versus reality.

The local media roundtables and NABJ workshop explore the best ways to expand the dissemination of *Act Against AIDS* messages in an environment where newsrooms struggle with shrinking resources and compete with an abundance of platforms beyond traditional print and broadcast outlets—e.g., news Web sites, blogs, social media, and Twitter. By identifying and responding to journalists' needs relating to reporting and the resources they need to effectively do so, CDC aims to provide journalists with the means to expand coverage and create informed dialogue about HIV/AIDS among African Americans.

Planning is underway for the Oakland media roundtable scheduled for October 2009. Media roundtables will continue monthly through 2010, with stops in Detroit, Atlanta, Baltimore, Miami, Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago.

Bronner Brothers Hair Show Attendees Learn About HIV/AIDS

Over the weekend of August 15, more than 60,000 hairstylists, exhibitors, distributors, and cosmetology students flooded the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta for the Bronner Brothers 2010 International Hair Show.

For the first time, the beauty giant partnered with the Prevention Partnerships Team in the Prevention Communication Branch (PCB) of the Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention (DHAP) to boost HIV prevention and education in the African American community.

Bronner Brothers aired the *Act Against AIDS 9½ Minutes* public service announcement during various portions of the event and provided CDC with two locations within the venue, offering testing at one and providing stylists with information they can share in their home salons at the other. The latter, outfitted as a barber shop, was lined with beauty shop-themed *Act Against AIDS* posters. The event, designed to boost testing and education, also provided attendees with live demonstrations on how easily barbers and beauticians can address HIV/AIDS myths and promote HIV prevention, testing, and care by talking with their customers and employees about basic HIV facts and referring them to www.actagainstaids.org. These demonstrations also included persons living with HIV, such as HIV activist and author Marvelyn Brown, to portray the natural relationships and camaraderie that often exist between stylists and their customers to bolster attendees' comfort levels in discussing what some may consider a difficult subject.



Pro Way Barber School instructor and student barbers support Act Against AIDS at the Bronner Brothers International Hair Show.

Between skits, attendees were treated to additional edutainment—content that both educates and entertains—in the form of a looped video featuring testimony and commentary from people living with HIV and leaders in the community. Additionally, an HIV-themed trivia game gave attendees the opportunity to test their HIV knowledge for the chance to win *Act Against AIDS* T-shirts, pens, and other paraphernalia.

Bronner Brothers, Inc., is a privately held, family-owned company founded in 1947 by Dr. Nathaniel H. Bronner Sr., and his brother, Arthur E. Bronner Sr. Today, Bronner Brothers is still a family business—Bernard Bronner leads the company as president and CEO. Bronner Brothers consists of a number of enterprises that include *UPSCALE* magazine, manufacturing companies, and hair and other trade shows.

Act Against AIDS Leadership Initiative (AAALI) Update

As part of the *Act Against AIDS* campaign, CDC has launched a 5-year partnership with some of the nation's leading African American organizations. While many of them have long-standing commitments to addressing HIV/AIDS among African Americans, AAALI enables each group to make HIV/AIDS prevention a core component of its daily activities.

All of these organizations use their collective strength and reach to spread HIV/AIDS awareness, advocacy, and testing to numerous communities throughout the United States. Some of the activities AAALI partners sponsored in July, August, and early September include these:

- The Urban National League and Walgreens Bus Tour made stops in Northwest Indiana (July 6); Tulsa, Oklahoma (August 3); Oklahoma City (August 10); Louisville, Kentucky (August 24); and Columbus, Ohio (September 7). At each stop, representatives attended HIV/AIDS awareness events and distributed education and awareness materials about HIV/AIDS and AAALI.
- The National Medical Association featured a special session on HIV/AIDS at its 2009 Annual Convention and Scientific Assembly, held July 25–29 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Robert Bailey, team leader for the Prevention Partnerships Team, Prevention Communication Branch, Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention, talked about AAALI.
- Phi Beta Sigma held its 95th Anniversary Conclave titled “Celebrating the Dream” July 6–12 in New Orleans. CDC participated in a Heightened National Response (HNR) training program as part of the “Conversation Among Brothers” series. The goal of the series is to raise the awareness of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the African American male population and to use the traditional service mission and national influence of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity to extend networking between community organizations for HIV prevention. CDC also participated in “Promising Practices: Program Models to Eliminate Health Disparities in African American Communities” at the conference where participants discussed what they can do to help inform and transform the country’s debate about health and address the root causes of racial, economic, and health inequities.
- At the 51st Annual National Convention of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Memphis, Tennessee, August 1–5, CDC representatives exhibited and provided information on HIV/AIDS prevention and on AAALI.
- At the 37th Annual Institute and Conference of the National Black Nurses Association in Toronto, Canada, August 2–6, CDC representatives exhibited and provided information about HIV/AIDS prevention to nurses from across North America.
- In mid-July, more than 5,000 persons—the largest number in recent history—traveled to New York to attend the centennial convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), an *Act Against AIDS Leadership Initiative* (AAALI) partner. The convention’s theme “Bold Dreams, Big Victories” was echoed by speakers ranging from President Barack Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder to Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and other congressmen and senators, to Reverend Al Sharpton, Reverend Jesse Jackson, NAACP Chairman Julian Bond, and other icons of the civil rights movement. In addition to electing officers and setting their agenda for the next year, the NAACP convention presented an HIV/AIDS educational session entitled “The Great Silence: The Impact of HIV/AIDS on African American Women.” The standing-room-only crowd listened to panelists C. Virginia Fields of the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS; Carrie Broadus, Executive Director of Women Alive; representatives from CDC’s Prevention Partnerships Team; and Willis Edwards, a national board member of the NAACP who shared his story about living with HIV. NAACP is the nation’s oldest and largest civil rights organization with more than half a million members and supporters nationwide.



Representatives for DHAP share information at the NAACP Conference.

New Stories Posted in Voices of Experience Section of 9½ Minutes Web Site

The 9½ Minutes Web site’s Voices of Experience section has been updated to tell the stories of people who are living with HIV infection to increase HIV/AIDS awareness and reduce the stigma that is still associated with the disease.

Some of the stories include

- O'Dell, a 45-year-old man who has lived with HIV for 25 years, says his diagnosis led him to start taking better care of his health and to become more involved at church.
- Pamela, a woman who was diagnosed after 16 years of marriage, has become an active volunteer, educating middle- and high-school students and women's groups about HIV/AIDS.
- Doug, a man who has been living with HIV for 22 years, believes he has stayed healthy because of his adherence to his medications over the years. He volunteers with a variety of AIDS organizations and teaches others the importance of taking their medications as prescribed by their doctors.
- Denise, a woman who was diagnosed with HIV 27 years ago when she was trying to join the military and has had AIDS since 1996, has become an advocate for HIV/AIDS education.

Additional stories were recorded at the 2009 National HIV Prevention Conference and will be placed on the Web site soon. To view these stories, and others, please visit <http://www.nineandahalfminutes.org/living-with-hiv.php?voices=true>.