

# NEWS RELEASE

---

For Immediate Release: <insert date here>  
NAME OF ORGANIZATION/GROUP/COMPANY  
Media Contact: <insert name here>  
T: XXX.XXX.XXXX ■ F: XXX.XXX.XXXX

## **NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY OBSERVED FEB. 7 Communities Nationwide Hold Events to Raise Awareness**

February 7, 2008 marks the eighth annual observance of **National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD)**. This national mobilization effort is designed to encourage African Americans across the United States and Territorial Areas to **get educated, get tested, get involved and get treated** for HIV/AIDS, as it continues to devastate Black communities. Special events such as free HIV/AIDS testing, prayer breakfasts, town hall meetings and memorial services will be held throughout the country.

While African Americans represent approximately 13 percent of the U.S. population, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that the group accounts for almost half (49%) of the nation's AIDS cases. According to the National Center for Health Statistics *2006 Report*, HIV/AIDS is one of the top 10 leading causes of death for African Americans; and in the same year African Americans accounted for more than half (54 percent) of estimated new HIV infections in the United States.

"Statistics show that African Americans have been disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS since the epidemic's beginning some 25 years ago," says Dr. John Robertson, *Executive Director* of **National Black Alcoholism and Addictions Council**, one of the lead organizations for NBHAAD. "If we increase the dialogue and get everyone involved, we will be able to galvanize our communities to take action and stop the spread of HIV/AIDS."

"NBHAAD is grateful to have celebrities and community leaders lend their name, voice and time to serve as spokespeople for this important day," said Robertson. "We are currently producing public service announcements with several to be aired in advance of February 7<sup>th</sup> on the website."

-more-

Among celebrities and those with a significant presence in Black America lending their name to this national mobilization campaign, to date include: Soldier and Statesman **Colin Powell**; Recording Artist **Pattie LaBelle**; Actress **Angela Bassett**; U.S. Congressman **Elijah E. Cummings**; Indianapolis Colts Head Coach **Tony Dungy**; U.S. Congressman **Kendrick P. Meek**; Actress, Singer and Activist **Sheryl Lee Ralph**; and U.S. Congresswoman **Maxine Waters**, to name a few.

NBHAAD is directed, planned and overseen by eight national organizations: Alliances for Quality Education, Inc. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Healthy Black Communities, Inc., Jackson State University – Mississippi Urban Research Center, My Brother’s Keeper, National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors, National Black Alcoholism & Addictions Council, and the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS. This group is commonly referred to as the Strategic Leadership Council.

For more information on **National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day 2008**, please visit the website at [www.blackaidsday.org](http://www.blackaidsday.org).

# # #