Be A Force for Change.

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The AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) recently secured new grant funding to build a system of services tailored for HIV-positive individuals returning to community life from correctional settings. According to national statistics, an estimated 1 in 4 HIV-positive persons have spent time in a jail or prison.

“Incarcerated individuals with HIV often experience enormous obstacles in accessing needed healthcare and social services upon their release,” said Rev. Doris Green, AFC director of correctional health and community relations. “By making services readily available, we are helping to break the destructive cycles that spread HIV and accelerate disability among formerly incarcerated individuals living with HIV/AIDS.”

Through a combination of funding sources, AFC is providing an array of services for HIV-positive individuals leaving correctional facilities. With funding from the Illinois Department of Public Health, AFC links HIV-positive former inmates to intensive case managers specialized in helping recently released individuals access healthcare, housing, job training, and other needed services.

Through a new grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, AFC will be able to place up to 40 HIV-positive inmates into subsidized housing upon their release from prison. And through a grant provided by the National AIDS Fund, AFC is conducting outreach and education to health officials in prisons across the state to ensure they refer their newly released HIV-positive former inmates directly to AFC so clients may benefit immediately from case management, housing, and other services.

“With more than 10 years experience working with correctional systems, we know that clients can achieve stability and independence following a period of time behind bars,” said Mark Ishaug, AFC President/CEO. “However, tailored and appropriate HIV-related services must be in place. In securing new grants, AFC is now able to reach more former inmates and their family members and provide them tailored services to improve their lives.”

2008-2010 Strategic Plan Charts AFC’s Future Agenda

After a year-long public input process, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) released its 2008-2010 Strategic Plan in November. The plan, entitled “A Force for Change,” will serve as a blueprint for the organization’s work in the period ahead.

“In the next three years, AFC will work tirelessly to build better service systems, advance HIV prevention goals, and make the entire HIV service sector more efficient and responsive to changing needs,” said AFC President/CEO Mark Ishaug. “With an ever increasing caseload, the sobering reality is that we must do more with less. This strategic plan will harness our efforts to do just that, while we continue to lead advocacy efforts to expand visibility and multisectoral efforts to end HIV/AIDS.”

The new plan incorporates the views of more than 400 community members who provided feedback through a survey, as well as input from members of AFC’s Service Providers Council, the AFC Board of Directors, and other stakeholders.

From 2008 to 2010, AFC will pursue three broad objectives designed to reduce HIV transmission and improve the lives of people with and at risk for HIV through advocacy, funding, and collaboration:

1. Invest in leadership and advocacy
2. Develop new prevention and care models
3. Devise strategies to make organizations and the sector more effective and efficient

To read the entire strategic plan, visit aidschicago.org/about_afc/strategic_plan.php
Dear Friends:

Happy New Year from the AIDS Foundation of Chicago! This January marks a watershed moment for AFC, as we implement our new three-year strategic plan. From 2006 to 2007, AFC awarded more than $35 million to area HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and advocacy projects. While we are proud of these accomplishments, our new strategic vision calls for even bolder, more effective projects to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

AFC’s 2008-2010 strategic plan incorporates the views of more than 400 community stakeholders, as well as local HIV/AIDS service providers and our Board of Directors. These collective viewpoints had a tremendous influence on the plan’s content, and ensure that our goals are practical, efficient, and community-driven.

The plan also anticipates a changing landscape in domestic HIV/AIDS policy. This winter, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is expected to announce that annual HIV infection rates are likely 30% higher than previously estimated. Sadly, the numbers come as no surprise to many public health officials working on the frontlines of the epidemic. It is our hope that these numbers will provide the impetus for a comprehensive national strategy to fight HIV/AIDS.

In response to the changing nature of the epidemic, AFC has created three primary goals for 2008-2010. First, we plan on investing in new leadership and advocacy. Through our future initiatives, we will train a new generation of leaders, especially those living with HIV, to promote effective state and federal HIV/AIDS policy and activities. We will also launch a Community Advisory Board, in response to the success of our Housing Advisory Council, to better engage service consumers.

Second, we aim to develop new prevention and care models. These include the creation of a new Center for Housing and Health Partnerships, which will fund new supportive housing options for low-income people with HIV and other chronic health conditions. We will also strengthen our medical case management programs, and redouble our efforts to expand proven prevention services.

Lastly, we must prepare for the future. In order to address the realities of the continuing epidemic, AFC plans to increase CommunityDirect fundraising, which empowers agencies to fundraise for themselves. AFC will also facilitate discussions through our Service Providers Council to ensure that high-quality services for people with and at risk of HIV/AIDS are available and accessible across the region. AFC recognizes the importance of community input in the development of our goals. With your continued support, we can make our plans a reality. Thanks for all you do.

Sincerely,

Mark Ishaug
President/CEO

Your gift will help provide services for people affected by HIV/AIDS; fund community-based agencies; educate the public, policymakers, and service providers; as well as support advocacy for sound AIDS policy and programs. Give online at aidschicago.org/donate or call Loren Leiding-Avila at (312) 922-2322 ext. 350.

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- **Bequest Designate AFC** as a recipient of a cash gift or a percentage of your estate in your will
- **Tribute/Memorial** Honor someone living or deceased, or celebrate a birthday or special date
- **Corporate Workplace Giving** Designate AFC to receive payroll deductions
- **Other Planned Gifts** Designate AFC as the beneficiary of an existing life insurance or retirement plan
- **Employee Matching Plan** Have your employer match your contribution
- **In-Kind Services** These can include donated printing, materials, professional services, and/or silent auction items—such as restaurant gift certificates, vacation homes, etc.
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Update is published four times a year.
Advocacy Campaign Secures Funding for AIDS Housing

In response to a budget crisis, AFC launched a four-month campaign to convince city officials to secure increased AIDS housing funds. With the help of the City Council, led by Alderman Tom Tunney (44th Ward), AFC’s efforts proved successful, as Mayor Richard M. Daley pledged in November to increase HIV/AIDS rental assistance by $250,000 in 2008.

“We thank Mayor Daley, Alderman Tunney, and the City Council members for their commitment to the fight against HIV/AIDS in Chicago,” said Mark Ishaug, AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) President/CEO. “By increasing AIDS housing funding this year, Mayor Daley takes us another step closer to the goal we all share, safe and stable housing for all people living with HIV.”

AFC previously learned that the City of Chicago proposed setting aside over 100 units funded by the Low Income Housing Trust Fund for people with HIV, with an annual price tag of more than $572,000. That decision brings the total increased financial commitment for AIDS housing in 2008 to over $750,000, including the new rental assistance funding.

AFC thanks people living with HIV, members of the AIDS Housing Advisory Council, and AIDS housing providers for their dedication to expanding HIV/AIDS housing services. Despite the new resources, a great need remains for housing assistance for people with HIV. AFC will continue to advocate for adequate resources for AIDS housing services. The advocacy efforts are documented in detail at aidschicago.org/advocacy/city_funding.php

2007 State Legislative Session Yields Results

The 2007 General Assembly enacted several new laws that will significantly impact people living with or at risk for HIV in Illinois. For more information, visit aidschicago.org/advocacy/state_legislative_news.php.

- HIV prevention activities in high-risk communities are chronically under-funded. That’s why AFC collaborated with the Coalition for Quality of Life to pass the HIV/AIDS scratch-off lottery game, which will provide funding for HIV/AIDS prevention and services to the highest at-risk populations. Purchase your “Quality of Life” lottery ticket in February 2008 to help support community-based HIV prevention programs in Illinois.

- Retaining health insurance coverage is a significant barrier for disabled people with HIV who wish to return to work. This year, a new law will allow disabled individuals with HIV and other conditions to retain Medicaid benefits while working more hours. Individuals may earn up to about $35,000 per year through the Health Benefits for Workers with Disabilities Program (HBWD), an increase of nearly $15,000.

- Until recently, people with HIV and other disabilities who were denied services in a doctor’s or other professional office had no recourse under Illinois law. HB 593 adds medical and professional offices to the list of public places in which discrimination is prohibited, giving people with HIV essential civil rights protections.

- In 2006, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended that every individual aged 13-64 accept testing for HIV. AFC, in partnership with a broad coalition of public health agencies and legal groups, supported legislation that will streamline the provision of HIV testing by medical providers while guarding against testing without the patient’s consent and knowledge.

- In 2007, the legislature also enacted a law requiring doctors to test pregnant women for HIV unless they decline testing, as recommended by the CDC. Women must be told that they have the right to decline testing, and how to decline.
Guests Delight in World of Chocolate

On November 29, more than 1,600 chocolate lovers gathered at the Hilton Chicago to enjoy the sixth annual World of Chocolate, the AIDS Foundation of Chicago’s (AFC) signature event.

Held in commemoration of World AIDS Day, the event was a great success, netting more than $200,000 for HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and advocacy services in the Chicago area.

“The quality of the chocolate was only surpassed by the energy of the crowd,” said Chris Matthews, AFC Director of Fundraising Events. “Each sponsor, chocolate vendor, volunteer, and guest contributed to make the evening tremendously successful for AFC and our community partners.”

At the event, guests sampled an array of chocolate creations donated by more than 30 of Chicago’s finest restaurants, caterers, and chocolatiers. The vendors displayed several culinary masterpieces, including an Eiffel Tower ice sculpture and a chocolate cookie Chicago skyline.

These indulgences, however, were just the tip of the entertainment iceberg. Many attendees found great bargains at the Holiday Bazaar, which included fine gifts and ornaments donated by local merchants. The event also featured a seven piece symphonic band, raffle, and professional artists.

At the evening’s end, a panel of celebrity judges announced the 2007 Chocolate Vendor Awards. Calihan Catering received the Hot Chocolate honor for the tastiest treat, while Palmer House Hilton and Cook Au Vin shared the Loco Cocoa Award for most creative use of chocolate as an ingredient.

Additionally, Cook Au Vin and Sweet Endeavors won the Sweet Booth Award for best presentation, and Palmer House Hilton took home the Chocoholic’s Dream Award for most visually enticing treat.

AFC extends special thanks to the Event Co-Chairs Richard P. Ellis, Claire Gregoire, and Joseph R. Sullivan, along with the Host Committee, Board of Directors, Junior Board, and all the volunteers for making the sixth annual World of Chocolate the most successful to date.

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Board Member David Morris, his wife Pam Morris, and Board Member Leslie Morgan (Photo: Anthony La Penna)

Event Co-Chairs Joseph R. Sullivan, Claire Gregoire, and Richard P. Ellis (Photo: Anthony La Penna)

Board President Marcia Lazar and Husband, Alan Amos (Photo: Anthony La Penna)
The Harris Theater of Chicago presented an exclusive one-night performance of *Les ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo* on January 17, 2008 to benefit the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. The Trocks, as they are affectionately known, performed in front of a sell-out crowd and joined guests for a VIP reception following the show.

“The Trocks simply rocked,” said Mark Ishaug, President/CEO of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. “Our partnership with the Harris Theater is another example of the art community’s deep commitment and bold leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS.”

The fact that men danced all the parts – their heavy bodies delicately balancing on toes as swans, water sprites, romantic princesses, and angst-ridden Victorian ladies – enhanced, rather than mocked the spirit of dance as an art form, wowing both knowledgeable and novice attendees.

Founded in 1974 by a group of San Francisco ballet enthusiasts, the Trocks are an internationally renowned dance troupe, and received a 2006 Critics’ Circle Dance Award for their outstanding repertoire. They have performed in cities such as Madrid, New York, Paris, and Vienna.

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**AFC Awards Seven Global Grants**

The AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) awarded microgrants this fall to seven Chicago community groups that collaborate with international HIV/AIDS organizations. Through generous support from the Abbott Fund, AFC distributed $5,000 to each grantee to support their efforts in combating the worldwide HIV/AIDS epidemic.

“As the world continues to shrink, we recognize that a unified global response is crucial to succeeding in the fight against the epidemic,” said Cynthia Tucker, AFC’s Director of Prevention & Community Projects. “As a result, we are honored to provide grants for local nonprofit groups that partner with international organizations to conduct global HIV prevention, advocacy, and treatment efforts.”

The grants will serve at-risk populations in countries as diverse as Kenya, Rwanda, El Salvador, and Haiti. This year, an emphasis was placed on increasing capacity for prevention and education initiatives in areas disproportionately affected by the epidemic.

Grantees include Women’s Equity for Access to Care and Treatment for HIV, Martin Temple AME Zion Church, Salud Latina/Latino Health, Institute for East African Collaboration HIV/AIDS Working Group, Children’s Place Association, Global Alliance for Africa, and World Bicycle Relief.

Funded activities include the purchasing of HIV testing materials and services, production of education materials, construction of medical clinics, and continued employment of nurses and doctors.

The seven agencies were honored at the October 16 pre-event for AFC’s annual *World of Chocolate*. This is the third consecutive year of AFC’s global grants program. Learn about the proposal process at aidschicago.org/grantmaking/global_grants.php.

**Les Ballets Trockadero Wows Crowd at Harris Theater**

The Harris Theater of Chicago presented an exclusive one-night performance of *Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo* on January 17, 2008 to benefit the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. The Trocks, as they are affectionately known, performed in front of a sell-out crowd and joined guests for a VIP reception following the show.

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In their only Chicago appearance of the year, the Trocks delighted the audience with their inspired blend of comedy, loving knowledge of dance, and extraordinary talent. The company of professional male dancers presented a playful, entertaining view of traditional classical ballet in parody form en travesti.

Founded in 1974 by a group of San Francisco ballet enthusiasts, the Trocks are an internationally renowned dance troupe, and received a 2006 Critics’ Circle Dance Award for their outstanding repertoire. They have performed in cities such as Madrid, New York, Paris, and Vienna.
WHAT’S NEW AT AFC

REPORT CHALLENGES LATINO RESPONSE TO HIV/AIDS
To commemorate National Latino AIDS Awareness Day, the Greater Humboldt Community of Wellness released a report in October that examined contributing factors and solutions to high rates of HIV/AIDS among Illinois Latinos. The report calls for expanded HIV/AIDS public education and awareness campaigns, as well as stronger advocacy programs within the Latino community. Read the press release at aidschicago.org/about_afc/10_15_2007.php

HOWARD BROWN RECOGNIZES AFC’S CONTRIBUTIONS
AFC received the prestigious Friend for Life award this fall from the Howard Brown Health Center (HBHC). The HBHC honored AFC for its long-time partnership and consistent support for important HIV prevention and care efforts.

DIRECT2HOUSING.ORG AND LIFELUBE BLOG AWARDED HONORS
AFC’s new online housing resource, Direct2Housing.org, recently received the Award of Excellence from the Society for New Communications Research. Led by Ric Martel, the AFC housing team accepted the award on December 5 at the Society’s Awards Dinner & Gala in Boston. Visit the award-winning site at www.direct2housing.org. The society also honored AFC-sponsored website, www.LifeLube.blogspot.com, with an Award of Merit in the nonprofit blog category.

Accomplished Advocate and Award-Winning Journalist join AFC

The AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) is pleased to announce the hiring of Loren Leidinger-Avila as its new Director of Development and Johnathon E. Briggs as its new Director of Communications.

“We are thrilled to have Loren and Johnathon on board,” said AFC President/CEO Mark Ishaug. “They have a wealth of experience that will help us implement our ambitious strategic plan.” (see, “2008-2010 Strategic Plan Charts AFC’s Future Agenda” on Page 1).

In her new role, Loren will lead the AFC development team to raise funds to support the organization’s mission and the thousands of individuals living with HIV in Illinois.

Loren comes to AFC from C.A.R.E., the Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, one of the world’s largest international development organizations. In her eleven years there, Loren worked in a number of positions in operations, development and advocacy.

Loren is also the co-founder of the Chicago Chapter of GROW (Global Reach Out for Women) and received the inaugural Grassroots Advocate of the Year Award from the Women’s Edge in 2003. She has met extensively with Members of Congress and their staff advocating on behalf of the underserved communities. She assumed her new post on November 29.

Loren has a bachelor’s degree from University of Illinois at Chicago in History and English and is originally from Chicago.

In his new role, Johnathon will implement a new communications strategy to help raise the profile of AFC on a national level and position the organization to lead and shape public discourse on HIV/AIDS issues.

Prior to joining AFC, Johnathon was an urban affairs reporter at the Chicago Tribune, where he wrote about gentrifying neighborhoods, minority communities, and education.

The award-winning writer has also worked overseas as an editor at the South Africa-based magazine, Challenge; as a staff reporter at The Chicago Reporter, a monthly magazine focused on race and poverty issues; and as a staff writer for the Los Angeles Times.

Johnathon has bachelor’s degrees from Stanford University in Communications and African/Afro-American Studies and is a Los Angeles native. He assumed his new post on November 15.
We received the following donations of $1,000 or more between August 1, 2007 and November 30, 2007 (excluding event sponsorships and tickets). Although space limitations prevent us from thanking all of our donors here, every contribution, regardless of size, is important to the success of our work.

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If we have made an error either in the spelling of your name or have omitted your name, please accept our apology, and contact the development department at (312) 334-0936.