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LEADING NATIONAL AIDS ORGANIZATIONS MERGE TO FORM *AIDS UNITED*
*AIDS Foundation of Chicago's Mark Ishaug Tapped to Lead **AIDS United** in Effort
to End HIV/AIDS Epidemic in United States*

Washington, DC (November 22, 2010) - Today, the National AIDS Fund (NAF) and AIDS Action announced details of a merger that will create a stronger national organization in the fight against HIV/AIDS, called **AIDS United**. **Mark Ishaug**, current President and CEO of AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC), will assume the helm of **AIDS United** in early 2011, when the new organization officially launches.

AIDS United, which combines the expertise of NAF and AIDS Action and their local and regional partners, will be an organization that strategically connects funding, advocacy, and capacity-building programs to ensure that every person at risk for or living with HIV/AIDS has access to the prevention and care services she or he needs.

Ishaug comes to **AIDS United** with more than 20 years experience in HIV/AIDS public policy analysis, grassroots organizing, fundraising and grant making. He helped establish AFC as the Midwest's largest HIV/AIDS service organization as well as Illinois' leading advocate for people with AIDS and the agencies that serve them. Under his leadership, the scope and reach of AFC has greatly expanded, and its grantmaking, policy, prevention, and service coordination programs serve more people living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS than at any other time in AFC's history. AFC is also recognized as a national advocacy and public policy leader.

"We are confident that Mark will bring new energy and vision to the national debate and ensure that other community leaders are engaged and that those living with HIV/AIDS anywhere in the U.S. have a voice in policy making and program design," said Dr. Celia Maxwell, Assistant Vice President for Health Sciences at Howard University and a National AIDS Fund Trustee.

Kandy Ferree, current President and CEO of NAF, will serve in a senior consultant role. Rebecca Haag, current Executive Director of AIDS Action, will serve on the **AIDS United** Public Policy Committee and continue her role as CEO/President of the AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts.

"Combining forces to create a stronger and more unified voice will bring us closer to ending the AIDS epidemic in America," said Joe Interrante, AIDS Action Council Board Chair and CEO of Nashville Cares. "Eradicating HIV/AIDS is a battle we can win, united together as advocates, community partners, community-based organizations and educators," he said.

AIDS United will combine nearly three decades of HIV/AIDS policy, advocacy, and development of public-private partnerships to support community-driven HIV prevention and access to care programs.

"Our goals are lofty, and rightly so – ensuring the implementation of healthcare reform and the National AIDS Strategy," said Mark Ishaug. "Securing resources that the AIDS community desperately needs will not be easy, but we have no choice. Ending AIDS is our passion – it's what motivates us, inspires us, and unites us."

More than 56,000 people in the United States become infected with HIV each year, and more than 600,000 people currently living with HIV are not receiving the life saving access to care that they need.

NAF and AIDS Action will continue to operate as separate entities until January 1, 2011, when **AIDS United** will be legally effective.

About The National AIDS Fund:

The National AIDS Fund exists to leverage resources, develop leadership and advocacy, and foster community innovation to prevent new HIV infections and care for people living with HIV/AIDS. Learn more at www.aidsfund.org.

About AIDS Action:

AIDS Action's mission is to advocate on a national level for people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS and the organizations that serve them. Learn more at www.aidsaction.org.

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