



Someone Cares, Inc. of Atlanta

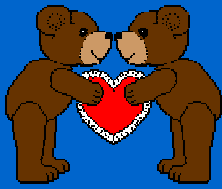
# The R.E.A.C.H.

Reaching, Educating, Assisting in, Community, Health

February 1, 2007

Volume 2 Number 5

Happy Valentine's Day!



In This Month's Issue

- National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
- S1C Employee of the Month
- A Positive Light
- Outreach in the Pan-African All Star Community
- National Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of HIV/AIDS
- HIV Testing
- Lawmakers ok clean-needle bill
- Oprah takes AIDS test at new South Africa School
- Ross Lyda of Roche Laboratories
- Duke develops sensitive HIV test



## National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

February 7, 2007

Greetings Friends:

In the United States, the HIV/AIDS epidemic continues to be a health crisis for African Americans. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2002, HIV/AIDS was among the top 3 causes of death for African American men aged 25-54 years and among the top 4 causes of death for African American women aged 25-54 years. It was the number 1 cause of death for African American women aged 25-34 years.

As HIV/AIDS continues to consume Black life, Black value and Black worth here in the United States and in other parts of the world, we know National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day can help to mobilize our communities to help shift and turn this epidemic around. We are working on this until there is a cure!!!

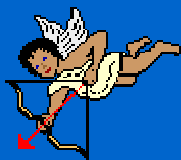
On February 7<sup>th</sup>, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, S1C and CW-Atlanta will be collaborating on an event that will reach out to the Atlanta Metropolitan community. On that day we will be conducting FREE HIV Counseling & Testing and hosting a panel discussion around Sexual Responsibility in College, Safe Sex in your 40's and the screening of "A Positive Light". We are asking all of Atlanta to come out and help us educate a community that has gone underserved.

Ronnie E. Bass / Executive Director

- **White CARE Act Reauthorization Bill; Bush Praises Compromise Measure**

- **State of Emergency**

- **S1C HIV Positive and Negative Partners Support Group**



## S1C February Calendar

**Feb 4, 11, 18, 25** – Evening Chat

Sundays at 6:30pm

**Feb** - Club, street, park outreach done on weekends

**Feb 5, 12, 19, 26** – HIV State of Emergency meeting 6pm ASP

**Feb 5, 12, 19, 26** – ITLA meeting / Colony Square Hotel 7pm

**Feb 3** - Pre-NHAAD

Greenbriar Mall 2-4

**Feb 5** – Morehouse School of Medicine - Imani Project Meeting 10-12:30

**Feb 6** – S1C PLWA Educational Session Common Ground 11am

**Feb 6** - Ronnie Bass on Radio station WRFG 89.3

7pm

**Feb 7** - National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day – S1C / CW-Atlanta

Panel and HIV testing

**Feb 8** – Syphilis Elimination Effort project - Hosted at Hands on Atlanta 10-12

**Feb 13** – S1C PLWA Education session Jerusalem House 6pm

**Feb 14** – S1C PLWA Educational session Edgewood

**Feb 15** – S1C PLWA Education session Edgewood House 1:30pm

## S1C Employee of the Month



**Khalid Idawu**

**Khalid Idawu** - Is the co-facilitator for our support group “Evening Chat”. Khalid has been dedicated to the group and serves as my life support when I am not able to make the meetings. Khalid possesses a bank of knowledge in wholistic living. He has helped to broaden our views on alternative ways to eating healthy and daily exercising. Thank you Khalid for being in my corner.

## A Positive Light

**February 7, 2007  
10pm**

**National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**



A Positive Light: HIV in Atlanta is an hour special about the growing number of African American women diagnosed with HIV. It introduces “Lana” a mother/grandmother who was diagnosed with HIV in 2002. This special is about exposing the truth about HIV/AIDS and erasing the shame and guilt that is so often associated with it in the African-American Community.

## Outreach in the Pan-African All Star Community



On Jan. 27, it was a night of love and unity at the Pan-African American All Star community fellowship, in College Park. S1C was asked to come be part of festivities and conduct HIV counseling & testing to its members. This event happens once a month and S1C has offered its services each month. We believe in reaching people where they are.....

**Feb 16** – S1C PLWA Education session Edgewood House 1pm

**Feb 22**– S1C PLWA Educational session Jerusalem House 6pm



**For your Holiday Meals**

### Volunteers Needed

S1C welcome all volunteers. We encourage you to volunteer with S1C which will give you an insight into how we serve the community here in Metro Atlanta. Your in-kind service help us keep the doors open.

### Our Mission

Our mission is to empower the African American and Latino MSM community, through HIV education and prevention methods, assisting them to take control of their lives in making sound sexual decisions. To broaden people living with AIDS knowledge base to help them make conscientious choices about available health care options, and enhance their skills to live a healthy and fulfilling life.

## National Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of HIV/AIDS



It's never too early to begin making plans for the **National Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of HIV/AIDS**. The event is every year, and is organized by [www.balmingilead.org](http://www.balmingilead.org) and is a large nationwide event. Perhaps your church could participate in 2007? It will take place March 4 through March 10, 2007. The Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS is a week of prayer, education, and action. This national AIDS awareness campaign engages Black congregations to support, encourage, and empower African Americans, Africans, and all people of the Diaspora to take action toward stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS in Black communities worldwide. Each year, a growing number of Black congregations are supporting and caring for persons living with HIV/AIDS, developing AIDS prevention outreach programs, setting up HIV/AIDS ministries in the church and in the community, and establishing HIV testing facilities complete with staff and counselors knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS. The 2007 national week of prayer calls upon Black faith communities worldwide to command accessible services and resources for people who are infected with and affected by.

## HIV Testing



S1C is now administering HIV testing with OraQuick Advance. This has allowed us to conduct HIV testing during street and club outreach. Our in-house testing days are on Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays, at the 233 Mitchell Street, Suite 200, Atlanta, GA 30303. 10am - 4pm

**FREE HIV Testing!**

**Become a volunteer in the community-based HIV testing program of Someone Cares, Inc.** We are in the process of recruiting new HIV testing volunteers. Wouldn't you LOVE to help make a difference in our community, while learning a valuable skill for your job resume and help save lives all at the same time? Just contact Someone Cares, Inc., for training opportunities. We can train you to use the new OraQuick Advance rapid HIV testing device, learn how to provide proper counseling and connect people to medical resources and much-needed support services. Just call 770-226-0075 for more details.

## **Please Donate**

S1C is able to carry out our vital mission through your generous financial contributions. We are a 501 (c) 3 agency. Your donations are tax deductible. Please give to help us, help others that are in need. Thank you.

### **Someone Cares, Inc. of Atlanta**

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**Someone Cares, The question now is, Do you?**

### **New Client Advocacy Group**

**"YOU COUNT!"**

**Use your VOICE, It makes a difference.**



## **Lawmakers OK clean-needle bill**

**Divided Senate and Assembly approve program after emotional debate**

Tuesday, December 12, 2006

**BY SUSAN K. LIVIO / Star-Ledger Staff**

After more than a dozen years and countless hours of impassioned debate, the Legislature yesterday passed a bill to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS among drug addicts by allowing needle exchange programs in six cities.

Gov. Jon Corzine said he would sign the bill into law quickly.

"The science is clear: Needle exchange programs reduce sharing of contaminated needles, reduce transmission of HIV and hepatitis C and serve as gateways to treatment," Corzine said.

For 13 years, lawmakers have wrestled with the legal and moral paradox of giving addicts syringes to use illicit drugs. Opponents questioned scores of scientific studies, the vast majority of which have found that needle exchanges reduce drug users' exposure to AIDS and do not entice more people to use drugs.

New Jersey is the only state in the country that does not allow drug users access to clean needles, either with a prescription or through community-based needle exchanges.

Sen. Ronald Rice (D-Essex), the most vocal opponent of the bill, pleaded with his colleagues on behalf of his Newark constituents who live with the presence of the drug trade.

"What do we tell senior citizens on South Orange Avenue who are afraid to come out of their homes?" he said.

Rice became animated as he railed against the bill. He called it an "experiment" on people of color -- saying it disproportionately affects minorities -- and compared it to the federal government's infamous Tuskegee experiment, which allowed 400 poor black men to suffer from syphilis without disclosing their diagnosis or providing treatment.

"The end result is the same -- death for a class of minorities and women," Rice said.

Sen. Nia Gill (D-Essex), a sponsor of the bill, said Rice's arguments against it have remained the same over the years, as has New Jersey's grim status: fifth in the nation in HIV and AIDS cases; first in women with the deadly virus, and third in infected children.

"If Newark doesn't want it, Newark doesn't have to have it," Gill said. "We've crafted the bill so it's permissive -- it would let Camden try to save the lives of its people. Why not let them have a chance to save lives?"

Camden, Atlantic City and Paterson have expressed interest in hosting a trial needle exchange program, said Roseanne Scotti, director of the Drug Policy Alliance of New Jersey, one of the bill's supporters.

Sen. Diane Allen (R-Burlington) said she couldn't vote for the bill after speaking to a parent who had lost a child to drug use. She urged her peers to change the bill to ban the use of public funds to support the needle exchange programs.

"We're using taxpayer dollars to send people deeper into the abyss," she said.

After more than two hours of emotional discussion, the Senate approved the bill (S494) 23-16. Minutes later, the Assembly passed the bill 49-27 with four abstentions.

## Oprah takes AIDS test at new South Africa school



Saturday, January 6, 2007; 10:42 AM

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) - U.S. talk show host Oprah Winfrey took an AIDS test on Saturday at her new \$40 million South African school for disadvantaged girls, hoping to set an example to pupils in one of the world's most infected nations.

Winfrey said when she opened the school earlier this week she hoped that a better education would help shield South African girls from contracting HIV.

She took the test during a family day at the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy, saying students would be encouraged but not forced to take tests with parental approval, a statement said.

"To be a great leader you must be of sound mind, body and spirit. Part of leadership is having the courage to demonstrate true action. Today I have taken the test to demonstrate why it's so important," Winfrey said.

The results of her and the students' tests would be kept confidential.

Winfrey promised to provide free anti-retroviral treatment to all parents and relatives living in the students' homes.

South Africa's AIDS epidemic is one of the world's worst, with one-in-nine people infected with HIV and nearly 1,000 people dying from AIDS every day.

The sprawling 52-acre campus in a sleepy community south of Johannesburg boasts classrooms and laboratories equipped with flat screen computers, a yoga studio, beauty salon and library.

Anti-apartheid icon and former President Nelson Mandela praised Winfrey for building the school, which took in 152 mostly black girls in its first batch, chosen from thousands of applicants.



**Ross Lyda** is Roche Laboratories Community Relations Representative. Ross has conducted several workshops for S1C and has enabled us to bridge the gap between agencies to educate consumers all over the Atlanta area. Thank you Roche and Ross for your continued support of our mission.

## Duke develops sensitive HIV test

Jan 7, 2007 : 9:59 pm ET

**DURHAM -- Researchers at Duke University Medical Center have developed a highly sensitive test for identifying which drug-resistant strains of HIV are harbored in a patient's bloodstream.**

The test may provide physicians with a tool to guide patient treatment by predicting if a patient is likely to become resistant to a particular HIV drug, said one of its developers, Feng Gao, associate professor of medicine. Drug resistance is one of the most common reasons why therapy for HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, fails.

The test, which detects genetic changes, or mutations, in HIV, also may help scientists understand how the constantly evolving virus develops drug resistance, Gao said. He said such knowledge ultimately may result in the development of new treatments designed to evade resistance.

The findings appeared online Sunday in the journal *Nature Methods*, and will appear in the journal's February 2007 print edition. The work was supported by the National Institutes of Health and the Duke Center for AIDS Research.

Duke has filed for a provisional patent on the technology, and the Duke Office of Licensing Ventures is considering various options to commercialize the technology.

Because HIV genes mutate so easily and the virus reproduces so rapidly, most people who are infected have many different forms of the virus in their bodies. In some cases, mutated strains take on new properties that make them more resistant to the drugs used in anti-retroviral therapy, the primary means of treatment for HIV infection.

During anti-retroviral therapy that does not fully suppress the virus, a strain that develops drug resistance will grow more quickly than strains lacking such resistance, and the resistant strain will replicate to become the most prominent virus in the person's body.

"The viral populations found in the blood of one patient can be very different from the populations present in another," Gao said. "Which resistant viruses are at hand can have important implications for the successful treatment of that patient."

More than 20 drugs currently are available for treating HIV infection. All but one of the drugs target two of the genes that serve as blueprints for vital protein components of HIV: reverse transcriptase and protease.

The Duke test examines the genes of HIV strains for mutations at certain positions that are known to be linked to drug resistance. For example, a change at a specific spot along the genetic code -- position 46 -- of the protease gene results in resistance to the drug indinavir.

To assess the test, the researchers analyzed blood samples from three different groups of HIV patients: those who had never received anti-retroviral treatment, those who had received treatment but were not currently being treated and those who were receiving treatment but the treatment was not completely successful.

After processing the blood samples and isolating the genetic material in each of them, the researchers added tiny fluorescent tags designed to stick to HIV genes in particular ways. Tags designed to stick to mutated gene locations known to produce drug resistance were labeled to appear green, while tags designed to stick to the same gene locations but where the genes had not mutated were labeled to appear red.

The researchers used a sophisticated computer program to count the number of molecules with green or red fluorescent tags in each sample. The test proved sensitive enough to detect a single mutated virus out of 10,000 nonmutated viruses in the patient samples, Gao said.

"This level of sensitivity makes the assay about 1,000 times more sensitive than the most widely used assays on the market for detecting drug-resistant HIV viruses," Gao said. "Thus, the assay may permit more accurate prediction of treatment outcomes."

The test also can detect when a virus molecule has more than one mutation, a capability that no commercially available test has achieved, Gao said. This capability may prove critical for detecting HIV strains that have become resistant to multiple drugs, a condition that occurs often as many patients are treated with many drugs at the same time.

The test may find broader medical application as well, Gao said. He said it had the potential to detect mutations that conferred drug resistance in infectious agents that cause other diseases besides HIV, such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and tuberculosis.

Other researchers participating in the study were Fangping Cai, Haifeng Chen, Charles B. Hicks, John A. Bartlett and Jun Zhu.

## Congress Passes Ryan White CARE Act Reauthorization Bill; Bush Praises Compromise Measure

Congress on Saturday passed a compromise bill ([HR 6143](#)) to reauthorize the [Ryan White CARE Act](#), which provides funding for HIV/AIDS programs in the U.S., by voice vote, the [New York Times](#) reports. President Bush "praised Congress for delivering the last batch of bills," including the reauthorization (Hulse, [New York Times](#), 12/10). Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) -- ranking Democrat on the [Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee](#) -- and HELP Chair Michael Enzi (R-Wyo.) last week announced that Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.) and other New York and New Jersey lawmakers agreed to the proposal crafted by Kennedy. Five senators, including those from New Jersey and New York state, earlier this year blocked Senate consideration of a House-approved bill sponsored by Rep. Mary Bono (R-Calif.) that would change CARE Act funding formulas so that rural areas experiencing increasing numbers of HIV/AIDS cases would receive higher funding amounts and urban areas' funding would decrease. Kennedy's proposal calls for strengthening "hold harmless" provisions and maintaining funding levels so that states would not receive less than 95% of their 2006 funding levels; counting all HIV-positive people for funding regardless of where they live or how the data are reported; maintaining the funding pool for prescription drugs and therapeutics; continuing [HHS](#) development of a framework addressing HIV/AIDS in the U.S. and a follow-up report of their progress in 2008; and maintaining a four-year transition period for states with code-based reporting systems to switch to names-based reporting systems without penalization. The compromise also would repeal the Ryan White program after three years, forcing Congress to write a new law and reconsider the program's structural challenges before then, Senate aides said. [House Committee on Energy and Commerce](#) Chair Joe Barton (R-Texas) -- who [co-wrote](#) and supported the original version of the reauthorization bill, which was passed by the House in September -- last week said he was dissatisfied with the Senate's amendment of the CARE Act bill and with the Senate's rejection of separate legislation ([HR 6164](#)) that would restructure the [NIH](#) ([Kaiser Daily HIV/AIDS Report](#), 12/7). The compromise CARE Act measure and Barton's NIH bill were passed together as part of a "complex" package of health legislation, the [Wall Street Journal](#) reports (Lueck, [Wall Street Journal](#), 12/11).

### **Reaction**

"This legislation focuses on lifesaving and life-extending services and increased accountability and will provide more flexibility to the secretary of Health and Human Services to direct funding to areas of greatest need," Bush on Saturday said in a statement (Werner, [AP/San Jose Mercury News](#), 12/9). "Congress put partisanship aside to do the right thing for the health of millions of Americans," Kennedy said ([New York Times](#), 12/10). "We have addressed the epidemic of today, not yesterday, by modernizing the Ryan White CARE Act to ensure federal funds follow the person being treated -- wherever they live," according to Enzi. House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) said, "When the reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act was passed by the House earlier this year, I was saddened to vote against it because when it came to meeting the needs of people living with AIDS, it fell far short," adding, "Tonight, we righted that wrong, sending a vastly improved bill to the President that reaffirms our will to fight HIV and AIDS" ([AP/San Jose Mercury News](#), 12/9).

## State of Emergency

- **African Americans are 76% of AIDS Cases in Georgia**

African Americans are 29% of the AIDS cases. Working with a community activists, and the Georgia Fighting for an Emergency, our goal is to declare a state of emergency in the state of Georgia in the African American Community.



the population and 76% of group of concerned newly formed Citizens of HIV/AIDS State of

76% = 911

The 2000 Census states that African American's make up 29% of Georgia's population. According to the 2004 AIDS Incidence Report for Georgia, a staggering 76% of all reported AIDS cases are in the African American community. Not only is that a disproportionate rate but its grounds for a State of Emergency.

**S1C** now has a **Partner of Positive Support Group (PPSG)**. It is designed to meet the growing need to educate HIV negative partners on the difficult challenges faced in maintaining a healthy lifestyle and relationship.



**My time. Your time.  
It's about time.**

**JOIN OUR HIV VACCINE STUDY**

Seeking HIV negative, men who have sex with men, ages 18 to 45 to participate in an HIV vaccine clinical trial (the STEP study). The purpose of this study is to see if the investigational HIV vaccine is safe and may lower the chance of getting HIV. We hope to learn more about HIV vaccines and prevention of HIV infection. This study is being performed by Dr. Frances Priddy at the Emory Hope Clinic, 603 Church Street, Decatur, GA 30030. Study volunteers are compensated for time and travel expenses and will receive confidential HIV counseling and testing.

Get info: [www.hopeclinic.emory.edu](http://www.hopeclinic.emory.edu) or [vaccine@emory.edu](mailto:vaccine@emory.edu)



Call us: **877-424-HOPE** (4673 x15)

**EMORY**

**Visit us at [www.someonecaresatl.org](http://www.someonecaresatl.org)**