



## News Alert

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **NATIONAL GAY MEN'S HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY EVENT SALUTES 20 GAY & SAME GENDER LOVING MEN WHO LEAD HIV/AIDS ADVOCACY**

*South Side Help Center Presents Its First Annual Event  
Commemorating Observance Day by the National Association of  
People With AIDS*

**CHICAGO, IL – September 30, 2016** South Side Help Center(SSHC) and AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) saluted 20 Gay & Same Gender Loving men for their advocacy and promotion of the overall health and well-being of gay men and HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and treatment during its first annual “20/20 Salute to 20 Gay & Chicago Same Gender Loving Men with Vision. More than 100 people representing a myriad of organizations from across the city of Chicago attended the event at The Promontory in Hyde Park. Remy V/VSOP sampling was provided. In 2008, the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA) launched observance of September 27 as National Gay Men’s HIV/AIDS Awareness Day to recognize the

disproportionate impact of the epidemic on gay men.

Those honored reflected in their bios on the continuing need for service to educate gay men on prevention of contracting or spreading HIV and their dedication to negating the stigma of the disease among same gender loving men. They also reiterated their efforts to help more gay men get tested every six months if they are sexually active — and getting those who are HIV positive to get and stay in treatment.

According to the latest report (December 2012) from the Chicago Department of Public Health on gay men in Chicago, 35 percent of gay black men have HIV. This is followed by 16.8 percent of gay white men, and 12.5 percent for gay Hispanic men.

The 20 men saluted included those from medical, political, social service, foundations, media, government and community based organizations. Vanessa Smith, Executive Director/President and Charles E. Nelson III, MSM Program Director, SSHC, presented the awards. Honorees included:

- Erik Glenn, Executive Director, Chicago Black Gay Men's Caucus
- David Ernesto Munar, President and CEO, Howard Brown Health
- John Sykes, MSW, LCSW, Psychotherapist, According To Sykes, LLC
- Sherman Bryant, Co-Chair, Chicago Black Treatment Advocates Network
- Art Sims, "Chat Daddy" Host & Executive Producer of "Real Talk", WVON
- Ben Montgomery, Retired U.S. Congressional Staffer
- Bruce C. Edwards, M.A. Coordinator Consumer Engagement, HIV Chicago Department of Public Health, STI/HIV Division
- Ariq Cabbler, Executive Director, Brothers Health Collective

- Sanford E. Gaylord, HIV/AIDS Regional Resource Consultant, Regional Resource Network Program, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services - Region V ↑
- Daniel Mendez, CDPH Project Coordinator, Center on Halsted
- Charles Nelson, South Side Help Center, MSM Project Director
- Anthony Galloway, AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Hektoen Institute, LLC - Austin CBC Initiative
- Arick Buckles, Scattered Site Outreach Worker and Advocacy co-chair, Chicago House
- Serette B. King, CDC Project Manager at Howard Brown Health Center
- Louis O. Spraggins, Training Associate, Thresholds
- Legendary Father Mario Balenciaga, One of the leaders in the Chicago ball culture, The Village
- Daniel T. Parker, Professor of African American Studies, renown art collector and book author: African Art, The Diaspora and Beyond".
- Shaune D. Freeman, MSW, LCSW, Psychotherapist
- John Fleming Jr., Founder, Manager, MadMan Productions
- Saúl Aviña, Jr., CTR Coordinator, CALOR, A division of Anixter Center

### About South Side Help Center

For nearly 30 years, South Side Help Center has provided critical services for HIV-positive individuals. Initially founded in 1987 with the goal of educating the African-American religious community so it could be sensitive to the needs of people dying from HIV/AIDS, SSHC's services have evolved beyond HIV prevention to include direct care services and a comprehensive range of Youth and Capacity Building programs that serve minorities at greatest risk. According to the Healthy Chicago STI/HIV Surveillance Report, Fall 2011, Fig. 2. P #8. Chicago's South Side has a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS. SSHC connects HIV-positive

clients to free medical services through its recent affiliation with AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), and is expanding its capacity to provide additional critical and much-needed services to the community at large.

Visit <http://www.southsidehelp.org> for additional information.

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