



THE AIDS INSTITUTE

National Office - Washington, DC: 202-835-8373
Administrative Office – Tampa, FL: 813-974-2598

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Media Contact: Michael Ruppal, (813) 258-5929, MRUPPAL@THEAIDSINSTITUTE.ORG or MEDIA@THEAIDSINSTITUTE.ORG

WORLD AIDS DAY: A TIME TO ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Washington, DC – The AIDS Institute joins millions around the world in recognizing advances made in the battle against HIV/AIDS, accepting the challenge that much work is still ahead and hoping for an end to the global AIDS pandemic.

Almost 40 million people are living with HIV/AIDS on our globe. In 2005, about 3.1 million men, women and children lost their lives to the disease. “It is disappointing that the global number of people infected with HIV continues to rise, despite the fact that effective prevention strategies already exist” said, Jeanne White-Ginder, Mother of Ryan White, long time advocate and Board Member of The AIDS Institute. World AIDS Day was conceived and adopted in January of 1988 to demonstrate the importance of the fight against AIDS and the global solidarity in this effort.

“I truly believe that this year’s theme for World AIDS Day, focusing on accountability, is insightful about the pressure we must continue to apply to our leaders around the world and hold them to promises made to put a stop to AIDS and help those people living with HIV/AIDS and those who care for them,” explained Dr. Gene Copello, Executive Director of The AIDS Institute. He continued, “During the past 25 years we have learned that stigma and discrimination are devastating aspects of this pandemic. Poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia and socioeconomic injustice – issues associated with HIV/AIDS – only exacerbate the stigma and discrimination faced by individuals and groups most affected by HIV/AIDS.”

According to Copello, “World AIDS Day is a perfect time for all of us to recommit ourselves to the AIDS movement, including advocating for actions that will produce the social changes necessary to minimize and eliminate stigma and discrimination associated with HIV/AIDS. The AIDS Institute is dedicated to pursuing that goal through sound public policy research, informed community advocacy and raising public awareness through education.” He concluded, “Today, World AIDS Day, we hope that community and religious leaders, government officials, as well as others in positions of leadership, will join their communities around the world in speaking out against stigma and discrimination. Together, we can become a strong voice for sound public policies, increased prevention and treatment resources and the hope for a cure.”

The AIDS Institute encourages all individuals to help stop AIDS. Keep the promise made over the last decades. Wear the red ribbon as a demonstration of your concern about and commitment to ending the AIDS epidemic. The red ribbon is a symbol of hope that a cure will be found and a symbol of support for those living with and those working to stop the spread of HIV.

For more information: About **World AIDS Day** visit www.worldaidscampaign.org or www.theaidsinstitute.org

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For more information or to become involved, please contact The AIDS Institute at:
(202) 835-8373, or by email at: Info@theaidsinstitute.org
Visit us on the web at: www.TheAIDSInstitute.org

The AIDS Institute is a nonprofit agency that promotes action for social change through public policy research, advocacy and education.