

# African American & Latino Faith Based HIV Prevention Initiative

Funded by the County of Los Angeles, Office of  
AIDS Programs and Policy

Managed by

The Palms Residential Care Facility &  
The Wall Las Memorias Project

# Purpose of Project

- To reach out to the African American and Latino Faith Community
  - To increase HIV / AIDS awareness
  - To increase HIV testing
  - To reduce stigma
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# Goals of Initiative

- To empower and mobilize faith based organizations to address HIV/AIDS in the Latino and African American communities throughout Los Angeles County

# Community Advisory Board (CAB)

- The CAB is our advisory board.
- The members of the CAB do not all share the same theological perspectives. This proves to be helpful during the planning stages of our work.
- We have gained valuable insights from the trials and errors of CAB members who are engaged in the HIV / AIDS fight.

# CAB Mission Statement

- The mission of the CAB is to mobilize the faith community to reduce HIV infection, ignorance and injury by spreading – through education and prevention – the compassionate, just and unconditional love of God.

# CAB Members

- Min. Robert Bolden, Crenshaw Christian Center; Los Angeles
- Rev. Terry Brown, Liberty Baptist Church; Los Angeles
- Rev. Roberto Colon, Chairman of the Council, Synod Southern & Hawaii, Presbyterian Church USA
- Rev. Walter Contreras, Esperanza USA
- Rev. Michael Eagle, St. Mark AME Church; Los Angeles
- Rev. Nimrod Flores, Grace Lutheran Church
- Rev. Carolyn Habersham, Emmanuel AME Church; Los Angeles
- Precious Jackson, City of Refuge; Gardena
- Rev. Carlos Jimenez, Consultant of Community Development
- Rev. Ron DeRon Johnson, Phillips Temple CME Church; Los Angeles
- Rev. Joyce Johnson, Turner AME Church; Culver City
- Rev. Jesse Lee, Holy Temple Full Gospel Church; Los Angeles
- Rev. Dr. Anthony McFarland, Abundant Harvest Christian Center; Pasadena
- Min. Donta Morrison, Christ First Baptist Church; Long Beach
- Rev. Dr. Clyde Oden, Bryant Temple AME Church; Los Angeles
- Father Chris Ponnet, Catholic Archdiocese
- Rev. Russell Thornhill, Unity Fellowship; Los Angeles
- Father Will Wauters, Epiphany Episcopal Church
- Edna Williams, St. Brigid Catholic Church; Los Angeles
- Rev. Ronald Wright, New Vision Church of Jesus Christ; Los Angeles

# Strategic Plan

- By 2008, create a comprehensive Los Angeles County African American / Latino HIV AIDS Faith Based Strategic Plan that can be readily modeled in communities of color nationwide.

## Progress Made Ministry Development Training (Palms)

- Ministry Development Trainings (MDT) have been a very successful component of the initiative.
- We have devised two additional 2 hour MDT sessions.
- MDT II (Research, Clinical Trials and Vaccines) for 2007
- MDT III (HIV / AIDS Public Policy) for 2008

# Speaker's Bureau [PLWH/A] (Palms)

- Four trained speakers (2 male, 2 female, age range early thirties – mid forties)
- Each of our speakers has a unique testimony that is both informative and inspirational
- Reports from host pastors have been very positive without exception “He has a way of reaching the young people” DRBC; “She was dynamic.. Lots of positive responses” SBCC
- Speaking forums include Sunday worship services, women's conferences and youth gatherings

# Train The Trainer (Palms)

- Eight people have completed a 5 hour workshop that prepared them to be facilitate the modules of MDT I.
- Four people (Two in April and two in November) served as co-facilitators at the MDT I held at the Palms offices on La Brea.
- Some of the Trainer attendees expressed an interest in facilitating small HIV 101 workshops at their respective churches
- Others invited members of their churches to attend the MDT I on the day that they served as co-facilitators.

# Faith Based Summit 2006 (Palms)

- Entitled “The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Cost and Casualties of Silence”
- Held at First AME Church Renaissance Center
- Moderator Rev. Al Sharpton
- Panelist
  - Sandra Cox, Ph.D. Coalition of Mental Health Professionals;
  - Phil Wilson, Black AIDS Institute;
  - Former Assemblyman Rod Wright;
  - Cheryl Brach, Exec. Dir. LA Metropolitan Churches;
  - Nina Hawara, Ph.D,

# Faith Based Summit (cont'd)

- Over 300 were in attendance and 41 people were tested for HIV
- Testing provided by Minority AIDS Project and AIDS Health Care Foundation MPower U Mobile Testing Unit
- Crenshaw Medical Expo provided diabetes and blood pressure health screenings

# Faith Based Summit (cont'd)

- Host Committee Organizations that served as co-sponsors
  - 100 Black Men, Alpha Gamma Omega Foundation, AmASSI
  - Black AIDS Institute, Coalition of Mental Health Professionals
  - “Los Angeles Sentinel” Newspaper, Minority AIDS Project
  - National Action Network, National Coalition of 100 Black Women
  - Latino Coalition Against AIDS, One Woman Can
  - Woman Alive Coalition
  
- Advertising: Newspapers, radio, internet, full color double sided post cards

# CAB Retreat August 2006 (Palms & The Wall)

- One day event held at the California Endowment Building downtown Los Angeles
- African American and Latino CAB members / faith leaders present
- There is great diversity of opinion amongst CAB members; however, there were several “barrier breaking” conversations.
- CAB members acknowledged that in some denominations, info on HIV / AIDS comes from the top down
- The rising rate of HIV/AIDS among women generated a great deal of discussion and debate

# Progress made to date (The Wall)

- One on one outreach
  - HIV/AIDS Ministry Development Trainings & CBO Referral Workshops
  - Community Relations Workshops
  - HIV/AIDS Awareness Activities
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# One-on-one Outreach (The Wall)

- Multi denominational
- Discuss impact of HIV/AIDS education
- Conducts needs assessments
  - HIV/AIDS Ministries in place
  - Services offered by the churches
  - Training needs
- 229 needs assessments conducted

# Ministry Development Training & CBO Referral Workshops (The Wall)

- 92 Churches have attended
- Increase participants knowledge about HIV/AIDS
- Assist in developing/improving HIV/AIDS ministry
- Promote sensitivity, compassion and knowledge
- Assist faith leaders in identifying outreach opportunities
- Increase the number of churches providing HIV/AIDS ministry or services

# Community Relations Workshop (The Wall)

- Implemented since 2006
- 13 churches have participated
- Follow up with churches that attended HIV/AIDS Ministry Development Training and CBO Referral Workshop
- Assist churches in developing a 1-year action plan
- Activities include: HIV testing, HIV/AIDS 101 presentations & HIV/AIDS Awareness Activities

# HIV/AIDS Awareness Activities (The Wall)

- Noche de las Memorias
  - 500-700 participants
- National Latino AIDS Awareness Day
  - Menudo Breakfast
  - “No Te Rindas”
- Strike Out AIDS at Dodgers Stadium
  - Human Red Ribbon
  - HIV/AIDS information

# Challenges / Barriers (Palms)

- The intense focus that many ministries have on survival and church growth poses a challenge.
- In spite of the alarming statistics, there is still a segment of the faith community that feels “HIV is not my problem so I am not interested in the initiative’s offerings.”
- Thorny issues of sexual ethics and morality oftentimes slow down progress at strategy and training sessions.

# Challenges / Barriers (The Wall)

- Lack of available time from faith leaders
- Homophobia and the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS still exist
- Lack of educational materials available specifically targeting churches and translated to Spanish
- Ignorance on transmission of HIV/AIDS
- Staffing

# Making a Difference (Palms)

- While the task is enormous, there has been tremendous progress.
- The clergy, among them are those with great influence, are now talking more and more about HIV from the pulpit, in bible studies and other forums.
- When health disparities are discussed, HIV is now among the topics
- Young people are far more aware of the risks associated with unprotected sex than young people of previous generations

# Making a Difference (The Wall)

- Churches are more open to HIV/AIDS education and are requesting educational workshops
- Increase in the number of requests for onsite HIV testing at health and resource fairs hosted by churches
- Increased involvement in HIV/AIDS Awareness activities such as Noche de las Memorias and Strike Out AIDS at Dodgers Stadium (The Wall)

# Making a Difference (The Wall)

- Churches are getting involved in issues that relate to HIV/AIDS, such as the ANAM coalition
- Churches that committed to starting and HIV/AIDS Ministry have included HIV/AIDS as part of existing activities

# Guest Speaker

Elder Ron Simmons  
Faith Based Coordinator  
West Angeles Church



# Guest Speaker

Father Will Wauters  
Pastor  
Epiphany Episcopal Church



# Best Practices / What Churches Are Doing (Palms)

- National Women and Girls HIV AIDS Awareness Day Panel Discussion with girls from local middle and high schools (testing) ; Bryant Temple AME Church Los Angeles
- Youth Explosion (Speakers Bureau Member as Special Guest Speaker) New Philadelphia AME Church Carson)

# Best Practices / What Churches Are Doing (Palms)

- HIV Question and Answer; Mt Moriah Baptist Church Baptist Ministers Conference Los Angeles
- Women's Health Fair (testing) at Ward AME Church Los Angeles
- Community Prayer Gathering for Black Church Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS Church of Christian Fellowship Los Angeles

# Best Practices / What Churches Are Doing (Palms)

- HIV Awareness Weekend (testing) Faithful Central Bible Church Inglewood
- Community Health Fair (info, Speakers Bureau speaker and testing) Abundant Harvest Christian Center Pasadena

# Best Practices / What Churches Are Doing (Palms)

- Health Fair (info, Speakers Bureau Speaker)  
One Lord, One Faith One Baptism Church Long Beach
- Youth “Lock-In” (Speakers Bureau Speaker, info)  
Double Rock Baptist Church Compton
- Community and Church Member Testing, St. Brigid Catholic Church Los Angeles

# Best Practices / What Churches Are Doing (The Wall)

- Mary Immaculate Church - HIV/AIDS info/HIV testing
- Our Lady of the Valley - HIV/AIDS info/HIV testing
- Santa Rosa - HIV/AIDS info/HIV testing
- St. Rose of Lima - HIV testing
- St. Joseph Catholic Church - Menudo Breakfast/AIDS monument

# Best Practices / What Churches Are Doing (The Wall)

- Ebenezer World Ministries - HIV/AIDS resource fair & screening of “No Te Rindas”
- Iglesia Bautista Jesucristo Es El Camino - Resource fair/HIV/AIDS information
- Encuentro Cristiano 07, La convencion Inter-D - Presentation of “No Te Rindas” and HIV/AIDS discussion
- El Monte United Methodist Church - HIV presentation for youth ministry

# Best Practices / What Churches Are Doing (The Wall)

- Victory Outreach East Los Angeles - HIV/AIDS resource fair/HIV testing
- Garvanza Lighthouse Church - HIV/AIDS info/HIV Testing
- Iglesia Elim - Participating in Rand Corporation Research Study
- Rosewood United Methodist Church - HIV/AIDS presentation for youth ministry
- Iglesia Episcopal San Clemente - HIV/AIDS Resources

# Thinking Outside the Box (Palms)

- Focus groups (Richard Hamilton University of San Francisco; Dr. William King UCLA)
- Rev. Dr. Clyde Oden as speaker at AB 1334 (Assemblyman Swanson) press conference at the Men's Correctional Facility in Downtown Los Angeles
- Team Members as ambassadors, guest speakers and interviewees for Top Ladies of Distinction Conference, Black AIDS Institute "It's All About Me Conference," In The Meantime "Straight Men Talking About AIDS", Power of Love Church Community Day Event, Tim Daniels HIV Documentary

# Thinking Outside the Box (Palms)

## ➤ National Partnerships

- Black Commission on AIDS Washington DC
- The Potter's House Bishop T.D. Jakes Dallas, TX,
- "Trumpet Magazine" Chicago, IL
- St. Peter Claver Church New Orleans, LA
- Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church Houston, TX

# Thinking Outside the Box (The Wall)

- HIV Testing Focus Groups
  - Identify barriers to prevention
    - Stigma
    - Homosexuality
    - Fear
    - Sex & Sexuality
    - Shame
    - Condom Use
  - Develop strategies to address the barriers

# Thinking Outside the Box (The Wall)

- “No Te Rindas” - 35 min short film about a Christian family affected by HIV/AIDS
- National Catholic AIDS Network Conference -Latino Faith Based Initiative Presentation
- Participation in church health fairs
- HIV Testing
- Rand Corporation Study

# Thinking Outside the Box (The Wall)

- Strike Out AIDS at Dodger Stadium - AIDS Awareness event
- Noche de las Memorias - World AIDS Day
- Churches organize visits to AIDS Monument in Lincoln Park
- Churches collect donations and organize visits AIDS Hospice in Tijuana

# Thinking Outside of the Box (The Wall)

- The Wall Las Memorias Project organized Menudo Breakfast and HIV/AIDS discussion at Catholic Church
- Voces de fe y cultura research study funded by CHRP
- HIV/AIDS, Religion and Spirituality in the Latino Community, discussion forum
- Conference on Latinos, Faith Culture and HIV

# Lessons Learned (Palms)

- Clergy members can and will get involved as they learn to see HIV / AIDS as a pressing health issue that is impacting all segments of the community
- No one CBO has the answers, partnerships are key
- Getting into African American churches to do this work is a slow process that requires tact and patience. There are no quick fixes.
- There seems to be an increase in openness to get involved in this work if the minister is more liberal, socially conscious, and/or led by a female pastor/assistant pastor.
- Ministers and lay leaders from certain denominations seem to be more open to learning about HIV and getting involved in the struggle.

# Lessons Learned (The Wall)

- HIV/AIDS education is not a top priority
- Churches can be a powerful force in HIV prevention efforts within the Latino community
- There is a growing need of HIV/AIDS education and material in Spanish
- Building and cultivating rapport that is based in genuine interest can open door for continuous opportunities to work with churches

# Lessons Learned (The Wall)

- When reaching out to faith based institutions, CBOs should be sensitive of church teachings
- There is an immense lack of understanding of basic HIV/AIDS information in some denominations
- As service providers working with church leaders, it is highly recommended to move forward with HIV/AIDS facts rather than partaking in theological debates
- Women are highly active in church ministry, however they do not have decision making power

# Lessons Learned (The Wall)

- Churches are open and receptive to the message of HIV/AIDS awareness and education
- Most churches are willing to collaborate with outside agencies
- Support from church leadership is critical to an effective response to HIV/AIDS
- The structure of institutionalized denominations can sometimes be a barrier to HIV prevention

# Lessons Learned (The Wall)

- Some churches are aware of the AIDS epidemic but need information to address the issues
- HIV/AIDS is automatically related to homosexuality by some denominations
- It is important to involve people affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS when conducting outreach in faith communities
- Contrary to the general belief the Evangelical churches are not open to discuss HIV/AIDS, we learned that they are open and receptive to HIV/AIDS education

THANK YOU

For more information contact

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or

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