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The Long Island Association for AIDS Care celebrates National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

March 20, 2015 is National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, an annual observance that calls to attention the impact of HIV/AIDS on American Indian, Alaska Native, and other Native communities and gives Native people across the United States an opportunity to learn more about HIV/AIDS and get involved in HIV testing and prevention. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HIV is a public health issue among the approximately 5.2 million American Indians and Alaska Native (AI/AN), who represent about 1.7% of the US population. Of all races and ethnicities, AI/AN have the highest percentages of diagnosed HIV infections due to injection drug use. Part of the reason why HIV is a problem among Native communities may be that the American Indian and Alaska Native population faces many challenges associated with risk for HIV such as: lack of awareness of HIV status, culturally based stigma, socioeconomic issues, mistrust of government and its health care facilities, and drug/alcohol use. Through partnerships with community-based organizations like LIAAC, native communities are working to increase effective HIV/AIDS prevention activities and encourage early detection through testing.

In recognition of National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, the Long Island Association for AIDS Care will provide testing and education services across Long Island. Check LIAAC's official Facebook events page for more details. For more information on National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and for a comprehensive list of testing locations, visit our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/LIAAC.inc>, our website at www.liaac.org or call our toll free hotline at 1-877-TO-LIAAC.