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WORLD AIDS DAY- December 1, 2008

December 1, 2008 marks the 20th anniversary of World AIDS Day. Since 1988, the face and response to AIDS has greatly changed. While many of these changes are positive, this anniversary offers us an opportunity to highlight how much more still needs to be done. **Leadership** is the theme for World AIDS Day 2008, encouraging leaders at all levels to stop AIDS.

Newly released estimates from the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC 2008)** indicate that the HIV epidemic in the United States is—and has been—worse than previously estimated. CDC now estimates that 56,300 new HIV infections occurred in the United States in 2006. This is a **40%** increase in the previously estimated annual number of new infections and a sobering reminder that the HIV/AIDS epidemic is far from over in this country. The new estimates provide a profile of HIV/AIDS in the United States that is primarily young, male, and African American. The epidemic also disproportionately affects Hispanic and Latinos; particularly Hispanic and Latino men who have sex with men (MSM). Gay and bisexual men of all races and ethnicities are the most affected of any group of Americans. **Long Island**, (Nassau and Suffolk Counties), still has the highest suburban HIV/AIDS infection in the country and more AIDS cases than 26 states. (Suffolk County Government-HIV Commission 2007)

In recognition of World AIDS Day 2008, the **Long Island Association for AIDS Care, Inc.** will be conducting a week-long HIV/AIDS outreach, education and testing initiative. **Starting Monday, December 1 through Friday, December 5**, our professional staff will **bring free and confidential rapid HIV testing and education initiatives to communities all across Long Island**. For more information on **LIAAC's World AIDS Day initiative** and a complete list of outreach, testing and education interventions locations and times, please visit our website at www.liaac.org or call our toll free number at 1-866-236-3448.

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