AIDS Foundation of Chicago Forms the Illinois Alliance for Sound AIDS Policy

December 17, 2009

The AIDS Foundation of Chicago has selected 17 local AIDS advocates to form the Illinois Alliance for Sound AIDS Policy (IL ASAP), which aims to empower policy and HIV community leaders, increase involvement in HIV-related activities across the state and strengthen ties and communication among elected officials, the media and those living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

“This is a dynamic group of individuals who are taking the lead and fighting for the interests of our state’s HIV/AIDS community,” AFC policy associate Pete Subkoviak, who coordinates IL ASAP, said in a statement. “In the short time since IL ASAP was created, I have been extremely impressed with what its members have accomplished, and I expect great things from them in the future.”

Two of the 17 advocates enrolled in IL ASAP’s “inaugural class” have already garnered attention. Transgender and women’s health advocate Helena Bushong attended a White House national strategy meeting December 8 on women and HIV/AIDS. She’s believed to be the first transgendered person to do so. Another IL ASAP member, Patricia Johnson, was featured on a local CBS news broadcast to discuss rising HIV incidence among African-American women, which is 15 times higher than that of white women.

Throughout 2010, IL ASAP will lobby for HIV/AIDS on the local and federal levels. It will participate in AFC’s annual Lobby Days in Springfield and attend AIDSWatch, the country’s largest gathering of HIV-positive people and advocates in Washington, DC.

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