# HIV Activists to Reengage LGBT Community at Equality March in DC

September 23, 2009

One day before the National Equality March on October 11 in Washington, DC, HIV activists, speakers and performers—most of whom are HIV positive—will convene in front of the White House to redirect attention to HIV/AIDS in the LGBT community. The event will culminate with a candlelight vigil.

“The weekend is about achieving full equality for LGBT Americans,” Cleve Jones, founder of the AIDS Memorial Quilt and one of the National Equality March organizers, said in a statement. “We need to use that political power to remind the country that the AIDS epidemic continues. A great many young people will attend the march; we need them to continue the fight against HIV/AIDS.”

According to recent statistics, men who have sex with men (MSM) are more than 50 times more likely to contract HIV than other populations. In young MSM, new HIV infections increased 12 percent annually from 2001 to 2006, making them the only demographic to see an increase in HIV incidence during that period.

Speakers and entertainers at the HIV/AIDS rally will include singer and actress Sherri Lewis, Broadway actress and former Miss America Kate Shindle, members of the Diva League and Inner Light Ministries Choir, the Rev. Kenneth Glasgow, San Francisco Human Rights Commission chairperson Cecilia Chung, *POZ* columnist Shawn Decker’s Synthetic Division band, poet Brandon Plain, gospel rap artist Desencé, singer/songwriter Dudley Saunders, *POZ* founder Sean Strub, the Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson and Bishop Rainey Cheeks.

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