Latinos on World AIDS Day

November 30, 2009 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

World AIDS Day is always a reminder to the public at large that HIV/AIDS is still among us and must be addressed.

The Latino Commission on AIDS has taken that opportunity by issuing a sobering statement about Latinos.

Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows that Latinos progress to AIDS faster than any other racial or ethnic group. Within 12 months of testing HIV positive, 42 percent of Latinos are diagnosed with AIDS.

“Our challenge is to advocate and respond to the fact that more Latinos are likely to test late. The reasons include: limited access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health care and information, denial about HIV transmission risk, gender roles and safer sex practices,” said Guillermo Chacon, president of the Latino Commission on AIDS.

“Being an immigrant in the current climate of discrimination is negatively affecting Hispanics/Latinos access to health care and services like HIV testing, these are barriers that we need to overcome,” he said.

Getting tested for HIV is crucial. Stefania Fernandez is Miss Universe 2009. For World AIDS Day, she will get publicly tested for HIV on December 1st. The event will take place in Washington Heights at the Broadway Temple United Methodist Church in New York City.

Visit latinosaids.org for more information.

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