HEADLINES

Declaration of Intensification

At the United Nations General Assembly High Level Meeting on AIDS, which concluded in early June, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) issued a declaration to world leaders and their respective UN Member States to step up the fight against AIDS.

The Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS: Intensifying our Efforts to eliminate HIV/AIDS, adopted by the General Assembly on June 10, 2011, emphasized issues and outlined targets to address in the next five years and beyond.

The targets outlined in the declaration include: universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2015, complemented by a review of associated laws and policies; and the elimination of gender inequality and gender-based abuse, as well as empowering more women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from HIV infection.

Citing prevention efforts as a cornerstone in the fight against AIDS, the declaration highlights groups such as injection drug users and children; expanded access to male and female condoms and sterile injection drug works; intensified national HIV testing campaigns, particularly in the context of treatment-as-prevention; and the need to tailor prevention campaigns to local and national contexts of risk. Over the next five years, the declaration also seeks to increase the number of people on lifesaving treatment to 15 million and reduce tuberculosis-related deaths in people living with HIV by fifty percent. In an effort to counter a drop in international assistance to AIDS services, the Member States also agreed to increase AIDS-related spending.

For more information about UNAIDS, log on to www.unaids.org.

National HIV Testing Day

To mark National HIV Testing Day on June 27, Dr. Kevin Fenton, director of National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention, CDC, released a statement that said in part: “On this National HIV Testing Day, we have good news to report. In just three years, CDC’s expanded HIV testing efforts facilitated almost 3 million HIV tests in hard-hit areas across the nation, helping nearly 20,000 Americans living with HIV learn their status for the first time. A recent report showed that more Americans than ever before have taken an HIV test at least once in their lifetime, and more HIV-infected people than ever know their status.”

He continued: “While these signs are promising, our work to end the HIV epidemic is far from over. Today, about 240,000 people in the United States are living with HIV.

Ronald H. Spair, COO and CFO, OraSure; Mayor Davis; Frank J. Oldham Jr., president and CEO, National Association of People with AIDS; Douglas Michels, president and CEO, OraSure; Johnny Ford; Marjorie Hill, PhD, CEO, Gay Men’s Health Crisis; Mayor Bowser; Catherine Abate, president and CEO of Community Healthcare Network
this potentially deadly virus and don’t know that they are infected. That’s 1 in 5 of the nearly 1.2 million Americans living with HIV.”

In New York City, the National Association of People with AIDS (NAPWA), the CDC, OraSure Technologies, and mayors and government officials from around the U.S. helped to open the NASDAQ marketsite to mark National HIV Testing Day. After the bell was rung, a panel discussion of HIV testing experts weighed in on the state of HIV diagnostics. Outside, in Times Square, the Community Healthcare Network set up free HIV testing with its mobile testing van. Mayor Ronald K. Davis of Prichard, Alabama, current President of the World Conference of Mayors; Johnny Ford, founder of the World Conference of Mayors and former mayor of Tuskegee, Alabama; and Mayor Robert L. Bowser of East Orange, New Jersey, president of the National Black Conference of Mayors, were among those who demonstrated the OraQuick ADVANCE test, a rapid HIV antibody test, at the van. Walgreens Pharmacies also participated in the initiative, offering free HIV testing across its locations.

**Who’s Your Hero?**

Celebrating half of a decade of FDA-approved usage, Atripla is sponsoring a contest to honor five individuals who have gone above and beyond in the fight against AIDS in the last five years. To enter **5 Years, 5 Heroes**, submit an essay in which you nominate yourself or a hero from your local community and explain in 500 words why you or your hero should be recognized as a vital part of helping to serve the needs of those infected and affected by HIV. An independent panel of judges will select the heroes.

The five winners will be honored during a dinner in Chicago in November 2011 to coincide with the United States Conference on AIDS (USCA); have their stories be part of a documentary film; and receive an all-expenses-paid trip to New York City in early 2012 for a red carpet screening event for the documentary.

Atripla, a prescription medication from Bristol-Myers Squibb, may be used alone as a complete regimen (one pill, once a day) or with other medicines to treat HIV-1 infection in adults.

**On-line entries must be received by September 2, 2011. You may also download the form on-line and submit by mail to:** 5 Years, 5 Heroes Contest, Dept. 7666, PO Box 5011, Stacy, MN 55079-5011. For more information, log on to www.5years5heroes.com.

**The Normal Tonys**

The Broadway revival of *The Normal Heart*, an AIDS drama by Larry Kramer, took home multiple Tony Awards on June 12. The AIDS drama took home the Tony for Best Revival of a Play, Ellen Barkin won Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Role in a Play, and John Benjamin Hickey won Best Performance by an Actor in a Featured Role in a Play. The production runs through July 10.

*The Normal Heart* cast includes (seated on floor) Patrick Breen, Richard Topol; (second row) Ellen Barkin, Wayne Alan Wilcox, Joe Mantello, Mark Harelik; (back row) Luke Macfarlane, Lee Pace, John Benjamin Hickey, Jim Parsons.