



SPEAK UP DETROIT!



U.S. POSITIVE WOMEN'S NETWORK (PWN) DETROIT CHAPTER

DECEMBER 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: **Nicole Seguin**, victoryoverhiv@yahoo.com

Website: www.pwn-usa.org

Press Kit: www.pwn-usa.org/media/press-kit

U.S. Positive Women's Network,
PWN, a project of WORLD
449 15th Street, Suite 303
Oakland, CA 94612
510-986-0340 phone
510-986-0341 fax
www.pwn-usa.org

HEAR US NOW! MAKE US A PRIORITY, WOMEN COUNT!

U.S. Positive Women's Network Advocates to Count HIV+ Women in on World AIDS Day 2011

November 21, 2011 Detroit, Mi — New biomedical research that may herald an end to the HIV pandemic is the hallmark of 2011, yet HIV remains a leading cause of death for Black American women. Yet for women, the promise of science's advances may ring hollow. Women have less access to HIV prevention tools and HIV-positive women are less likely to reap the benefits of these new advances. In fact, research shows that women are more likely to get sick and die faster due to poverty, stigma, and logistical barriers to accessing health care.

The HIV pandemic is a human rights crisis, say advocates. Disproportionately impacting women of color, low-income women and women in the Southern and Northeastern U.S., many women living with HIV suffer from gender-based violence, stigma and discrimination, reproductive rights violations, and lack of employment opportunities. Nationally, over half of women living with HIV are not in medical care, and here in Michigan 22% of those living with HIV are women and 17% of those women are black women.

The economic crisis has had grave consequences for women living with HIV. Nationally and locally, several organizations providing essential services to HIV-positive women have closed their doors in the past year or cut back on programs. As the U.S. navigates a volatile election year, women-focused services have become a political football. The result? Though women comprise over 27% of HIV cases in the U.S., women are rapidly becoming invisible in HIV funding, programs, services, leadership and data.

Women living with HIV demand to be counted. All women living with HIV matter, and therefore have a right to live a healthy and quality life, free from stigma and discrimination. Women living with HIV, including transgender women, account for almost a third of the HIV epidemic in the U.S., yet programs, services and funding for HIV-positive women are disappearing. We demand that women be counted in HIV planning, services, data, budgets, and leadership to achieve high-quality health care that upholds our rights. We as women living with HIV stand in sisterhood and solidarity to make this happen. Count Us In!

On World AIDS Day, December 1st, 2011, U.S. Positive Women's Network is launching Count Us In!, a national campaign focused on ensuring that women living with and vulnerable to HIV receive affordable, culturally-competent, non-heterosexist, and age-appropriate women-centered care that upholds our human rights! PWN will be holding local Count Us In! events across the country, including here in Michigan. You can attend the World AIDS day event on December 1st in Detroit to show your support and learn more about how you can help those living in Michigan with HIV. Go to: <http://www.worldaidsdaydetroit.com/> for more information on this event. Can We count on you to support us? Stay tuned!

U.S. Positive Women's Network (PWN) is a project of WORLD (Women Organized to Respond to Life-threatening Disease) in Oakland, CA. We are a national membership body of women living with HIV and our allies that exists to strengthen the strategic power of all women living with HIV in the United States. We believe in self-determination, solidarity and sisterhood. Everyday we inspire, inform and mobilize women living with HIV to advocate for changes that improve our lives and uphold our rights. Get on our e-mail/ mailing list by contacting Sonia Rastogi, sbrastogi@womenhiv.org, (510) 986-0340 ext. 317.

MAKE WOMEN COUNT!

This year on World AIDS Day we focus on ways we can end AIDS together. With so much new research on the horizon, a cure may be something we will see in our lifetime.

There are still many injustices for HIV-positive women that need to be addressed. I have been HIV-positive for six years and was diagnosed on my 30th birthday. I thought my life was over and that I was going to die. It took me over six months to get into care and another year to start medications. Unfortunately in Detroit, we do not have a women-centered agency to address the specific needs of women living with HIV. HIV-positive women are more likely to drop out of care and are slow to engage in care because we are caregivers ourselves. We often put the needs of others first and ourselves last. We often suffer from domestic violence. We suffer in silence, afraid to disclose, for fear of stigma and discrimination. We are economically challenged because of lack of employment opportunities. In Michigan, we account for 23% of the HIV population, yet we do not have access to gender based medical services, adequate housing, child care or funding for psychosocial support.

After seeing so much suffering, with women like myself, I decided to try and make a difference. I decided not to live in silence anymore. It's time for us to come together and demand change!

The theme of the upcoming International AIDS 2012 conference is 'Turning the Tide Together'. We need to come together as a community and fight for the end of AIDS together.

We need our faith-based community to step up to the plate and talk about HIV in their churches. We need Detroit government, especially Mayor Bing, to put forth more efforts; collaborating with planning and prevention of HIV services in our community. We need more women infected and affected to join forces and stand up and demand that we are counted in the plan, the services, the data, the budgets, and LEADERSHIP!

Join the U.S. Positive Women's Network and shout with us "HEAR US NOW! MAKE US A PRIORITY! WOMEN COUNT!" I am a woman living with HIV, can I count on you? ❧



STACIA COTTRELL, NICOLE SEGUIN AND AMARI AT AIDS ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN YOUTH AND FAMILIES VOICES ADVOCACY DAY ON THE HILL!

UPCOMING EVENTS

International AIDS Conference
July 22-27, 2012
Washington DC



XIX INTERNATIONAL AIDS
CONFERENCE JULY 22 - 27
WASHINGTON DC USA

<http://www.aids2012.org>

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
March 10, 2012



National Women and Girls
HIV/AIDS Awareness Day
March 10

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/nwghaad>

THANK YOU TO OUR NEWSLETTER SPONSOR



DETROIT
LEGAL SERVICES
— Social Security Advocates —

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE — <http://detlegalservices.com>

313/673-5472

Get Involved with the PWN!

1. Fill out your information below!

ALL OF YOUR INFORMATION REMAINS CONFIDENTIAL

NAME _____

ORGANIZATION / AFFILIATION (if applicable) _____

POSITION (if applicable) _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (circle one: mobile / work / home) _____

E-MAIL _____

2. Check all that apply

- ☐ Join the PWN mailing list: receive updates about PWN's work, plans and upcoming opportunities.
- ☐ Update your existing information.

- ☐ Invest in the PWN: We need you to be a part of the PWN's work to strengthen the collective power of women to advocate for change in the U.S.! Your investment will help develop leadership among HIV-positive women nationally, build our capacity for collective action, and support local and regional organizing. Your support is deeply appreciated!

Annual membership

- ☐ Supporter \$10 - \$99
- ☐ Sponsor \$100 - \$199
- ☐ Partner \$1000

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Make checks payable to:
WORLD-Positive Women's Network

3. Mail this form and your investment, if applicable, to:
414 13th Street, 2nd floor, Oakland CA 94612

CONTACT PWN

414 13th Street, 2nd floor, Oakland CA 94612
Phone 510/986-0340 — FAX 510/986-0341