

Contacts:  
Michael Kaplan  
Executive Director  
Cell: 202.236.1396

Cascade AIDS Project



Michael Sorensen, MPA  
Development Director  
Cell: 503.756.2314



**LOVE TAKES COURAGE**  
**SW 4TH & PINE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Love Takes Courage**

**A public awareness campaign promoting acceptance and Pivot, a space for men into men**

June 27, 2011 – Portland, OR – Cascade AIDS Project, in collaboration with Garbero Photography and Clear Channel Outdoor, launched “Love Takes Courage,” a campaign to help combat stigma, normalize images of gay affection and to gently respond to the recent gay-bashing at the east end of the Hawthorne Bridge in SE Portland. There are 17 billboards in place around the Portland Metro area, one of which is located at SE 12<sup>th</sup> and Hawthorne.

“In the Portland area, if you estimate 10% of the population is same-sex attracted, there are more than 120,000 members of the LGBT community, many of whom are in relationships,” said Michael Kaplan, Executive Director of Cascade AIDS Project. “The right to love and show appropriate public affection should be available to everyone. The idea that some try to deny the right to love through intimidation and violence is unacceptable. At CAP, we actively promote positive relationships that express healthy and safe behaviors. When the LGBT community is shunned or suppressed through violence, every one of us—gay and straight—suffers. Our campaign, Love Takes Courage, shows men in loving embraces, similar to those we see every day in public among heterosexuals. The intention of this campaign is to help combat the stigma and invisibility same sex couples are confronted with in today’s society.”

The billboards also promote Pivot, a space dedicated to the physical, personal, and social health of gay/bi/trans and all men into men. At Pivot, we offer a variety of programming that is both social and educational in nature, a drop in space, and STD/HIV testing and prevention education.

CAP staff and select representatives are available for interviews to discuss the campaign and our work at Pivot.

## ***About Cascade AIDS Project***

Incorporated in 1985, Cascade AIDS Project (CAP) is the oldest and largest AIDS Service Organization in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Our mission is ***to prevent HIV infections, support and empower people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS, and eliminate HIV/AIDS-related stigma.***

With a staff of 50, and a volunteer corps of over 700 individuals providing more than 21,000 hours of service each year, CAP manages a diverse array of programs and an annual budget of \$4.6 million. Fifteen percent of CAP's staff are individuals living with HIV, 25% identify from communities of color, and 30% are bilingual. Our programs serve the broad and diverse set of communities impacted by HIV, from community-specific programs focused on teens, Latinos, the gay community, individuals and families living with HIV, to the thousands of individuals throughout the state who seek education through the Oregon AIDS/STD hotline each year. A committed 18-member volunteer Board of Directors provides strategic guidance and oversight to ensure CAP accomplishes its mission and continues to operate with integrity and transparency.  
[www.cascadeaids.org](http://www.cascadeaids.org).

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