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## **10,000 area walkers to Take a Stand! at AIDS Walk Portland**

PORTLAND, OR (October 4, 2008) – **AIDS Walk Portland**, a 5K walk in support of Cascade AIDS Project (CAP), gets underway at 8:30 a.m. Sunday morning, October 12, 2008, starting and ending at Pioneer Courthouse Square in downtown Portland.

More than 10,000 walkers are expected to participate in the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual event to raise critical funds as well as awareness needed for CAP's HIV/AIDS services, public education, and prevention and outreach efforts to youth and adults most at risk for contracting HIV. Walkers also honor those living with HIV/AIDS and remember those lost to the disease.

AIDS Walk Portland urges participants to **Take a Stand!** and leads the effort for greater activism in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The first step is for everyone to be tested. HIV testing information will be available for the second year on the Square.

Speakers at the morning event will include **Senators Gordon Smith and Ron Wyden, Mayor-elect Sam Adams**, and CAP's new **Executive Director Michael Kaplan** – making his first community-wide debut. Key issues to be addressed by the speakers include the Early Treatment of HIV Act, sponsored by Senators Smith and Clinton and the adopted Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) regarding human sexuality education, and where we are as a community with HIV/AIDS today.

Other beneficiaries of the funds raised by AIDS Walk Portland include Our House of Portland/Tod's Corner/Esther's Pantry, Unity Project of Oregon (formerly Brother to Brother), Quest Center for Integrative Health Services, and OHSU Partnership Project. This year attendees are encouraged to bring canned goods for Esther's Pantry – providing food to those living with HIV/AIDS. Esther's Pantry has served thousand of people over its 18+ year history. Food barrels will be provided.

In addition, focused components of advocacy, i.e., protecting and advancing the legal, service and human rights of people with HIV/AIDS, and education about HIV/AIDS locally, nationally, and globally will be available to all. Walkers will receive an action list of *10 things I Can Do*, that can be immediately acted upon, including registering to vote, writing to political leaders, volunteering and getting tested. The *Bus Project* will be present to register voters on the spot.

A special *AIDS Walk VIP Breakfast* sponsored by Hotel Monaco Portland will host community leaders and top fundraisers. Attendees will include: **Mayor Tom Potter, Secretary of State, Bill Bradbury, Senator Suzanne Bonamici, Commissioner Nick Fish, Representatives Tina Kotek and Speaker of the House, Jeff Merkley, Commissioners Lisa Naito and Maria Rojo de Steffey and Chair Ted Wheeler.**

Since its incorporation in 1986, CAP's AIDS Walk has raised more than \$3.75 million. CAP is grateful to AIDS Walk Portland's sponsors and donors: The Standard, Hotel Vintage Plaza, Red Star, Pazzo, Hotel Monaco Portland, KINK fm, Knowledge Learning Corporation, AutoMart, Wells Fargo, PGE, NIKETOWN, New Seasons Market, Tiffany & Co., Portland Monthly, Portland Spaces and many others.

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## Facts about Cascade AIDS Project (CAP) 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual AIDS Walk

- Where:** Pioneer Courthouse Square  
Downtown, Portland, OR
- When:** 8:30 a.m. to noon, Sunday, October 12, 2008
- What:** A 5K fundraising walk and rally benefiting CAP to support its efforts to provide HIV/AIDS services, public education, prevention, advocacy, and outreach to those most at risk.
- Why:** It has been 26 years since the Centers for Disease Control identified the first case of AIDS in the United States. It is estimated that nearly half the people carrying HIV don't know they are. While right now there is no cure, only treatment, for the AIDS virus, it can be prevented through education, awareness, and precautionary methods. In Oregon, 6,500 cases have been reported through December 2007, with an average of 300 new cases reported each year.
- Major Sponsors:** Knowledge Learning Corporation, The Standard, Kimpton Hotel Group; Hotel Monaco, Red Star, Hotel Vintage Plaza, Pazzo, Wells Fargo Bank, KINK FM, AutoMart, NIKETOWN

### About Cascade AIDS Project

Founded in 1983 with two staff and a budget of less than \$100,000, CAP has remained Oregon's leading and largest AIDS service organization for a quarter-century. CAP provides HIV supportive housing and care services, youth and family programming, prevention services, community education, and leadership in public policy and advocacy.

Cascade AIDS Project's mission is to lead efforts to **prevent** new HIV infections, **care** for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS, **educate** communities to eliminate stigma and shame, and **advocate** for immediate action in combating the pandemic.

In the last year CAP delivered HIV/AIDS education and prevention services to 18,307 people; coordinated wrap-around support services for 3,253 men, women, and children affected by and infected with HIV/AIDS; and provided direct housing and housing-related services to 575 individuals and families with HIV/AIDS. CAP has an annual budget of \$4.2 million, relying on individual donors, foundations, corporations, government contracts, and the proceeds from two annual events: **AIDS Walk Portland** and the **Annual Art Evening & Auction** (April 18, 2009).

CAP has 45 full- and part-time staff. Crucially important to CAP's success, 737 volunteers donated 19,960 hours valued at \$528,843 during the last year, the equivalent of about ten full-time employees. A number of programs benefit from CAP-trained and -mentored volunteer peer educators, and volunteers support all our programs and work in every department. CAP has a committed 14-member volunteer Board of Directors who supplies oversight and guidance to ensure CAP accomplishes its mission and continues to operate with integrity and transparency. For more information, go to [www.cascadeaids.org](http://www.cascadeaids.org).

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