

PPMET AND THE HIV VACCINE RESEARCH PROGRAM: PARTNERING FOR A BETTER WORLD

PPMET is partnering again this year with the HIV Vaccine Trials Unit (HVTU) at Vanderbilt University to raise awareness about HIV vaccine research programs. Vanderbilt is one of 12 sites in the United States that conducts research in search of a preventive HIV vaccine. PPMET's relationship with the HVTU started informally several years ago, with a staff member volunteering to take part in a trial, and another serving on the Community Advisory Board. For a second year, PPMET is the recipient of a grant from the National Institutes of Allergies and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) to fund activities that help spread the word about the trials and the need for volunteers in the Nashville area. PPMET will incorporate Vaccine messages into our educational and outreach activities, specifically focusing on minority communities and women.

This unique partnership enhances the mission of Planned Parenthood in three ways:

1. **Prevention:** Planned Parenthood has a long tradition of providing prevention services — from avoiding unplanned pregnancy to preventing STD/STIs through safer sex practices.
2. **Solutions:** When we "go upstream" to focus on wide-reaching solutions, we potentially save many times over in time, money, and effort spent on treatment. We envision a world where HIV vaccination is part of the routine battery of childhood vaccinations: a world where HIV has gone the way of smallpox and polio.
3. **Partnering:** Planned Parenthood is proud to join forces with others to effect change in the lives of individuals and the community. We look forward to the day when we can look back on this partnership as having played a part in winning the battle against HIV.

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**We're More
Than You Think.**

FROM THE CEO

It's been twenty-five years since the virus that causes AIDS was first identified by medical researchers. After initial optimism that a cure or vaccine would be found in as little as two years, we now live in a world where HIV/AIDS has been a daily reality for many people for a quarter of a century. On this anniversary, it seems right that we pause for a moment and take stock of where we are.

According to UNAIDS, the United Nations program on HIV/AIDS, here is where we stand:

WORLDWIDE:

- Over 42 million people are living with HIV/AIDS.
- Over 22 million people have died of AIDS.
- 74% of those living with HIV/AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa.
- There are 14,000 new infections every day or approximately 5 million each year.
- 95% of those infections occur in the developing world.
- Half of the new infections each year occur among people ages 15 to 24.
- 9 out of 10 people carrying the virus have never been tested.

UNITED STATES:

- An estimated 1 million people are living with HIV in the United States.
- There are approximately 40,000 new infections each year.
- 54% of new infections occur among African-Americans.
- 75% of new infections in women are heterosexually transmitted.
- Half of new infections each year occur in people 25 years or younger.
- 25 % of those infected do not know it.

These are staggering statistics. Have we become complacent about the epidemic? Are we willing to accept HIV/AIDS as a manageable condition? Or are we ready to fight the virus like an epidemic that threatens the well-being of millions of people?

At PPMET, we are prepared to fight and dream of a day when it no longer threatens anyone, anywhere in the world. To that end, we continue our relationship with the HIV Vaccine Trials Program being conducted at Vanderbilt University, one of twelve sites in the country that is working to discover a preventive vaccine for the virus. As you know, our work is a public awareness campaign that educates people about the trials program. We hope our efforts will produce volunteers who are willing to participate.

In addition, we provide HIV testing at our health centers. Using the OraQuick testing method, a test result can be provided in as little as twenty minutes. With rapid results, people are more likely to get tested, find out their status, and avoid risky behavior in the future or get the necessary treatment that will allow them to continue to lead a productive life. **On Tuesday, June 27, National HIV testing day, PPMET is proud to be providing HIV testing to anyone at both of our health centers free of charge.**

Despite our efforts, we realize there is so much more to be done to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS. What can you do to help?

Here are some suggestions:

1. Get tested yourself and encourage your family and friends to get tested as well.
2. Contact your representatives in Washington and demand that the United States fully fund efforts to combat the spread of the virus worldwide. That means funding programs that are culturally sensitive and that do not limit funding to those that only promote abstinence.
3. Make a contribution to PPMET to make sure that we are able to continue providing HIV tests at the lowest cost possible (for instance, a contribution of \$100 will provide a test to four at-risk teens).

In the face of these statistics, it seems like we are up against an insurmountable hurdle. With continued determination, we will defeat this terrible epidemic worldwide.

I hope that you will join PPMET in fighting HIV/AIDS by making a personal commitment to end this epidemic.



Jeff Teague
President and CEO

Jeff Teague

THE CURRENT REALITY: HIV/AIDS IN TENNESSEE

The Tennessee Department of Health's HIV/AIDS statistics are sobering. There have been close to 19,200 cases of HIV/AIDS in Tennessee since reporting began in 1982. As of June 2005, there were 6,400 Tennesseans living with HIV/AIDS.

Of the 1,050 new cases of HIV/AIDS reported in Tennessee in 2004:

- 28% were women: 71% of those women were African American, 24% White, and 3% Hispanic/Latina.
- 59% were African American (67% men, 33% women)
- 61% were between the ages of 25 and 44, and 16% were between the ages of 15 and 24.
- 52% were exposed through male-to-male sex or injection drug use, and 22% through heterosexual sex.

WHAT IS A PREVENTIVE HIV VACCINE?

A preventive HIV vaccine is a substance that teaches the body's immune system to recognize and protect itself against HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Preventive HIV vaccines currently being tested in humans are made from man-made materials that cannot cause HIV infection. Currently, there is no vaccine to prevent HIV infection.

The long-term goal is to develop a preventive HIV vaccine that is 100 percent effective, protecting everyone from infection. However, even if a preventive HIV vaccine only protects some people, it could still have a major impact on controlling the worldwide HIV/AIDS epidemic.

There are numerous safe and effective vaccines currently used to prevent other diseases. Vaccines have been used successfully against many

life-threatening diseases, such as smallpox, measles and polio.

With the help of those behind the science, much progress has been made toward developing a safe and effective preventive HIV vaccine. Currently, there are more than 20 HIV vaccine candidates in various stages of testing. Yet, there is still no vaccine. All Americans, especially at-risk populations such as communities of color and those who are sexually active, need to learn more about HIV vaccine research and be a part of making an HIV vaccine a reality.

The search for a preventive HIV vaccine offers everyone the hope for a future world without HIV/AIDS. When combined with HIV/AIDS prevention efforts, treatment and care, a preventive HIV vaccine could play an important role in better controlling or ending the AIDS pandemic.

FACTS

- Currently, there is no HIV vaccine available.
- HIV vaccines being tested in humans DO NOT contain the HIV virus; therefore, the vaccines CANNOT cause HIV infection.
- Individuals who volunteer for an HIV preventive vaccine trial must be HIV negative.
- The best long-term hope for controlling the AIDS pandemic is the development of safe, effective and affordable HIV preventive vaccines.
- In order for an HIV preventive vaccine to work for all people, diverse individuals must participate in clinical trials.
- A comprehensive approach to controlling the AIDS pandemic includes prevention strategies, care and treatment improvements, and HIV vaccine research.

WHY PLANNED PARENTHOOD?

Josh Barnes, Community Educator Vanderbilt HIV Vaccine Program

Among the wars, political unrest and natural disasters that shape our current worldview, what *hasn't* happened in the twenty-first century is foremost in my mind. On May 18, 1997, President Clinton promised the world a safe, effective preventive HIV vaccine within a decade. As the community educator for the Vanderbilt HIV Vaccine Research Program, I know that there will still not be a vaccine in 2007; ten years after that promise.

I have worked with HIV/AIDS for nearly 14 years - I know this plague. From the time that a youth leader at a local church was permitted to wear a t-shirt into my high-school that read, "Raid Kills Bugs Dead. AIDS Kills Fags Dead," to the days when it was fashionable to wear a red-ribbon, to the present day when it appears easier to relegate the disease to the banks of Africa's distant shores - I've been there.

Despite our best efforts in creating systems of behavior change and the development of new treatments, approximately 5 million new infections occur annually. Globally, this virus is the murderer of women and children. In the United States, AIDS is the number one cause of death among African-American men. African-American women comprise

about 70% of all new infections in American women. Gay men represent the majority of those living with AIDS, but young heterosexuals are quickly catching up. AIDS has always been the disease of the disenfranchised, the poor, the stigmatized, the hated, and the discriminated against.

Nine years after President Clinton's proclamation, I am glad that Planned Parenthood of Middle and East Tennessee is among our strongest allies in the journey to find a safe, preventive HIV vaccine. So, why partner with Planned Parenthood? That is the most frequent question I have been asked since our two programs entered into our formal collaboration last year.

It would be easy for me to answer that question by quoting the list of startling statistics that demonstrate HIV's impact on women, girls, and children. However, the vision of a



Josh at an event at PPMET's Nashville Clinic

WHY PLANNED PARENTHOOD? (cont'd)

successful partnership between our two programs goes deeper than the obvious need to support our shared client population. Planned Parenthood's long-standing grassroots community education, patient care programs, international support of comprehensive sexual healthcare, and women's rights create the perfect opportunity to provide on-going education, community-involved ethical research, and future access to an effective vaccine. I have no doubt that the world will one day have a safe, effective, preventive HIV vaccine. Planned Parenthood's continued partnership with our program will mean that when the world has that vaccine, women, girls and other communities that trust Planned Parenthood will have a means to access that vaccine.

The world needs a bridge between the concepts of behavior science, treatment, grassroots advocacy and vaccine research. The collaborative effort between Planned Parenthood and the Vanderbilt HIV Vaccine Research Program is beginning to build that bridge.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP IN TENNESSEE?

- Educate yourself about HIV/AIDS by speaking with an educator at Planned Parenthood, or visit www.aidsinfo.nih.gov for information on prevention, treatment and research.
- Visit www.hivvaccineresearch.com or www.bethegeneration.com and learn more about vaccine research and the studies currently under way in Tennessee. Once you know more, talk to your friends, family and coworkers about HIV/AIDS and let them know that you support HIV vaccine research.

2006 GALA A SUCCESS!

Over 200 supporters joined PPMET at the 6th Annual Gala on May 10, 2006, at Nashville's Loews Vanderbilt Hotel. Guests enjoyed a cocktail reception, silent auction, and gourmet dinner by Executive Chef Elaine Taubin. Loretta J. Ross, National Coordinator of the SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Healthcare Collective, presented an eloquent, moving keynote speech about the ongoing fight for reproductive freedom and the need to recognize the ways in which "choice" must be viewed as a human rights issue.



Keynote speaker Loretta J. Ross

PPMET would like to extend a special thanks to our table hosts, patrons, and sponsors, and especially to our Gala co-chairs: Greg Decker, Liz Slagle Todaro, and Rachel B. Woods!



SAVE THE DATE FOR ARTS & EATS 2006

Don't forget to join us in Knoxville on October 20th, 2006, for Arts & Eats, East Tennessee's premier taste, music, and arts event. This always-popular event features hundreds of amazing auction items together with an enjoyable cocktail buffet and musical entertainment. Held at the Rothchild Catering and Conference Center, Arts & Eats is one of East Tennessee's best gatherings. To purchase tickets, donate an item, or volunteer, please call Jeanna Emert at 615-345-0952.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR AWARDS PRESENTED AT PPMET'S 2006 GALA

The Family Life Educator of the Year Award, established in 1992, recognizes educators who offer family life and human sexuality education in an exemplary manner. Criteria for selection include creativity, use of a variety of resources, and an emphasis on the values of responsibility, respect, and healthy decision-making.

This year's first place winner is Hillsboro High School Ecology teacher Wesley Roberts.

During his 12 years of teaching, Mr. Roberts has successfully integrated the topic of sexuality by weaving the topic into daily sessions into his ecology curriculum. In his classroom, Mr. Roberts is able to link global issues, such as overpopulation, with the every



Wesley Roberts, 2006 Family Life Educator of the Year

day decisions that his students make. This way, each student is invited to see how their actions affect larger world issues. One of his students mused "... the information he shares goes far beyond the classroom and influences healthy decisions."

Angela Hubbard, Lifetime Wellness teacher at Hume Fogg Academic High School, was honored as second place winner. Ms. Hubbard has been a very good source of support, providing balanced and useful information for her students. As one student put it, "She has been very instrumental in equipping me with the knowledge and skills for when I am faced with tough decisions in life."

Mr. Roberts and Ms. Hubbard received cash awards from the Joni Werthan and Patricia Werthan Uhlmann Generations Fund during Planned Parenthood of Middle and East Tennessee's Gala on May 10th.