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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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\$750,000 Grant Will Reduce HIV Among Portland's High-Risk Youth

Cascade AIDS Project, Outside In, and Multnomah County's African American AIDS Awareness Action Alliance collaborate to use new media for HIV prevention education

PORTLAND, OR (November 2, 2009) – A joint effort between **Cascade AIDS Project (CAP)**, **Outside In** and the **African American AIDS Awareness Action Alliance (A6)** was awarded \$750,000 over three years to bring HIV prevention and education to Portland's at-risk youth. The grant, one of ten awarded nationally by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Minority Health, will fund **Curbing HIV/AIDS Transmission Among High Risk Minority Youth and Adolescents (CHAT-PDX)**, a program fusing peer education with new media to engage Portland's at-risk, minority youth.

Almost a third of Oregonians with HIV/AIDS contracted HIV when they were under the age of 30. Among youth, minorities, those living in foster homes, disadvantaged neighborhoods, the corrections system, or on the streets are at the highest risk of contracting HIV. Yet they are also the least likely to benefit from sexuality education in school.

“Basically, we’re creating a youth movement to stop the spread of HIV using the methods youth are experts in. Youth culture, social networking, story telling, internet outreach and communication—young people use these everyday to connect. CHAT-PDX will give high-risk youth the information, encouragement, and tools they need to share HIV prevention information the ways they know best,” says Michael Anderson-Nathe, Cascade AIDS Project’s Director of Prevention and Education.

Zarod Rominski, Outside In’s Associate Executive Director says, “Homeless youth are highly vulnerable to all sorts of diseases, including HIV. The CHAT-PDX program will allow Outside In to engage youth in Guerilla Theater – a dynamic peer education program whereby youth reach out to their social circle with information on how to prevent HIV.”

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About Cascade AIDS Project (CAP)

Cascade AIDS Project is the oldest and largest community-based provider of HIV services, including housing, education, and advocacy in Oregon and Southwest Washington. CAP'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. Overall, last year CAP provided HIV/AIDS education and prevention services to 16,040 people and coordinated wrap-around support services for 2,502 people affected and infected with HIV/AIDS. In addition, 735 people gave 19,960 hours of their time to help CAP achieve its mission.

For more information about CAP, go to www.cascadeaids.org.

About Outside In

Since 1968, Outside In has served low-income adults and homeless youth. Its programs include a community health clinic and programs to help homeless youth find housing and transition to becoming independent, secure adults. Outside In's approach is to meet youth where they are and to share with them services proven successful. Eighty percent of the youth who graduate from Outside In's transitional housing program exit to safe living situations.

For more information about Outside In, go to www.outsidein.org.

About African American AIDS Action Awareness Alliance (A6)

A6 is a coalition of several community-based organizations, the Portland Chapter of The LINKS, Inc., Multnomah County Health Department, Oregon Department of Health & Services (DHS) HIV/STD Program and community members to increase awareness about the impact of the HIV/AIDS disparity among the Portland African American community. Through innovative initiatives, targeted education, providing resources, erasing stigma, changing community norms, and HIV testing, A6 engages and empowers community members.

For more information about A6, please contact Ronnie Meyers, 503.988.3030, ext 25677.

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