



APICHA Honored for Its Service to Asian and Pacific Islander Women in New York City

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Rutsuko Nakajima

Direct line: (646) 884-5385

Email: rnakajima@apicha.org

New York, NY (September 22, 2011) –The Asian Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS Inc. (APICHA) is among the seven honorees who will receive the WE SPEAK (Women Empowered Support Protect Educate Advocate and Know) Awards from the Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition (YWCHAC). APICHA's Chief Executive Officer Therese R. Rodriguez will receive the award on behalf of the organization. The event will be held on October 5 at 6 p.m. at The Prince George Ballroom (15 East 27th Street, New York, NY).

YWCHAC's mission addresses HIV and the structural factors impacting the lives of young women of color 13-24 years old, by fostering their organizational and advocacy skills to make changes in their community. Hosted by Demetria Lucas, Relationship Editor for Essence magazine, the first annual WE SPEAK Awards, Voices: Past, Present, Future, recognizes the advocacy efforts of individuals and organizations that push forward awareness, treatment, and prevention of HIV/AIDS among young women of color.

"APICHA has been the voice of A&PI women in the fight against HIV/AIDS," says Claire Simon, co-founder of YWCHAC. Ms. Simon points to APICHA's long history of providing HIV and sexual health education to A&PI women. In 1992, APICHA was the first HIV organization in the country to establish a program targeting A&PI women. Today it provides support and education to A&PI women – especially recent immigrants, survivors of violence and sex workers – to help them make informed decisions about their well-being and sexual health. Specifically, it provides one-on-one peer counseling, group workshops as well as free HIV testing and affordable



Chlamydia and Gonorrhea screening. Over 550 women, 65% of whom are A&PI from 15 ethnic groups, including Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean and Asian Indian received HIV and other STD tests in 2011.

Ms. Rodriguez lauds YWCHAC for the recognition. "HIV/AIDS has been and continues to be a taboo subject in the Asian and Pacific Islander communities. APICHA's Women's Program has played a significant role in APICHA's struggle to stop HIV/AIDS in our communities. YWCHAC's awards serves as a reminder that there is much more that needs to get done. "

New York City remains one of the epicenters of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Although new HIV diagnoses among A&PIs are small when compared with other race/ethnicities in New York City, the numbers have been fluctuating in recent years. Also, data showing delayed access to care is a point of concern. Stigma, discrimination, limited English proficiency and lack of insurance are among the barriers to accessing HIV services. New immigrants from countries with very little, or no prevention education, are also put at risk for HIV when they engage in unprotected sex and other risky behaviors upon arriving in New York City.

The other honorees are Urooj Arshad, Associate Director, Racial/Ethnic Disparities and Social Justice Advocate for Youth; Caressa Cameron, Miss America 2010; Community Resource Exchange; Tracie M. Gardner, Director of NYS Policy & Coordinator of Women's Initiative to Stop HIV/AIDS of New York, Legal Action Center; Ana Oliveria, President & CEO, The New York Women's Foundation, and Tracy Reese, President, T.R. Designs, Inc.

For more information about this event, visit: wespeakawards.com

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APICHA

Founded in 1989, Asian & Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS Inc. (APICHA) provides comprehensive primary care and other medical services, including mental health, STD and Hepatitis and supportive services targeted to Asians and Pacific Islanders, the LGBT community and individuals living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Over the last twenty-one years, APICHA has shown a considerable growth from a grassroots HIV prevention-focused organization to a patient-centered medical home.



In 2010, the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) awarded APICHA Medical Services Level 3 recognition as a Patient-Centered Medical Home, the highest level of recognition.

In 2011, APICHA served over 2,600 patients, including a majority of people of color, LGBTQ and low income individuals in New York City. About a half of APICHA's patients identify themselves as A&PIs from over 20 ethnic groups, including Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, Asian Indian, Vietnamese, Thai, or Indonesians. APICHA has been a pan-Asian organization with multilingual/multicultural staff fluent in 17 languages with 24 fulltime staff capable of speaking one or more Asian languages.

For more information: www.apicha.org