

**November 26, 2018**

## **Events to acknowledge those affected by HIV/AIDS**

MOBILE, Alabama — In recognition of those who have passed, been infected or affected by Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), the HIV Prevention and Care Network Group has planned several events to mark the 30<sup>th</sup> annual World AIDS Day.

Along with the Mobile County Health Department, the network is comprised of Franklin Primary Health Center, USA Children's & Women's Specialty Clinic and AIDS Alabama South.

The first occasion will be in Downtown Mobile at Cathedral Square at 12:30 p.m. on Friday, November 30. The theme this year is "Know Your Status." Proclamations observing the day will be presented by local officials, while LeFlore Magnet High School plus Chastang and Chickasaw middle schools are scheduled to have students from their FOCUS Programs attend. FOCUS promotes school and community partnerships for the reduction of HIV transmission and adolescent risk behaviors. In case of inclement weather, the ceremony will move to the Newburn Health Center at 248 Cox Street.

Officials with the Retirement Systems of Alabama have announced that the RSA buildings in Mobile and Montgomery will be illuminated in red to recognize World AIDS Day.

Next on the schedule is the seventh annual "Scarlet Event," which will also be at Cathedral Square on Friday, December 14, beginning at 6 p.m. This free gathering will offer an evening of music, art and vital health information. The Scarlet Event is the second part of World AIDS Day, celebrating life for the ones still here laughing, loving and living.

According to the United Nations, HIV/AIDS infects 5,000 new individuals per day. There are 36.9 million people living with HIV who will need access to treatment in order to stay healthy and prevent the spread of HIV to others. Millions of people affected by HIV/AIDS do not have adequate access to housing or healthcare.

"Know Your Status" events are taking place as many people are not aware that they have HIV. Statistics from [www.hiv.gov](http://www.hiv.gov) report nearly 1.1 million people in the United States are living with HIV infection, and almost one in seven do not know they are infected.

Getting tested is the first step to finding out if a person has HIV. If a person has contracted HIV, getting medical care and taking medicines regularly helps them to live a longer and healthier life. It also lowers the chances of passing HIV on to others.

For more information on the local events, contact Diane Glass, HIV Mobile District Manager, at 251-690-8167, or Tyrome Tover, a Peer Mentor for MCHD, at 251-690-8170.