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UC San Diego Sponsors Annual Women's Conference on HIV/AIDS

March 10 Conference Honors National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

In observance of National Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, the UC San Diego AIDS Research Institute (ARI) and Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) are sponsors of "A Woman's Voice/Una Voz de Mujer," San Diego's annual women's HIV/AIDS conference.

The event will take place on Saturday, March 10 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront, and is presented by the CARE Partnership, a collaboration of San Diego-area HIV/AIDS service providers and community members.

"A Woman's Voice/Una Voz de Mujer" is free to women living with HIV/AIDS and \$50 for all others. It is the only local conference focusing on HIV-positive women and their families, reaching more than 200 women with medical updates, educational workshops, and presentations specific to women and HIV/AIDS.

"We are proud to continue our sponsorship of 'A Woman's Voice,'" said Douglas D. Richman, MD, director of the ARI and CFAR. "By supporting this nurturing and stigma-free environment, we believe that essential conversations can begin, testing strategies can be improved, and the ratio of HIV-positive women who know their status and are in excellent care will be increased. "

Community member Acintia Wright, who was diagnosed with HIV in 1995, attended the conference in the past and plans on attending again this year.

"What I like most about the conference is seeing the people who have come through this journey and can still smile about life," said Wright. "It's inspiring to see the collaboration of agencies with booths of information all around the conference. I love the educational workshops that are held throughout the day, and the service we receive is so uplifting."

AIDS is now the leading cause of death among African-American women ages 25 to 44 and the fifth leading cause of death for all women in this age group. For more information, including registration information, call 619-702-4186.

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