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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Southern AIDS Living Quilt Posts 100<sup>th</sup> Video Patch During National Women's Health Week**

Video features HHS Deputy Director of the Office on Women's Health

Wednesday, May 13, 2009 — The Southern AIDS Living Quilt ([www.livingquilt.org](http://www.livingquilt.org)), a unique web project that collects and shares video stories of women on the front lines of the fight against HIV/AIDS, today announced that it has posted its 100<sup>th</sup> patch, featuring Frances Ashe-Goins, Deputy Director of the Office on Women's Health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The milestone comes as the nation recognizes National Women's Health Week.

In her video, Ms. Ashe-Goins, a registered nurse with a master's degree in public health education, urges women to "know your status; it's not a big thing," adding that all it takes is "a quick swab, and you can find out your results. Once you have that, it's like a deep breath, because you have clarity and you have knowledge." Ms. Ashe-Goins notes that all women should have an HIV test as part of their routine annual checkup. Her video can be viewed by clicking here: <http://tiny.cc/8OByN>

"We are honored to have Ms. Ashe-Goins add her voice to the Living Quilt, particularly during National Women's Health Week," said Patrick Packer, Executive Director of the Southern AIDS Coalition. "She, like so many others on the Quilt, is a leader in the effort to raise awareness of the impact of HIV and AIDS on women. Ms. Ashe-Goins' video underscores the importance of making HIV testing a routine part of preventative health care. It is appropriate, that during a week focusing on women's health, that Ms. Ashe-Goins urges women to know their HIV status."

National Women's Health Week began on Mother's Day and will be celebrated until May 16. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services initiative encourages women to take simple steps for a longer, healthier, and happier life. According to the program's website ([www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov)), communities, businesses, government, health organizations, and other groups work together to educate women about steps they can take to improve their physical and mental health and lower their risks of certain diseases.

The Centers for Disease Control estimates that one in five Americans do not know that they are infected with HIV/AIDS. The Living Quilt shares the personal stories of women living with HIV/AIDS and underscores the critical importance of making HIV screening a routine part of medical care in order to ensure earlier diagnosis and prevent the spread of the disease.

The Living Quilt provides links to valuable resources and fact sheets about the epidemic to empower those directly impacted to make informed healthcare decisions and to help others understand the power in knowing their HIV status. Just as important, the women on the Quilt also remind us that there are individual faces behind the numbers and statistics of those living with HIV and AIDS.

For more information, visit us online at [www.livingquilt.org](http://www.livingquilt.org)

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