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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Living Quilt Marks National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**

Monday, February 2, 2009—The Southern AIDS Living Quilt, a unique project that collects and shares video content of women on the front lines of HIV/AIDS, today announced that it will share its message of HIV education and empowerment at events this week in Columbia, South Carolina and Washington, D.C. As part of the Living Quilt's recognition of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, The Southern AIDS Living Quilt project will highlight the impact of HIV/AIDS in the South, particularly women of color, and will provide critical information about routine testing and the importance of early diagnosis.

On Thursday, February 4 representatives from the Southern AIDS Living Quilt will discuss the importance of routine testing and prevention and the role of the faith community in combating HIV/AIDS, at the "Faith Leaders Stepping into Action" Conference in Columbia, South Carolina. The event is sponsored by South Carolina's Project F.A.I.T.H.

The Living Quilt will also be featured Thursday at the Fourth Annual Hip-Hop and Higher Education Symposium at Howard University in Washington, D.C. Representatives from the Southern AIDS Living Quilt will reach an estimated 1,000 college students with messages of HIV/AIDS prevention, personal responsibility and HIV testing.

"The Southern AIDS Living Quilt creates an opportunity to help change the way we view the face of HIV/AIDS. As the faces of the Quilt show, anyone could be at risk. Routine testing and early diagnosis are critical to help prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS in America", said Patrick Packer Executive Director Southern AIDS Living Quilt. "The Southern AIDS Living Quilt is on the move to encourage, empower, and educate southern communities across the nation."

The Center for Disease Control estimates that one in five does not know that they are infected with HIV/AIDS. The Southern AIDS Living Quilt has responded to the dire need to increase HIV/AIDS awareness. The shared stories on the [www.livingquilt.org](http://www.livingquilt.org) are inspirational, eye opening, and most importantly, they encourage women to get tested and know their status.

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