

For Immediate Release
October 17, 2005

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2006 Advocates of the Year Announced

Awards recognize outstanding local leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS

CHICAGO -- The Advocates of the Year Awards Selection Committee has chosen the following individuals to receive top honors at the Advocates of the Year Awards on March 22, 2006:

Outstanding Health Care Advocate

Dr. Ram Yogev

Director, Section of Pediatric, Adolescent and Maternal HIV Infection

For more than 20 years, Dr. Ram Yogev has dedicated his efforts to preventing HIV infection among newborns and adolescents, and to providing outstanding medical care to children with HIV and their mothers. He was the driving force behind the establishment of the Section of Pediatric, Adolescent and Maternal HIV Infection at Children's Memorial Hospital in 1987 and the development of a clinic in Uptown specializing in adolescent care. An impassioned advocate for policies that improve the lives of people with HIV, Dr. Yogev has been the recipient of numerous awards for his many years of service and advocacy. In 2004, Dr. Yogev was appointed to the President's Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA).

Outstanding Community Advocate

State Representative Constance Howard

Illinois State Representative, 34th District

Elected to the Illinois General Assembly in 1994, State Representative Connie Howard has become one of its most outspoken leaders on the HIV epidemic and its impact on African-Americans. She conceived, sponsored and helped pass the African-American HIV/AIDS Response Act, a first-in-the-nation bill that responds directly to the spread of HIV in the African-American community. She was instrumental in defeating a bill that would have required mandatory HIV testing of Illinois inmates (a bill that was widely opposed by community advocates and public health experts) and has been visionary in her leadership of the HIV/AIDS Institute at Chicago State University.

Outstanding Client Advocate

Catherine Christeller

Executive Director, Chicago Women's AIDS Project

When Cathy Christeller first conceived of a non-medical, community organization that would provide HIV prevention, care and advocacy services to women, there was still widespread ignorance about the impact of the epidemic on women. Under Cathy's leadership, the Chicago Women's AIDS Project fought to challenge that invisibility, empowering women to advocate for fair public policy, educate decision makers and demand optimal care and other services. Started in 1988, CWAP has developed unique programs for women across the city, offering support groups, one-to-one mental health therapy, advocacy at clinic visits and housing, food and transportation support. Cathy has also put resources into peer leadership development, mentoring women and clients to become advocates and leaders.

Outstanding Philanthropic Advocate

Season of Concern

Season of Concern is the Chicago-area theatre community's response to the AIDS epidemic — a fundraising effort that raises money to support programs that provide direct-care services to those in the theatre community who are living with HIV. Since 1988, Season of Concern has raised needed funds through generous gifts from theatre artists, staff, boards, corporations and audiences. Funded programs provide financial support, hospice care, meals, medications, legal assistance and a variety of other services for people in theatre who are living with HIV throughout the Midwest.

Presented by the **AIDS Legal Council of Chicago** since 1995, the Advocates of the Year Awards recognize the contributions of local men and women who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in service, care and advocacy for people living with HIV/AIDS. ALCC issued a call for public nominations in August 2005 and asked a panel of previous award recipients to review submissions and vote on a slate of finalists. The Selection Committee, co-chaired by 2003 Advocates winners Maurice Chapman and State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz, made the selection at its meeting on October 6th. Independently, the AIDS Legal Council also selected Mr. & Mrs. Kimball & Karen Anderson to receive the ALCC 2006 Leadership Award for years of service to the Council's mission.