

**For immediate Release
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**AIDS Legal Council of Chicago to Honor Advocates of the Year, Dr. William Johnson
and Bethsheba Johnson**

Chicago, IL -- The AIDS Legal Council of Chicago, a non-for-profit agency which provides legal services to individuals living with HIV in the Chicago metropolitan area, will be honoring the work of Dr. William Johnson and Bethsheba Johnson, APRN BC at its annual Advocates of the Year Awards on Thursday, June 6.

Citing their extraordinary work on behalf of people living with HIV/AIDS in Chicago's Southside neighborhoods, the ALCC will honor this husband and wife team with this year's Provider Advocates Award. "We are truly inspired by the hard work and compassion that Dr. William Johnson and Bethsheba Johnson have demonstrated in providing medical care to people struggling with HIV at the Luck Care Center," said Ann Hilton Fisher, Executive Director of the AIDS Legal Council. "They are on the front lines every day, working in some of the hardest hit neighborhoods of our city. More people deserve to know about their efforts and we are extremely proud to count them among our honorees this year."

The couple first came to the Luck Care Center in Roseland following the sudden death in 1999 of its founder, Sherry Luck, at age 44. Faced with the probability of the center's closing, the Johnsons immediately stepped in, working to continue Dr. Luck's tradition of providing needed medical attention to the African-American community affected by HIV in this area. "Underserved communities in Chicago, especially African-Americans, have been disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS," continued Ann Fisher. "Women and children are especially vulnerable, with 71% of all pediatric cases occurring among African-American children and 79% of all female AIDS cases occurring among African-American women. The exceptional work of individuals like Dr. William Johnson and Bethsheba Johnson is having a real impact on the every day lives of the men, women and children struggling with HIV."

In addition to their valuable work at the Luck Care Center, the couple has remained very active in other AIDS-related endeavors. Bethsheba Johnson is currently the Illinois Program Director of the Midwest AIDS Training and Education Center, and a member of the National Association of Nurses in AIDS Care. In 1999, she was also the recipient of the Recognition of Community Service Award of the National Black Nurses Association, Chicago Chapter. Dr. William Johnson is currently President of the Cook County Physicians Association and co-chair of the South Side HIV Providers Forum. Their work has also led both of them to South Africa where they have witnessed first-hand the devastation caused by the epidemic on the African continent.

The Advocates of the Year Award Ceremony will be held on Thursday, June 6th at Sidetrack located at 3349 N. Halsted.