



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 20, 2008

Contact: Art Brooks, President and CEO, Arizona Broadcasters Association,
602-252-4833

Carol Poore, President and CEO, Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS,
602-451-6769

PHOENIX (November 20, 2008) – The Arizona Broadcasters Association (ABA) and Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS announced today a forum for members of the broadcast media, *Breaking the Silence: A Broadcasters Forum and Reflection on the past 20+ Years of the HIV Epidemic*.

The forum will be held on Wednesday December 3 from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the new studios of Eight/KAET in downtown Phoenix. The forum caps a week focusing on the long-term nature of HIV/AIDS as a chronic disease, following World AIDS Day two days earlier.

More than a dozen local and national HIV/AIDS experts will provide Arizona media with a look at the changing face of HIV/AIDS in Arizona, including startling trends in youth, elderly, and ethnic populations. The panel will address HIV as a domestic and long-term issue within the United States.

“With meth use leading to risky behavior, youth infections on the rise in all ethnic communities, and new trends such as internet dating and risky behaviors at assisted living situations, we thought it was important for the media to be aware of the shocking new facts about HIV/AIDS,” said Art Brooks, President and CEO of ABA.

According to the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), there are 12,000 people infected with HIV/AIDS in Arizona, and another 4,000 who may be infected but unaware of their status. Among these people, Black and Hispanic women show the largest trend of new infections, with Black women being seven times more likely than women in any other ethnic group to become infected. The changing nature of the disease is evident by the following statistics:

- Hispanics form approximately 28 percent of the population in Arizona but 20 percent of the HIV/AIDS cases.
- Blacks, while constituting less than four percent of the state’s population, represent 12 percent of the HIV/AIDS cases.
- Native Americans represent five percent of those infected in Arizona.
- Men having sex with other men of all races represent 70 percent of HIV/AIDS cases.
- Intravenous drug users represent 15 percent of HIV/AIDS cases.

-more-

“Despite the fact that people are living longer with HIV due to research and discovery leading to improved medications, it’s imperative that today’s youth understand that the devastating consequences of HIV infection are lifelong – one cannot take a pill and make HIV go away,” noted Carol Poore, president and CEO of Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS. “Our goal is to create an opportunity for Arizona broadcasters to help educate the public about the myths and facts of this disease so that teens and at-risk populations can protect themselves.”

Panelists addressing trends in HIV/AIDS include Dr. Flavio Marsiglias, ASU Director of Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center, Carol Poore, President and CEO of Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS, Judy Norton, Chief of the Office of HIV, STD, and Hepatitis C Services, ADHS; Debby Elliot, Vice President of Client Services, Area Agency Director of HIV Care Directions, John D. Musil, Pharm.D., President and CEO of The Apothecary Shops, as well as representatives from the Centers for Disease Control, National Minority AIDS, and National Association of People with AIDS.

###

About the Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS

Phoenix-based Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS is the only HIV/AIDS service organization in the United States that combines research, prevention/education and wellness services under one roof. The agency is a leading HIV/AIDS research and resource center in Arizona serving 70 percent of the state’s population impact by and at-risk for HIV/AIDS, and providing outreach to more than 30,000 at-risk men, women and youth annually. The Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS’ history of partnership with pharmaceutical companies for clinical trial research has helped bring 26 of 28 FDA approved drugs to the market to treat this destructive disease. Visit the Web site www.swhiv.org for more information, or call 602-307-5330.

About the Arizona Broadcasters Association

The Arizona Broadcasters Association (ABA) is a 501c(6) non-profit corporation founded in 1952. Membership includes radio stations, television stations and associate members. The ABA is managed by a full time President/CEO and governed by a 10-member board of directors. The ABA is a member of the National Alliance of State Broadcast Associations and supports the programs of the National Association of Broadcasters. The ABA’s mission is to promote cooperation and understanding among its members, to foster and promote the development of the art of radio and television broadcasting, to encourage and promote the customs and practices which will be for the best interests of the public and the radio and television broadcasting industry, to protect its members in every lawful and proper manner from injuries and unjust exactions and, to act as a regional contact with the National Association of Broadcasters.