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ACADEMY OF FRIENDS SELECTS ELEVEN BAY AREA HIV/AIDS ORGANIZATIONS AS 2010 GALA BENEFICIARIES

Celebrates 30 Years of Raising Awareness, Donating Funds, and Encouraging Volunteerism for HIV/AIDS Agencies throughout the Bay Area

SAN FRANCISCO – Sept. 22, 2009 – Academy of Friends proudly announces its 2009-2010 fundraising for 11 Bay Area HIV/AIDS service organizations. Known for its annual Academy Awards® Night Charity Gala and monthly social events, AOF raised more than \$7.5 million benefitting over 70 organizations serving more than 250,000 people over the last 30 years.

“This is an important milestone for us. And while today’s economy has provided challenges, we’re still celebrating and expect to exceed our fundraising goals to help people living with HIV/AIDS,” said Doug Piper, Board Chair of Academy of Friends. “These organizations are critical to our communities, providing HIV/AIDS prevention, counseling, health, and nutritional services to a diversity of ethnic, gender and age groups in the fight to stop the spread and curb the impact of HIV.”

The 2009-2010 beneficiary organizations serve a number of Bay Area counties, from Sonoma to San Mateo and San Francisco to Alameda. They include:

AIDS Legal Referral Panel is dedicated to providing free and low-cost legal assistance and education on virtually any civil matter to persons living with HIV/AIDS. AOF funds will specifically fund ALRP’s insurance attorney, helping clients get the health care they need and the disability income on which they rely.

Asian & Pacific Islander Wellness Center has a mission to educate, support, empower and advocate for Asian and Pacific Islander communities—particularly APIs living with or at risk for HIV/AIDS. AOF funds will be used to support HIV prevention and direct HIV care services for significantly underserved APIs in San Francisco, Alameda and San Mateo Counties.

Face to Face has been addressing the challenges presented by the HIV epidemic in Sonoma County since 1983. With AOF’s support, they will continue prevention education to the community and comprehensive services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Huckleberry Youth Programs educates, inspires, and supports underserved youth in San Francisco and Marin to develop healthy life choices, to maximize their potential, and to realize their dreams. AOF will provide funds for their peer led HIV/AIDS curriculum which reached more than 1,200 youth over the last year.

Maitri is the only residential California facility offering comprehensive end-of-life care exclusively to those living with AIDS. As longtime supporters of Maitri, AOF helps the organization meet the changing needs of Californians living with AIDS in a dignified and caring manner.

Positive Resource Center is the only place in San Francisco for people living with or at risk for HIV/AIDS to get comprehensive benefits counseling and employment services. This is the second year of a two-year commitment AOF has made to the organization.

Project Inform operates the only telephone hotline in the country that connects HIV-positive people to other knowledgeable HIV-positive people to help them understand how to manage and cope with HIV disease. This year, AOF will fund a bi-lingual HIV treatment education component of the hotline.

San Francisco LGBT Community Center provides space and programs that welcome the LGBT community and its allies; including HIV prevention education services. This year, AOF is supporting the San Francisco Newcomers' Assistance Program, offering assistance and prevention services to gay and bisexual men who recently moved to the San Francisco Bay Area.

Shanti offers a continuum of services designed to meet the practical and emotional support needs of people living with HIV/AIDS. AOF's financial support will help train 100 new volunteers to be non-judgmental advocates for medically underserved and disenfranchised people in our community.

Tenderloin Health works to improve the health of the Tenderloin's homeless, poor and most vulnerable residents—people who are at the greatest risk of acquiring HIV/AIDS. AOF's support will help the organization serve those who have difficulty obtaining services elsewhere.

Women's HIV Program at UCSF provides comprehensive health and social services to over 200 women, transgenders and families living with HIV/AIDS in the San Francisco Bay Area. It was among the first programs in the country dedicated to HIV+ women and is a national model of care for this vulnerable population. AOF's support is especially needed for the program's transgender client population.

"We honor our 2009-2010 beneficiary partners and are grateful to our individual and corporate donors for their undying passion and commitment to AOF," says Mike Horak, Executive Director of Academy of Friends.

About Academy of Friends

Since 1980, Academy of Friends annually produces the world's premier Academy Awards® Night Charity Gala as the centerpiece of its efforts to raise funds, award donations, and encourage volunteerism that benefit a diverse set of HIV/AIDS direct care and prevention education agencies in the San Francisco Bay Area. Since its founding, AOF has given over \$7 million to 61 HIV/AIDS service organizations and will continue its work until the pandemic has passed. The 30th Annual Gala will be held on March 7, 2010, at Ft. Mason Festival Pavilion, San Francisco.

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