


Announcing the screening of

who will speak for me

A film that breaks the silence about HIV/AIDS among people of African descent in the faith community and encourages healthy dialogue about one of the most important issues facing our world today.

Presented by the African Americans Reach and Teach Health Ministry (AARTH) and The UW Northwest AIDS Education and Training Center (NWAETC) Minority AIDS Initiative.

Produced and Directed by John Gordon Hill and Tom Furtwangler. Narrated by Vivian Phillips.



For more information visit www.aarth.org or call 206.850.2070

Made possible by the support of several community co-sponsors

HIV/AIDS Documentary: *Who Will Speak for Me*

African Americans Reach and Teach Health (AARTH) Ministry and the Northwest AIDS Education and Training Center (NWAETC) at the University of Washington announces "Who Will Speak for Me". This moving documentary is produced and directed by John Gordon Hill of Hills Film in association with Cascade Health Communication Group, Co-Produced by Mary Diggs-Hobson and narrated by Vivian Phillips.

The 30 minute documentary takes a glimpse at the impact HIV/AIDS among African Americans & African/Caribbean immigrants in the Pacific Northwest and is one of several local actions being taken to help break the silence about HIV/AIDS and facilitate discussions about the devastating affects of the epidemic.

Who Will Speak for Me is an education and awareness tool that can be used for generating discussions, raising awareness and motivating the community to learn more about HIV/AIDS. The video features HIV-positive African American and African/Caribbean immigrant voices from the Pacific Northwest. The video focuses on personal stories that humanize the HIV epidemic in this region to help inform the Black community of the devastation of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and to move the community towards actions for creating healthy dialogues about this issue. The video addresses the role that churches and religious organizations can play in supporting HIV-positive community

members, creating a safe space for dialogue about HIV, and leading in the dissemination of accurate, factual information about the disease.

Who Will Speak for Me features conversations with King County Executive Ron Sims, Dr. Maxine Hayes, Washington State Health Officer, Dr. George Counts, Senior Advisor on Special Populations HIV Vaccine Trials Network at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Reverend Amos Landry, Pastor of Peoples Institutional Baptist Church, Reverend Martin Ndegwa, Covenant Missions International and representatives from the African/Caribbean communities and personal stories shared by individuals living positive.

Socially and culturally HIV/AIDS is one of the least talked about subjects among African Americans & African/Caribbean immigrants largely due to the stigma associated with the disease in addition to religious beliefs and practices. Much of the silence is a result of fear and a lack of knowledge. Silence and a lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS have contributed to a steady increase in the infection rate of the virus and deaths. National and community assessments have indicated that factual and culturally relevant education is the key to increasing awareness and the faith community can play an important role in helping to bring about change and action.

It is important to note that after almost 30 years since the first cases of AIDS started appearing in the United States, African American communities are still wrestling with disproportionately high numbers of HIV infections and deaths due to AIDS. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Blacks represent more than half of all new infections nationally, though they only represent about 13% of the population. Just as startling, Black women represent more than 64% of new infections nationally. African American teens represent 15% of U.S. teenagers, ages 13-19 account for almost 61% of new AIDS cases reported among teens in 2001. In King County, Blacks represent about 15% (1 in 7) of AIDS cases while they only represent about 5% (1 in 20) of the population. Globally, Sub-Saharan Africa has over 70% of the world's HIV/AIDS population and Haiti is reported to have the highest prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS.

Please contact AARTH at 206-850-2070 if you wish more information about how you can support this event through volunteering and donations.

Reverend Mary A. Diggs-Hobson
Executive Director, AARTH