



**AIDS walk  
run PHILLY**  
SUNDAY OCTOBER 21, 2012



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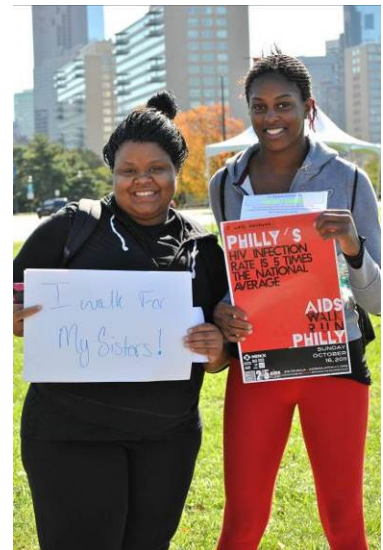
## **AIDS WALK PHILLY & AIDS RUN PHILLY TO RAISE FUNDS, AWARENESS 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Event Continues the Fight for HIV/AIDS in Philadelphia Region**

**PHILADELPHIA – September 19, 2012–** For 26 years, AIDS Walk Philly has been raising funds for HIV/AIDS service organizations in the Greater Philadelphia Region, and on **Sunday, October 21, 2012, the 26th Annual AIDS Walk Philly & AIDS Run Philly** presented by Merck continues the fight. Every 9½ minutes, someone becomes infected with HIV in the U.S. One out of five people infected with HIV in the U.S. don't know it. Philadelphians can make a difference in the fight against HIV and AIDS by participating in AIDS Walk Philly, which will bring together nearly 15,000 people to raise money for HIV prevention education, public awareness, and HIV care services here in the Greater Philadelphia region.



Walk and run beginning at the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Run along the certified 5K route on Martin Luther King Drive at 8am. Walk along the 12K route, beginning at the Art Museum Steps at 9am and returning on Martin Luther King Drive. Right in our own backyard, thirty thousand of our friends, family, and neighbors live with HIV, a condition for which they are often judged and misunderstood. In 15 years, the rate of infection has not decreased.

The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual AIDS Walk Philly is also a time to help the region remember why HIV/AIDS is still an important issue. **Robb Reichard, Executive Director of AIDS Fund**, explains that part of the mission of the Walk is to give Philadelphians a better understanding of current HIV/AIDS facts. “As a nation and as a city, these are statistics that we should find alarming. We want to educate the entire community about the epidemic and its current state, reminding them to get tested and learn their HIV status.”



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As part of the 2012 campaign, AIDS Fund is encouraging walkers and runners to share the reasons they participate and raise funds. The **#WhyIWalk Campaign** is running on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, where individuals can share their stories. Briana Morgan of Bryn Mawr posted on her Facebook page, “#WhyIRun: Because 1 in 4 Americans still think they can contract HIV from this...” while holding a glass of water.

To emphasize the long history of HIV/AIDS, AIDS Fund has created a large photographic and text timeline of over 30 years of the epidemic. The **"1981-Until It's Over..." AIDS Timeline** will be on display at AIDS Walk Philly.

The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual AIDS Walk Philly presented by Merck is also sponsored by Wells Fargo, CVS CarePlus, Frito-Lay, NBC10, PGN, and City Paper. Participants can pick up registration information at any Center City Starbucks or register online at [aidswalkphilly.org](http://aidswalkphilly.org). In 1987, volunteers from Philadelphia's lesbian and gay community center decided to organize a walk-a-thon to support area AIDS agencies and raise public awareness about the disease. The Delaware Valley's first AIDS Walk had about 300 participants and raised \$33,000. Since then, thousands of fundraising walkers have gathered each year to participate in the region's largest annual HIV/AIDS public awareness and fundraising event. Over \$15 million has been raised for HIV/AIDS public awareness, prevention and care services for people living with HIV disease. The money raised at AIDS Walk Philly goes toward HIV prevention education, public awareness, and HIV care services right here in the greater Philadelphia region to 30 partner organizations.

The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual AIDS Walk Philly will again have 25 panels from the **AIDS Memorial Quilt** on display. A powerful tool for raising awareness about HIV/AIDS, the Quilt is the largest ongoing community arts project in the world. Each of the more than 44,000 colorful panels that make up the Quilt memorializes the life of a person lost to AIDS. **Free rapid HIV tests** will be provided on-site at AIDS Walk Philly. Find out your status in only 20 minutes.

Individuals can take action in the fight against AIDS by getting sponsors, making a donation, and joining with thousands of others on October 21 for AIDS Walk Philly & AIDS Run Philly. These efforts will support direct care services, prevention and education, counseling and testing, medical care, and public awareness efforts right here in this community. Register online and get additional information at [www.aidswalkphilly.org](http://www.aidswalkphilly.org) or call 215-731-WALK.

**About AIDS Fund** – The AIDS Fund grant program supports 30 partner organizations in the Philadelphia Region that provide AIDS and HIV-related services, education, and prevention including increasing public awareness of HIV/AIDS issues. AIDS Fund is the producer of AIDS Walk Philly, GayBINGO, and other fundraising and awareness programs throughout the year. Follow AIDS Fund on Facebook and Twitter: [www.facebook.com/AIDSWalkPhilly](http://www.facebook.com/AIDSWalkPhilly), [www.facebook.com/gaybingophilly](http://www.facebook.com/gaybingophilly), @AIDSWalkPhilly, or @GayBINGOPhilly.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** High-resolution photos available upon request by emailing [cari@reliefcomm.com](mailto:cari@reliefcomm.com). View #whyiwalk videos at: [http://youtu.be/9xivui-D\\_Sc](http://youtu.be/9xivui-D_Sc) and <http://youtu.be/71KW8DaJtgA>.