



## White House Unveils Historic National HIV/AIDS Strategy

Asheville, NC (July 22, 2010) - On July 13th the White House unveiled the nation's first [National HIV/AIDS Strategy](#). Widely recognized as an historic first step, the Western North Carolina AIDS Project hopes that this will spark a renewed effort in addressing the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The National HIV/AIDS Strategy was developed by the Obama administration with the support of Federal and Community Partners and the input of thousands of Americans. The Strategy has three primary goals: reducing the number of new infections; increasing access to care and optimizing health outcomes for people living with HIV; and reducing HIV-related health disparities. "Our hope is that by bringing national attention to these issues, the President's strategy will encourage the local community to support us in these efforts here in Western North Carolina," says WNCAP's Executive Director Ron Curran.

The National HIV/AIDS Strategy's vision is that "The United States will become a place where new HIV infections are rare and when they do occur, every person, regardless of age, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or socio-economic circumstance, will have unfettered access to high quality, life-extending care, free from stigma and discrimination."

The Western North Carolina AIDS Project supports the NHAS in recognizing and addressing the effects of stigma and discrimination on the AIDS epidemic. HIV/AIDS stigma deters people from getting tested and knowing their HIV status, which contributes to the spread of the disease. The Centers for Disease Control estimates that one in five people currently living with HIV is not aware of their status. Moreover, people living with HIV and AIDS may not seek proper medical treatment because of stigma. This results in poorer long-term health outcomes and an increase in medical costs for the entire community. It is with these issues in mind that WNCAP continues to promote its "I Need U2 Know" anti-stigma campaign with radio and TV spots and a billboard now in place on Biltmore Avenue.

The award-winning "I Need U2 Know" campaign focuses on ending HIV/AIDS stigma in Western North Carolina. It features a diverse group of local people delivering the message that people living with HIV and AIDS deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. For more information, please go to [wncap.org](http://wncap.org).

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/onap/nhas>  
<http://www.wncap.org/iknow/>