



Multicultural AIDS Coalition, Inc.  
31 Heath Street, Suite 12  
Jamaica Plain, MA02130  
[www.mac-boston.org](http://www.mac-boston.org)

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***For Release***

Contact: Gary K. Daffin (617)238-2401work  
(617)840-8604cell

## **Boston's Two Black HIV/AIDS Service Organizations Merge**

### **February 7<sup>th</sup> Event with Boston Public Health Commission Celebrates National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**

Boston's longest running Black HIV/AIDS service organizations have merged. The **Multicultural AIDS Coalition (MAC)** and **Women of Color AIDS Council (WCAC)** filed Articles of Merger with the Secretary of State in January of this year.

All services at both agencies will continue uninterrupted. The united organization will operate as the Multicultural AIDS Coalition, with WCAC becoming a program of the MAC. All WCAC staff were transitioned to become MAC employees. Four members of the WCAC board will be seated on the MAC board at its next meeting in February. WCAC services will remain headquartered at its Drop-In Center located on Blue Hill Avenue.

"MAC and WCAC have worked closely for nearly two decades. We already had a strong programmatic and administrative collaboration," said Gary K. Daffin, MAC's executive director. "Given the challenging fiscal times for all nonprofit organizations, we want to make sure that the critically important HIV/AIDS prevention and care services that WCAC provides are supported and maintained into the future."

"We have had a successful partnership with the MAC for many years," noted Malkia Kendricks, MSW, MAC's new director of women's services and former executive director at WCAC. "We explored several options and decided that the MAC was the best fit for sustaining and enhancing HIV/AIDS services for Black women in the community."

"The MAC's mission is to mobilize communities of color to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic. To do that, we are committed to offering HIV prevention, counseling, screening and referral services to the parts of the community who experience the greatest burden of the disease," said Paul Glass, President of the MAC Board of Directors.

*More*

In addition to WCAC , other prevention and support services at MAC include: **Men Color Against AIDS (MOCAA)**, which reaches Black gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men – the population most severely affected by HIV in the US; The **Africans for Improved Access (AFIA)** program serves men and women from Sub-Saharan Africa, the region of the world with the highest prevalence of the disease; **Casa Iris**, a Ryan White funded peer support program, assists HIV positive Latinos in maintaining adherence to treatment plans and accessing needed care. The City of Boston funded “**State of Emergency Initiative**” is a wide ranging prevention effort to raise awareness about the disproportionate impact of HIV/AIDS on Black residents. Other initiatives at MAC focus on capacity building and technical assistance, cultural competency training, HIV biomedical prevention research education.

“The addition of WCAC fits perfectly within our mission,” said Daffin. “We have always been impressed with their passion for ensuring that women, primarily Black women, have access to life-saving prevention and treatment services, regardless of social and economic challenges.”

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***Boston Public Health Commission and MAC Co-Host  
National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day***

The MAC/Boston Public Health Commission ‘State of Emergency Initiative’ will mark National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day with a number of activities that will include distributing HIV/AIDS information at MBTA stations, offering free HIV testing at MAC’s offices, and hosting an Open House highlighting HIV/AIDS services available in the community. The events are free and open to the public. Participants at the event will include: **Douglas Brooks**, a member of the President’s Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA); **Michael Curry**, President of the Boston NAACP Chapter; **Rebecca Haag** of AIDS Action Committee; **Rodney Vanderwarker** from the Fenway Institute/Fenway Health; several elected officials, and others.

**National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day**

**Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup>**

**5:30 -8:30pm**

Multicultural AIDS Coalition / 31 Heath Street / Jamaica Plain

MAC’s offices are located near the Jackson Square MBTA station. For more information, call (617) 238-2475.