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African American Office of Gay Concerns (AAOGC) To Launch “Status Is Everything” HIV Testing Campaign

“Status Is Everything” Social Marketing Campaign Targets Young African American Gay Men In Newark

NEWARK, N.J., Oct.27, 2009 – Beginning in January 2010, African American men who have sex with men in the City of Newark will be targeted by an HIV Testing social marketing campaign titled “Status Is Everything” organized by the African American Office of Gay Concerns (AAOGC) based in Newark. “Status Is Everything” aims to encourage African American men, particularly young men who have sex with men, to get tested for HIV and reduce risky behaviors. AAOGC will unveil the “Status Is Everything” brand and outreach components on World AIDS Day, December 1, 2009. Funding for “Status Is Everything” is provided by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services as part of the department’s HIV prevention efforts aimed at high-risk African American men.

“Our focus groups with young African American gay men have shown that “Status Is Everything” must use new media to reach and impact their demographic. We will market the campaign using mobile text messaging, viral videos, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, as well as billboards and palm cards, print and online ads,” adds Gary Paul Wright, Executive Director of AAOGC. AAOGC has retained Newark based multicultural marketing firm, FEMWORKS, to lead the creative and communications plans for the social marketing campaign.

The “Status Is Everything” campaign is designed to provide referrals to partnering local HIV testing centers in Newark that are preferred by young African American gay men and offer confidential and convenient testing services. A testing candidate will be able to receive referral services through their mobile device, online at www.StatusIsEverthing.org, or through the New Jersey hotline 1-866-HIV-CHECK. A thorough evaluation will be conducted by the HIV Prevention Community Planning Support and Development Initiative of Rutgers University.

About African American Office of Gay Concerns (AAOGC)

AAOGC’s mission is to comprehensively serve as a resource for the well-being of Gay men of color, inclusive of, but not limited to the gay, bisexual, transgendered and questioning communities through outreach, education and compassionate care. The African American Office of Gay Concerns is committed to delivering quality HIV/AIDS services to the Gay community in the Newark Area. We provide an array of services focusing on changing individual behavior. This is accomplished through our interaction with our consumers and developing an

understanding of their needs. For more information about AAOGC or Status Is Everything, please call 973-639-0700 or visit www.AAOGC.org.