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AIDS Network and the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin Announce Merger

Organizations' leaders say merger preserves continuity of care and reinforces Wisconsin's national leadership in the fight against AIDS

MADISON and MILWAUKEE, WIS... In order to strengthen Wisconsin's already nationally-renowned response to AIDS, AIDS Network and AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW) are announcing they will merge effective February 1, 2015. Leaders of both organizations state the merger will preserve continuity of care for patients and clients.

"Wisconsin has always been a national leader in the fight against AIDS. Our merger will enhance this leadership position," said ARCW President & Chief Executive Officer Michael Gifford. "By combining the best of our two organizations, we will enhance services, improve clinical outcomes, and generate new financial resources, all of which are critical as we continue on our quest for a world without AIDS."

Gifford will continue to serve as President and Chief Executive Officer of the merged organization, which will operate as the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin (ARCW).

"AIDS Network is proud of the leadership role we provide to combat AIDS in Wisconsin. Joining forces positions us to better serve people at-risk for HIV, our patients and clients, and our communities throughout southern Wisconsin," said AIDS Network Executive Director Dan Guinn. "Our Board has evaluated this wonderful opportunity thoroughly over the past 9 months and fully supports it. The merger assures the continuity of all the services we provide, the opportunity to enhance our programs and the continuation of our hallmark events like the Wisconsin AIDS Ride, the Red Ribbon Affair and Camp Bingo." Upon merger, Guinn will serve as ARCW Vice President of Compliance & General Counsel.

The work of AIDS Network and ARCW in evaluating merger, completing a due diligence report and developing a plan of merger was supported by a grant from the AIDS United Sector Transformation Initiative, made possible by generous cross-industry support from Johnson & Johnson and Bristol-Myers Squibb.

ARCW will continue to build upon existing community partnerships in Madison and southern Wisconsin to provide access to HIV Medical Home care, including medical, mental health and pharmacy services. ARCW will also close its small Madison office and move into the current AIDS Network office in Madison and continue to provide services from the AIDS Network

Beloit office. Once merged, ARCW will provide statewide services through its offices and clinics in Appleton, Beloit, Eau Claire, Green Bay, Kenosha, La Crosse, Madison, Milwaukee, Superior and Wausau.

ARCW projects it will serve 4,000 people with HIV throughout the state annually. Given the anticipated increases in the need of people living with HIV for integrated and comprehensive health care and social services, and the ever-present need for aggressive HIV prevention programs, all current staff of both organizations will have the opportunity to continue employment with the merged organization. Gifford added that it is likely the number of employees will increase in the future.

Both the AIDS Network and the ARCW Boards of Directors voted unanimously early this week to merge the organizations. A newly expanded ARCW Board of Directors will continue to oversee all aspects of the merged organization. Of the seventeen member Board, six will reside in Madison and southern Wisconsin including four members of the AIDS Network Board of Directors who will join the ARCW Board upon merger. Current AIDS Network Board members will assume Board officer and committee chairperson positions on the ARCW Board of Directors.

“There have been tremendous advances made in the fight against AIDS that position us better than ever before to defeat the epidemic,” said Gifford. “Our merger along with stronger and closer relationships with key partners in southern Wisconsin will be critical to achieving that goal.”

AIDS Network and ARCW have notified patients and clients of the merger. Patients and clients seeking information on the merger should contact AIDS Network at 608-252-6540 or ARCW at 414-273-1991.

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ABOUT ARCW

ARCW is home to the ARCW Medical Center – Wisconsin’s largest and fastest growing HIV health care system. Through its integrated medical, dental and mental health clinics, along with its pharmacy and dedicated social services that include food pantries, a legal program, housing support and social work case management, nearly 3,000 HIV patients in Wisconsin receive the health care and social services they need for long-term survival with HIV disease from ARCW.

ARCW is also a leading provider of prevention and testing services targeting people most at-risk for HIV, hepatitis C and sexually transmitted infections, making more than 160,000 contacts per year.

ABOUT AIDS NETWORK

Established in 1985, AIDS Network is the leading provider of HIV/AIDS prevention and care services in southern Wisconsin. AIDS Network prioritizes providing comprehensive, integrated prevention and care services, as well as working with local partners to ensure a strong and proactive community response to the disease.

ABOUT AIDS UNITED

Created by a merger between the National AIDS Fund and AIDS Action in late 2010, AIDS United’s mission is to end the AIDS epidemic in the United States, through strategic grant-making, capacity building, formative research and policy. AIDS United works to ensure access to life-saving HIV/AIDS care and prevention services and to advance sound HIV/AIDS related

policy for U.S. populations and communities most impacted by the epidemic. To date, our strategic grant-making initiatives have directly funded more than \$85.8 million to local communities, and have leveraged more than \$110 million in additional investments for programs that include, but are not limited to, HIV prevention, access to care, capacity building, harm reduction and advocacy.