



THE AFRICAN, AMERICAN, ADVOCACY, SUPPORT-SERVICES & SURVIVAL INSTITUTE, INC.

AMASSI HEALTH & CULTURAL CENTER

PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION OFFICES

160 So. La Brea Ave. * Inglewood, CA 90301 * Ph: 310-419-1969 * Fax 310-419-1960

CHAIR
Charles Hamilton, Esq.

MEMBER EMERITUS
Ollie P. Manago, Esq.

TREASURER
Dr. Cheryl Lee, Ph.D.

SECRETARY
Tomi Abdul Hameed

Masaline Tswago, Esq.

Rev. Clarence Herron

Charles Peters, M. Ed.

Chief Operations Officer
Adrienne Sears, MSW

FOUNDER

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Cleo Manago

AMASSI SERVICES:

- MENTAL HEALTH
- SUBSTANCE ABUSE
- & HIV PREVENTION
- YOUTH PROGRAMS
- REFERRALS
- COALITION BUILDING
- CAPACITY BUILDING
- ENGLISH/MATH TUTORING
- 1800-STOP-HIV HOTLINE
- COMMUNITY & CULTURAL EVENTS
- SUPPORT GROUPS
- COMMUNITY COPY & DIGITAL GRAPHICS CENTER

Web Address
www.amassi.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 28, 2006

Contact: Adrienne Sears
(310) 419-1969

AmASSI Health and Cultural Center & Jenesse Center Hosts *Choose Respect Night* in an Effort to Help Local Adolescents Build Healthy Relationships, Prevent Dating Abuse

Los Angeles, CA— To motivate adolescents to challenge harmful beliefs about dating abuse and take steps to form respectful relationships, the AmASSI Health and Cultural Center and the Jenesse Center will host *Choose Respect Night* during the LA Sparks game at STAPLES Center on Friday, June 30, 2006 at 7:30 pm. The AmASSI Center and the Jenesse Center are local community partners working in collaboration with the Los Angeles Sparks to promote *Choose Respect*, a national public health initiative that was nationally launched by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) in May. LA Sparks three-time Women's National Basketball Association's (WNBA's) All Star player Chamique Holdsclaw is the official spokesperson for this event and Dr. Rita Noonan, behavioral scientist with the CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC) will attend the event. Supporters of the effort also include Mayor Roosevelt Dorn of the City of Inglewood, Dominique Diprima of 102.3 KJLH, Robert Biggs Vice President and Branch Manager of Union Bank of California, and Denise Hunter, First Lady of First AME Church.

According to Cleo Manago, CEO of the AmASSI Health and Cultural Center, "Our *Choose Respect Night* is a great opportunity to encourage positive action on the part of youth in Los Angeles and the surrounding areas to help them discover the power of self-respect and self-esteem. By joining together we can raise awareness locally about the importance of healthy, respectful relationships and help lead adolescents on the path to prevention before they enter unhealthy relationships."

During half-time five young winners of the Creative Expressions Challenges contest will be honored and awarded prizes. The challenges were offered as a means of encouraging youth to describe respect and to define what it means to them. Approximately 500-600 youth will attend the event, along with thousands of LA Sparks fans.

Recent studies report that as early as 8th and 9th grade, one in four students report some form of dating abuse. It can be as subtle as controlling behaviors, or as overt as physical violence.

-MORE-

Page 2

AmASSI & Jenesse Center Host *Choose Respect Night*
to Help Local Adolescents *Build Healthy Relationships and Prevent Dating Abuse*

“What this data tell us is what most adolescents in unhealthy or abusive relationships already know — that abusive relationships hurt both body and mind,” said Cleo Manago. “It can have a negative impact on personal health that lasts a lifetime. With *Choose Respect*, we are helping adolescents learn to give and get respect in all their relationships; making not only an investment in their future, but an investment in Los Angeles for generations to come.”

AmASSI Health and Cultural Center and Jenesse Center activities are in partnership with *Choose Respect*, an initiative to help adolescents, ages 11 to 14, form healthy relationships to prevent dating abuse before it starts. This national effort, launched by the CDC’s National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC), is designed to motivate adolescents to challenge harmful beliefs about dating abuse and take steps to form respectful relationships.

Throughout the summer of 2006, CDC will work with community agencies in ten cities Hartford, Houston, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York City, Phoenix, San Antonio, Topeka and Washington D.C. to bring the message of respect to the nation’s youth. Each *Choose Respect* community will create diverse educational opportunities to motivate adolescents and parents to *Choose Respect* using online games and interactive learning tools; television and radio spots; activity ideas; streaming video clips and clickable quizzes.

For more information on *Choose Respect* go to www.chooserespect.org

###

The **AmASSI Health and Cultural Center** serves the community with culturally affirming services that focus on advocacy, health, well-being, self respect, responsibility, leadership development, HIV/AIDS prevention, diversity, education, critical thinking and other health and human services needs.

The **Jenesse Center** is the oldest domestic violence intervention program in South Central Los Angeles. The Jenesse Center provides victims of domestic violence with a comprehensive, centralized base of support to assist them in addressing their immediate crisis and changing the patterns of their lives.