



*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

October 11, 2015

Contact:

Ben Fordham
AIDS Walk Los Angeles
Phone: 213.201.9255 (WALK)
Email: benf@mzaevents.com

**MAYOR ERIC GARCETTI, DREW CAREY, LEA DELARIA, AND
DANNY PINTAURO JOIN 20,000 AIDS WALK PARTICIPANTS; \$2.38
MILLION RAISED PUSHES CUMULATIVE TOTAL
PAST \$80 MILLION**

**HUGE CROWD BRAVES HIGH TEMPERATURES
AT CALIFORNIA'S LARGEST AIDS FUNDRAISING EVENT**

(Los Angeles, CA, October 11, 2015)—Today's annual AIDS Walk Los Angeles (AWLA) brought a crowd of 20,000 participants who filled the streets of West Hollywood and Los Angeles in support of people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Participants gathered in and around West Hollywood Park for an Opening Ceremony filled with notable figures, music, and inspiring moments.

Since the first event in 1985, walkers have raised funds totaling more than \$80 million for AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA) and more than 20 other important L.A. County AIDS service organizations. These groups provide essential services to thousands of people living with HIV/AIDS, as well as vital HIV prevention work that reaches many more throughout the Southland.

"Today's high temperatures did not stop our supporters from turning out in massive numbers and raising \$2,375,946," said AIDS Walk Founder and Senior Organizer **Craig R. Miller**. "Just as they have since the beginning of the epidemic, this inspiring community continues to manifest the commitment, compassion, and power necessary to end AIDS, regardless of the political, epidemiological, or literal climate. AIDS Walk supporters are anything but fair-weather friends. They tough it out with us year after year, no matter what."

Organizers prepared well for the hot day, providing additional emergency services, extra servings of water, and more relief shuttles to ensure the safety of everyone who walked the 10K route. The Quest Diagnostics-sponsored "Inspiration and Rejuvenation Station" also offered relief for attendees in the form of a 90-foot tented structure erected along the route, complete with Astroturf, misters, and fans.

"We are incredibly thankful for everyone who raised funds, showed up this morning, and braved the heat to do the Walk with us," APLA Chief Executive Officer **Craig E. Thompson** said. "We are at a pivotal moment in the epidemic. The funds raised through the Walk give us an opportunity to really change its arc by ensuring that people living with HIV and AIDS are getting the support and health care they need while now also being able to deliver health care—including HIV testing, STD screening, and PrEP—to HIV-negative individuals in L.A. County. It's a pretty powerful combination that will have a real impact."

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti spoke about the current HIV/AIDS crisis in the city, encouraging everyone to know their status. "We want people to go out there and take advantage of free testing, and to spread the word," he said. The Mayor also noted his support of the trans community, a population that experiences disproportionately high rates of HIV infection. "We need trans equality in this city and in this country and in this world, today, right now, right here," said Mayor Garcetti.

Other elected officials in attendance included: California State Senators **Ricardo Lara, Isadore Hall, and Ben Allen**; California State Assemblymembers **Mike Gipson and Adrin Nazarian**; Los Angeles County Assessor **Jeffrey Prang**; West Hollywood Mayor Pro Tem **Lauren Meister**, who spoke on behalf of the AIDS Walk host city; West Hollywood City Councilmembers **John D'Amico, John Duran, and John Heilman**; L.A. City Councilmember **Paul Koretz**; and L.A. City Controller **Ron Galperin**.

Celebrities in attendance included:, **Drew Carey** (*The Price Is Right*), **Lea DeLaria** (*Orange Is the New Black*), **Kim Johnson & Robert Herjavec** (*Dancing With the Stars*), **Chris Kluwe** (professional NFL football player), **Carson Kressley** (*Dancing With the Stars*), **Our Lady J** (classical pianist, TV writer on *Transparent*, and singer-songwriter), **Danny Pintauro** (actor and HIV/AIDS activist), **Jai Rodriguez** (actor and musician), **Ken Todd & Lisa Vanderpump** (*Vanderpump Rules*), and **Nick Wechsler** (*Revenge*).

The Sposato Brothers sang "In My Life," and **Ashley Brown** (*The Sound of Music* at the Ahmanson Theater) closed the program with a stirring performance of "Climb Every Mountain."

The corporate community continued to show its strong support for the event through team fundraising and corporate sponsorship. Longtime AIDS Walk supporter ABC7 News Anchor **Ellen Leyva** addressed the crowd. ABC7 returned this year as AIDS Walk Los Angeles' television broadcast sponsor.

Also in attendance were representatives from the event's top sponsors and top corporate teams, including Premier Sponsors Quest Diagnostics and Gilead Sciences, Inc.; Grand Sponsors ABC7, the City of West Hollywood, Delta Airlines, Paramount Studios, and Paul Hastings LLP; and Principal Sponsors Albertsons | Vons | Safeway, Macy's, Crescent Heights LLC, Time Warner Cable, Toyota, and Wells Fargo. Time Warner Cable once again provided free WiFi access to walkers along the entire route, allowing them to fundraise and share their experiences via their mobile devices.

For more information, please visit la.aidswalk.net. To connect with the online community on Facebook, simply join the AIDS Walk Los Angeles Facebook Fan Page. To view exclusive video content, visit the AIDS Walk Los Angeles YouTube channel at youtube.com/aidswalkla. To receive instant updates, follow “@AIDSWalkLA” on Twitter.

NOTE FOR MEDIA OUTLETS: To download official press photos, visit:
<http://mzaevents.smugmug.com/AWLA-2015/DOE>

About AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA): APLA provides life-saving services for people living with HIV/AIDS across Los Angeles County, including medical, dental, and behavioral health care, as well as HIV testing, prevention, and education programs. APLA delivers care to over 14,000 people annually and is a leader on policy and legislation that affects the HIV/AIDS and LGBT communities. For more information, please visit apla.org and aplahw.org.

About AIDS Walk Los Angeles: Since 1985, AIDS Walk Los Angeles has raised more than \$79 million for HIV programs and services throughout Los Angeles County, and has grown into one of the largest AIDS fundraising events in the country. In 2014 alone, 25,000 participants, many of whom were members of 1,600 corporate and community teams, raised over \$2.3 million for AIDS Project Los Angeles and 27 other L.A. County AIDS service organizations. For more information, please visit aidswalk.net.

About MZA Events: AIDS Walk Los Angeles was founded in 1985 by Craig R. Miller and his organization of activists, MZA Events. Miller is the AIDS Walk founder and senior organizer and has produced hundreds of public service campaigns and fundraising events, generating more than \$395 million for major AIDS organizations throughout the country. For more information, please visit mzaevents.com.

###