



For immediate release

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WHO CARES? FASHION CARES...

-- AIDS is not over. Unfortunately, it's just beginning for a new generation in Canada --

The threat of HIV and AIDS is real, and an increasing number of men, women and youth are becoming infected with HIV everyday in Canada. It's estimated that there are 56,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in Canada, and almost 30 percent are unaware of their infection. Ontario accounts for 44 per cent of the national total, with Toronto the home to the majority of those living with HIV/AIDS. There is still no cure. But there is hope and support through the work of ACT, The AIDS Committee of Toronto.

About ACT (The AIDS Committee of Toronto)

The AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT) is a community-based, charitable organization that provides support, HIV prevention and education services for people living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS. Since 1983, ACT has provided invaluable support and hands-on practical assistance to thousands living with HIV/AIDS. Through the years, ACT's innovative HIV prevention, education and outreach programs have helped thousands to reduce their risk.

Fashion Cares' contribution to fighting HIV/ AIDS

As a charitable organization, ACT relies on its 1,420 volunteers and is funded by individuals, corporate support and events. Fashion Cares is ACT's single most significant source of funding, with all proceeds from Fashion Cares going directly to ACT. Since its inception in 1986, Fashion Cares has raised \$8 million for ACT.

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ACT at work...

“As the reality of HIV/AIDS in Toronto continues to change, the needs of people living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS become increasingly complicated,” said Lori Lucier, executive director, ACT. “ACT brings essential support and practical assistance to people with HIV/AIDS, and offers emotional support to their loved ones. However, in order to do this, ACT depends on the generosity of our private donors and corporate sponsors to tackle these challenges head on. Fashion Cares provides some of the necessary funds that help ACT support our community partners and help those in need of our services.”

“Some services include helping our clients with transportation to and from medical appointments through our ‘Drives Program’, providing a weekly hot lunch where people with HIV/AIDS can come together for a nutritious meal, sharing information and meeting others in a confidential and supportive environment.” ACT’s newest service, its Case Management program, helps to ensure that clients with the greatest needs are matched with support services both inside and outside of ACT.

A crucial part of ACT’s work is their involvement in HIV/AIDS prevention, working alongside communities at risk for HIV infection to help develop and deliver HIV prevention, education, outreach and community programs. ACT develops information materials on HIV/AIDS for specific communities affected by the epidemic and distributes these materials around the world. ACT also conducts on-going, in-house research and evaluation to ensure its programs are responsive to changing needs, and maintains an up-to-date library of information materials and resources for public use.

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ACT- background information

The AIDS Committee of Toronto (ACT) is a community-based, charitable organization whose mission is to provide support, HIV prevention and education services for people living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS.

ACT provides support and practical services to men, women and youth living with HIV/AIDS, and offers support to their family, friends and partners. ACT works with gay and bisexual men, Portuguese-speaking communities, youth, and women at increased risk for HIV infection to develop and deliver HIV/AIDS information, education and outreach programs. ACT staff and volunteers are dedicated to responding to the changing nature of HIV/AIDS.

-Fashion Cares Makes a Vital Difference in the Fight Against HIV/AIDS In Canada-

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For further information or to speak with an AIDS Committee of Toronto spokesperson, please contact John Maxwell, Director of Communications and Community Education, AIDS Committee of Toronto: 416-340-8484 ext 245 or jmaxwell@actoronto.org

To arrange an interview with a Fashion Cares spokesperson, please contact Paula Waring, Kim Roman (Cornofsky) or Lisa Bednarski at the Fashion Cares Media Line:
Tel: 416-642-7975 Email: fashioncares@rogers.com.