



News Release For Immediate Release

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UCSF Alliance Health Project Celebrates 30 Years of HIV/AIDS Care

San Francisco, March 4, 2014—The **UCSF Alliance Health Project** (AHP), originally the AIDS Health Project, will commemorate 30 years of community service with a gathering at 1930 Market Street on March 21 at 5:00PM.

When the UCSF AIDS Health Project started in the spring of 1984, the goal was to meet the mental health needs of SFGH patients and their loved ones affected by AIDS. It was not long before it became clear that they also needed to help HIV-negative people remain free of infection. In 1985, AHP started the first ever HIV anonymous test sites in San Francisco and has provided HIV counseling, testing ever since.

Recognizing the HIV/AIDS epidemic's devastating psychological impact, AHP was among the first organizations to emphasize mental health and wellness and to provide emotional support, peer support, and therapy to HIV-positive and HIV-negative people, their families and communities. In 2012, AHP became the Alliance Health Project, providing culturally competent lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ)-affirming mental health and substance abuse services in support of the LGBTQ and HIV-affected communities as they construct healthy and meaningful lives.

Now, in their thirtieth year, AHP's services include case management, individual and couples counseling, psychiatry, provider education and training and HIV/AIDS publications. Peer and professionally lead support groups are available for lesbians with disabilities, people coping with trauma, transgender folks, the newly positive, men over 50, and LGBTQ folks coping with sex and sobriety.

In a City that has suffered through too many non-profit organizations forced to close their doors, AHP remains a pillar of the San Francisco network of care.

"We know that the communities we serve experience higher levels of stigma and stress. Too many of our clients are marginalized, uninsured, and under-served, and the result is that they are disproportionately affected by mental illness, substance use, violence, and homelessness," said AHP Director, Lori Thoemmes. "So despite the fact that in 1984, we imagined that AHP would be gone, along with AIDS, within a few years, we now pledge to be here for the next 30 years."

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