



**POSITIVE WOMEN'S NETWORK**  
USA

U.S. Positive Women's Network, a  
project of WORLD  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Press Kit:** [www.pwn-usa.org/media/press-kit](http://www.pwn-usa.org/media/press-kit)

**Hear Us Now! Make Us A Priority, Women Count!**

**U.S. Positive Women's Network Advocates to Count HIV+ Women In on World AIDS Day 2011**

**November 16, 2011, Oakland, CA** – New biomedical research that may herald an end to the HIV pandemic is the hallmark of 2011, yet HIV remains a leading cause of death for Black American women. Yet for women, the promise of science's advances may ring hollow. Women have less access to HIV prevention tools and HIV-positive women are less likely to reap the benefits of these new advances. In fact, research shows that women are more likely to get sick and die faster due to poverty, stigma, and logistical barriers to accessing health care.

The HIV pandemic is a human rights crisis, say advocates. Disproportionately impacting women of color, low-income women and women in the Southern and Northeastern U.S., many women living with HIV suffer from gender-based violence, stigma and discrimination, reproductive rights violations, and lack of employment opportunities. Nationally, over half of women living with HIV are not in medical care.

The economic crisis has had grave consequences for women living with HIV. Nationally and locally, several organizations providing essential services to HIV-positive women have closed their doors in the past year or cut back on programs. As the U.S. navigates a volatile election year, women-focused services have become a political football. The result? Though women comprise over 27% of HIV cases in the U.S., women are rapidly becoming invisible in HIV funding, programs, services, leadership and data.

**Women living with HIV demand to be counted.** All women living with HIV matter, and therefore have a right to live a healthy and quality life, free from stigma and discrimination. Women living with HIV, including transgender women, account for almost a third of the HIV epidemic in the U.S., yet programs, services and funding for HIV-positive women are disappearing. We demand that women be counted in HIV planning, services, data, budgets, and leadership to achieve high-quality health care that upholds our rights. We as women living with HIV stand in sisterhood and solidarity to make this happen. **Count Us In!**

**On World AIDS Day, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011, U.S. Positive Women's Network is launching *Count Us In!***, a national campaign focused on ensuring that women living with and vulnerable to HIV receive affordable, culturally-competent, non-heterosexist, and age-appropriate women-centered care that upholds our human rights! PWN will be holding local *Count Us In!* events across the country, including launching a video series of HIV+ women leaders, and a petition to show your support. Can We Count On You to support us? Stay tuned!

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U.S. Positive Women's Network (PWN) is a project of WORLD (Women Organized to Respond to Life-threatening Disease) in Oakland, CA. We are a national membership body of women living with HIV and our allies that exists to strengthen the strategic power of all women living with HIV in the United States. We believe in self-determination, solidarity and sisterhood. Everyday we inspire, inform and mobilize women living with HIV to advocate for changes that improve our lives and uphold our rights. Get on our e-mail/ mailing list by contacting Sonia Rastogi, [sbrastogi@womenhiv.org](mailto:sbrastogi@womenhiv.org), (510) 986-0340 ext. 317.