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The AIDS Memorial Quilt to Return to Washington, D.C.
The NAMES Project Foundation calls for volunteers and sponsors to ensure display and supporting activities will be a loud, persistent clarion call this summer

ATLANTA – Majestic. Devastating. Moving. The AIDS Memorial Quilt – one of the world’s most powerful symbols of the public’s response to the AIDS epidemic – will return to the nation’s capital this summer for two major programs. Deemed by an act of Congress to be a National Treasure, The Quilt now consists of more than 47,000 panels representing the lives of 94,000 individuals taken by AIDS, sewn by more than 100,000 friends and family members.

The Foundation is calling on the public to join its efforts as it prepares to bring all 54 tons of The Quilt to Washington for a full roster of activities in June and July.

“Science has begun to articulate a new AIDS narrative that says if we test and treat enough people globally, the trajectory of the AIDS epidemic will change and we will see the beginning of the end of AIDS,” said Julie Rhoad, president and CEO of The NAMES Project Foundation. “It’s time to re-double our efforts – join us as volunteers and sponsors and, together, let us call on The Quilt to do what it does best: affirm our humanity, make clear our connections to and responsibility for one another, and garner a new era of support and advocacy for the AIDS cause.”

As Washington hosts the XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012) this summer, The Quilt will “blanket” the national capital region – with sections of the massive tapestry of life displayed on part of the National Mall, in 40+ additional venues throughout Washington area, and prior to AIDS 2012 during the Smithsonian Folklife Festival via “Creativity and Crisis: Unfolding The AIDS Memorial Quilt” – the first Festival program ever to focus exclusively on ways in which community craft and performance have helped educate people and helped them cope with one of the most complex epidemics in modern history. For a listing of all the venues scheduled to display panels of The Quilt this summer, go to www.Quilt2012.org.

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“The Quilt is a connector and catalyst, an ambassador and educator. Bringing every panel of The Quilt back to Washington D.C. provides an amazing opportunity share its power with a largely new audience and in doing so place HIV/AIDS squarely back into the public conscience,” said Rhoad.

The AIDS Memorial Quilt

The Quilt began with a single 3' x 6' foot panel created in San Francisco in 1987. Today, The Quilt is the largest piece of ongoing community art in the world. Its personally sewn panels come from every state in the nation, from every corner of the globe. Sections are continuously on display across the country in schools, churches, community centers, businesses, corporations and a variety of other institutional settings, all with the purpose of making the realities of HIV and AIDS real, human and immediate. To date, more than 15 million people have seen The Quilt at tens of thousands of displays throughout the world.

Volunteers and Sponsorship

The Foundation welcomes the public to volunteer – volunteers are needed for a wide variety of event support this summer for The Quilt. To register as a volunteer, please go to www.Quilt2012.org

Funding for this monumental event is still needed. To donate, please go to www.AIDSquilt.org. Sponsorships are still available. To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please call Julie Rhoad, president & CEO of The NAMES Project Foundation at 404-688-5500.

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To download high-resolution photographic images of The AIDS Memorial Quilt, please go to www.AIDSquilt.org/about/medianewsroom.

Established in 1987, The NAMES Project Foundation, Inc., is the international, non-governmental, 501(c)(3) organization that is the custodian of The AIDS Memorial Quilt and its associated document and media archive. The mission of The NAMES Project Foundation is to preserve, care for and use The AIDS Memorial Quilt to foster healing, advance social justice and inspire action in the age of AIDS and beyond.