



For Immediate Release

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## **22nd ANNUAL U.S. CONFERENCE ON AIDS OPENS IN ORLANDO**

***Conference Brings Together HIV Advocates, Educators, Activists, and Care Providers from Around the U.S.***

**Sept. 6, 2018** - The 22nd annual U.S. Conference on AIDS (USCA), organized by NMAC, opens today, with the theme “Fight Back! Fight HIV!” The conference brings together community leaders and HIV advocates to learn the latest information and build skills to provide effective HIV prevention and treatment services. The conference will run through Sept. 9. For a full program of USCA events, activities, and speakers, visit <http://2018usca.org/>.

Prominent speakers and performers at USCA include Parkland shooting survivor and activist **David Hogg**; Black Lives Matter co-founder **Alicia Garza**; **Abigail Echo-Hawk**, Director of the Urban Indian Health Institute; **Richard Zaldivar**, Executive Director of The Wall Las Memorias Project; **Naina Khanna**, Executive Director of the Positive Women’s Network – USA; legendary disco diva **Thelma Houston**; “RuPaul’s Drag Race” season one contestant **Ongina**; and a cappella drag quartet **The Kinsey Sicks**.

“For this year’s conference, we wanted to focus on the importance of activism in the fight against HIV,” said NMAC Executive Director Paul Kawata. “Activism played such crucial role in the early years of the epidemic, bringing pressure on governments, industry, and society to respond to the epidemic with urgency and compassion. Today, as we face an uncertain political environment, HIV activism is needed more than ever. We hope this conference will re-ignite the kind of passion and action in the HIV community that we saw at the very beginning. If we are truly going to end this epidemic, that kind of commitment is what we will need from everyone.”

USCA is sponsored by Presenting Sponsor Gilead; Premiere Sponsors Merck, ViiV Healthcare, and Janssen; Collaborating Sponsor Walgreen’s; Colleague Sponsor POZ magazine; and Friend Sponsors Avita Pharmacy, EMD Serono, Human Rights Campaign, Broadway Cares-Equity Fights AIDS, FHI360, Elton John AIDS Foundation, Planned Parenthood, the Florida Department of Health, and bioLytical Laboratories.

*NMAC leads with race to urgently fight for health equity and racial justice to end the HIV epidemic in America. Since 1987, NMAC has advanced our mission through a variety of programs and services, including: a public policy education program, national and regional training conferences, a treatment and research program, numerous electronic and print materials, and a website: <http://www.nmac.org/>. NMAC also serves as an association of AIDS service organizations, providing valuable information to community-based organizations, hospitals, clinics, and other groups assisting individuals and families affected by the HIV epidemic.*

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