



PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: **Beth Beck, Director of Health Programs**
1638 R St., NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20009
202.319.7596 x20 202.253.0397 / cell

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

22 June 2006

NYAC WINS PRSA SILVER ANVIL AWARD
You Know Different HIV Youth Testing Campaign
Gains National Recognition for Innovation, Creativity & Results

New York City – The National Youth Advocacy Coalition is the recipient of this year’s prestigious Silver Anvil Award, sponsored by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). The Silver Anvil, which recognizes outstanding achievement in strategic public relations planning and implementation, was presented during the Silver Anvil Awards Evening held earlier this month in New York City. (Images of the campaign are available upon request.)

Working closely with the Metropolitan Group (a national strategic communications firm headquartered in Portland, Oregon), NYAC received the 2006 Silver Anvil Award for the creation and implementation of the *You Know Different* HIV youth testing campaign. NYAC, the nation’s only lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth advocacy organization, received a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to increase the rates of HIV testing and test retrieval among African American LGBTQ youth ages 13-24 by building capacity among local agencies and conducting a public awareness campaign.

During the campaign, youth calls to agencies grew 304%; calls to schedule testing increased 220%; walk-in testing visits jumped 46%; and completed HIV tests grew an unprecedented 120%.

“We are thrilled with these extraordinary results and honored that our community partnerships have earned this level of national recognition,” said Beth Beck, Director of Health Programs at NYAC.

“The response to the *You Know Different* Campaign from young people in our community has been nothing short of astounding,” said Adam Tenner, Executive Director of DC’s Metro TeenAIDS. “This powerful collaboration is making it possible to help more young people take control of their sexual health by taking the first step and getting tested for HIV infection,” Tenner added.

The Silver Anvil, established by the Public Relations Society of America in 1946 to symbolize the forging of public opinion, is annually awarded to organizations that have successfully addressed a contemporary issue with exemplary professional skill, creativity and resourcefulness. The Silver Anvil Awards evaluate the strategic nature of public relations programs assessing key components including research, planning, execution and evaluation.

“The pilot campaign was very successful,” said Dr. Richard P. Keeling of Keeling & Associates, NYAC’s evaluation consultant. “NYAC was clearly able to change the behavior and increase the capacity of youth-serving organizations in ways that in turn changed the behavior of youth.”

“The PRSA Silver Anvil Awards are the highest watermark of success for any public relations practitioner,” said David M. Imre, APR, 2006 PRSA Silver Anvil chair and president, Imre Communications, LLC. “This program contributes to the best practices of our industry.”

###



About the *National Youth Advocacy Coalition (NYAC)*

National Youth Advocacy Coalition (NYAC) (www.nyacyouth.org) is a social justice organization fighting injustice against LGBTQ youth and advocating to ensure their physical and emotional well-being. NYAC is committed to supporting local and national public health efforts, whereby LGBTQ youth of all races, ethnicities, class backgrounds, and gender identities live to their fullest potential. It is the only national organization focused solely on improving the health and well-being of LGBTQ youth. NYAC encourages young people to make the choice to learn their status. For more information about testing for HIV, visit www.hivtest.org or for more information about HIV/AIDS, call the National CDC AIDS Hotline at 1.800.342.AIDS (English), 1.800.344.SIDA (en Espanol), or 1.800.243.7889 (TTY).

About *Metro TeenAIDS*

Early in the AIDS epidemic, physicians, educators, medical experts, and citizens began to recognize the need for more HIV education and support services directed toward young people in the Washington, DC area. To help meet this need, Metro TeenAIDS (MTA) was founded in 1988. MTA continues to be the only community-based organization in the Washington, DC area focused solely on the needs of young people as they relate to HIV and AIDS. Through education, support, and advocacy, MTA prevents the spread of HIV, promotes responsible decision making, and improves the quality of life for young people infected with, or affected by, HIV/AIDS. MTA programs connect HIV positive young people to care, provide HIV testing and counseling, and educate young people on effective ways to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS. MTA also works to hold DC government agencies accountable for providing the city's youth with HIV services and education.

About *Metropolitan Group (MG)*

Metropolitan Group is a full-service social change agency that crafts and integrates strategic communication, creative and resource development services that empower social purpose organizations to build a just and sustainable world. Metropolitan Group was founded in 1989 and has offices in Chicago; Portland, Oregon; and Washington, D.C. working exclusively on behalf of social purpose organizations—nonprofits/NGOs, government agencies and socially responsible businesses. They work as a team with their clients to create results, including sustainable attitudinal and behavioral change; increased participation, program use and awareness; and expanded resources and capacity. MG has developed a Public Will Framework, which organizes social impact campaigns to have long-term and movement-building impact. Public will building works by linking issues to existing closely held values and integrating grassroots outreach with traditional media. Visit www.metgroup.com to see the article “Building Public Will.”

About the *Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)*

The Public Relations Society of America (www.prsa.org), based in New York City, is the world's largest organization for public relations professionals. The Society has more than 29,000 professional and student members. PRSA is organized into 112 Chapters nationwide, 19 Professional Interest Sections, along with Affinity Groups, which represent business and industry, counseling firms, independent practitioners, military, government, associations, hospitals, schools, professional services firms and nonprofit organizations. The Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) has 272 Chapters at colleges and universities throughout the United States.