

Today is National Gay Men's HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, September 27, 2012.

NGMHAAD calls on gay men across the United States to remember that the end of the HIV/AIDS epidemic may be in sight, but the epidemic isn't over — and men who have sex with men are still at high risk. The number of gay men already living with HIV in this country may be as high as 1 in every 8, so we have to protect ourselves and be safe!

NGMHAAD calls on gay men to lead the movement to end the AIDS epidemic and calls on gay men to be proud because we know that *our* love is good.

On behalf of the staff, volunteers, clients **and** friends and supporters of God's Love We Deliver, I would like to commemorate this day not only for myself as a gay man who has been living with HIV and AIDS, but as part of the entire community of all gay men living with or impacted by HIV and AIDS.

We are blessed as an agency that despite this difficult economy, **and** the fact that demand for our services increases every year, we are still able to remain committed to holding to the core commitments that our Founder, Ganga Stone, set so many years ago. Which are:

- that **no** person should suffer the dual crisis of hunger and life-altering illness
- that meals would always be free of charge to the individuals that we serve
- and that there would be no waiting list

And so, as we look to the future, well past delivering more than 13 million meals, we are all:

- **proud** to be able to be here to help our friends and neighbors in need
- **honored** to be associated with the GMHC, the Gay Officer's Action League, and so many other agencies serving and supporting our community
- and **steadfast** in affirming that we all share the same core principles of dignity and solidarity

And lastly, with great humility and respect, I would like to thank my gay brothers **and** my deceased long-term partner and friend Joe, who was a recipient of services from God's Love We Deliver before succumbing to AIDS-related illness in 1991, and who taught me **first-hand** how much those services contributed to **his** quality of life, **as well as** to my own, during our last few months together after 19 year relationship that began on April 29, 1972, and honor our affirmation that our love for one another, even in the presence of living with AIDS was wonderful, natural and dignified.

I also want to extend my gratitude, love and respect to all of our LGBT brothers and sisters everywhere on this important day !

~Jim Konetsky, Senior Administrator of Program Services