FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CSU Students Take Action Against AIDS with Testing, Vigil

CHICAGO (NOVEMBER 27, 2008) A group of Chicago State University students hopes to draw attention to the world’s AIDS crisis by offering free HIV testing as part of the World AIDS Day Candlelight Vigil 2008 on Monday, December 1, in the rotunda of the Cordell Reed Student Union. The HIV testing is scheduled from 4 to 7 p.m.; the vigil will be held from 6 to 8 p.m.

The event is co-sponsored by Students Taking Action Against STDs and HIV/AIDS (STAASH), the CSU Health and Wellness Center, the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Chicago State University HIV Research and Policy Institute, the Core Center, Vital Bridges, and the Medical Health Association. STAASH is a CSU student organization created to educate other students and area communities about HIV/AIDS and STDs through education, awareness and the arts.

“Seven percent of new STD cases in this country involve young people between 13 and 25 years old,” explained STAASH president Tiffany Johnson, a senior majoring in pre-physical therapy. “When talking with peers on campus, they seem to be concerned about the economy and classes, but they’re not the least bit concerned about something a life-threatening as HIV/AIDS. We want to help them take this more seriously.”

In recent weeks, STAASH has stepped up its efforts to heighten students’ awareness of the dangers of unprotected sex. On Tuesday, November 18, the organization sponsored a campus event featuring Eusonia Records’ R&B sensation, Maiysha. The December 1 vigil offers incentives to the first 100 people tested for AIDS, including a chance to win a laptop computer.

For more information, contact STAASH at (773) 995-2010, or by e-mail at STAASH06@yahoo.com.