

John M. Lloyd Foundation

11777 San Vicente Boulevard, Suite 745 • Los Angeles, CA 90049 • Tel: 310/ 622-1050
Fax: 424/625-0740 • E-mail: info@johnmlloyd.org • www.johnmlloyd.org

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Contact: Melanie Havelin +1 323.251.6497 / mhavelin@johnmlloyd.org

Health GAP AIDS Activist Receives Lloyd Foundation Leadership Award

The John M. Lloyd AIDS Leadership Award Recognizes Visionary Activist

LOS ANGELES, MARCH 11, 2011 – The John M. Lloyd Foundation announced today that Asia Russell of Health GAP has been selected as the recipient of the fourth annual John M. Lloyd AIDS Leadership Award.

Asia Russell has worked extensively as part of the U.S. and international AIDS activist movements for over 15 years, focusing on grassroots and policy campaigns to secure access to life-saving medicines, particularly among low-income people and other marginalized groups. Since 1995, Asia has been a member of ACT UP Philadelphia, one of the largest grassroots AIDS activist organization led by people living with HIV/AIDS in the U.S. She has coordinated successful campaigns on issues ranging from national AIDS medicine pricing policies to health care justice for U.S. prisoners and detainees living with AIDS or Hepatitis C. Currently she is the Director of International Policy for Health GAP (Global Access Project).

Health GAP (Global Access Project) is an organization of U.S.-based AIDS and human rights activists, people living with HIV/AIDS, public health experts, fair trade advocates and concerned individuals who campaign against policies of neglect and greed that deny treatment to millions and fuel the spread of HIV.

At Health GAP, Asia is responsible for international advocacy campaigns and policy programs to secure universal access to HIV treatment in developing countries through grassroots community mobilization, policy change, solidarity with developing country networks, and activism. With Asia's leadership Health GAP and other organizations helped force G8 donors to create the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in 2001. Her advocacy to correct the harmful impact of pharmaceutical industry monopolies on public health and access to medicines have helped to secure dramatic price reductions for lifesaving AIDS medicines.

More recently, through campaign work with people living with HIV in Uganda and in the U.S., Asia has dedicated a huge portion of her time and energy toward addressing the dire needs of people in developing nations who have been placed on waiting lists for access to AIDS treatment. In conjunction with many other concerned activists, Asia has worked to highlight the shortsightedness of policies that cut aid for life-saving treatments – policies that simultaneously contribute to a higher incidence of AIDS-related deaths as well as an increase in the number of those infected, a phenomenon that will only serve to increase the long-term costs of ending the pandemic.

Asia Russell's dedication to the sanctity of human rights for all which naturally includes universal health care, as well as the fearlessness in which she will call out broken commitments, corruption, greed and injustice make her an ideal candidate for this award. The John M. Lloyd

Foundation applauds Asia Russell's extraordinary vision and leadership in fighting to end the AIDS pandemic.

Renowned AIDS Activists and Leaders Commend Asia Russell

Leading AIDS advocates and experts applauded the selection of Asia Russell for this award:

Prof. Michel Kazatchkine, the Executive Director of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria said, "I am so pleased that Asia Russell is this year's recipient. Anyone who has worked with Asia knows of her deep commitment to fighting for those living with and affected by AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. It was because of AIDS activists like Asia that the Global Fund was created. And it is because of her continued engagement and activism that millions of people have access to treatment, prevention and care services. As an active member of the Global Fund Board and community broadly, Asia brings so much – thoughtful comments, uncompromising suggestions, unparalleled passion and always, always the concerns of those who are marginalised in society. She's a remarkable activist, health advocate and champion of human rights."

Long-time AIDS activist Gregg Gonsalves, formerly of the AIDS and Rights Alliance of Southern Africa (ARASA) as well as Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), noted, "I am thrilled. Asia is a brilliant activist, with an encyclopedic knowledge of policy and an unwavering commitment to access to AIDS treatment. She has worked tirelessly for years, with little recognition for her outstanding contribution to the field. It's a timely and long-overdue accolade." Gonsalves was the first recipient of the John M. Lloyd AIDS Leadership Award in 2008.

"Asia is a natural leader with the distinct ability to speak at the level of international AIDS policy and human rights while retaining the capacity for heart-to-heart grass root exchanges of ideas and shared responsibilities within her own community. I aspire to achieve such balance in my own life." commented Waheedah Shabazz-El, Founding/Advisory Member of the U.S. Positive Women's Network

The John M. Lloyd AIDS Leadership Award was established to recognize, support and empower effective leaders in AIDS advocacy who have not yet been extensively recognized. There is no application process for the award – the selection is made by the board of the John M. Lloyd Foundation. The award will be split between Asia Russell and Health GAP as an unrestricted gift.

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The John M. Lloyd Foundation was established in 1991 by John Musser Lloyd (1948-1991) to seek creative, compassionate, and courageous solutions to the root causes of the AIDS epidemic. The objectives of the foundation's grant awards are to:

- Increase funding from public and private sectors to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic, in the U.S. and globally
- Improve U.S. and international AIDS policies
- Amplify global awareness of HIV/AIDS and facilitate broad-based changes in attitudes, to reduce stigma and change behavior
- Develop the leadership of organizations fighting HIV/AIDS, and foster collaborations among those organizations and leaders.

For more information, see www.johnmlloyd.org