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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 1, 2003

COUNTY OBSERVES WORLD AIDS DAY WITH WEEKLONG ACTIVITIES

In observance of World AIDS Day, Westchester County will co-host “Dimensions in HIV/AIDS Prevention” conference on December 4, 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., at New York Power Authority, White Plains. Please pre-register for this conference by calling 813-5100. New HIV Prevention Needs Assessment results will be announced at the conference.

“World AIDS Day is an opportunity for the County to join the world in demonstrating the importance of conquering an epidemic that devastates an enormous number of people,” stated County Executive Spano.

“Even though there have been many notable successes in the field of HIV/AIDS research, such as new treatments that have slowed the progression of HIV infections to AIDS defining illnesses, the disease still remains an epidemic at large,” stated Westchester County Health Commissioner Joshua Lipsman. M.D., M.P.H.

“In Westchester County there are nearly 2,000 people with AIDS and another 3,000 with HIV,” Dr. Lipsman continued. “This is more than the number of people infected with all other life-threatening communicable diseases combined, including tuberculosis, hepatitis, syphilis, and SARS.”

World AIDS Day activities include:

December 1: Dr. Lipsman will be speaking at the Mount Vernon Task Force on AIDS’ annual World AIDS Day Luncheon, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., at the Grace Church in Mount Vernon.

December 3: Along with Project W.A.V.E. (War Against the Virus Escalating), the Westchester County Department of Health will be offering free HIV counseling and testing at the following colleges and agencies:

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College of New Rochelle, Mercy College (Dobbs Ferry, White Plains and Yorktown campuses), Iona College, Westchester Community College (Mount Vernon, Ossining, Peekskill and Valhalla campuses), Monroe College, Fordham/Marymount, SUNY Purchase, Manhattanville, Pace University (Pleasantville and White Plains campuses), Westchester Business School, Mount Vernon Hospital, Ossining Open Door, Westchester County Department of Health's New Rochelle and White Plains District Offices, Hudson River Health, ARCS and Saint John's Riverside Hospital.

December 4: The Westchester County Department of Health and the Westchester County AIDS Council will be hosting "Dimensions in HIV/AIDS Prevention," 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at the New York Power Authority, White Plains. This is a free event open to residents with HIV/AIDS and providers from Westchester, Rockland and Putnam Counties. Presenters include Maria Alvarez and Dr. Lisa M. Lee from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Jeffrey D. Fisher from the University of Connecticut, and Dr. Mitchell E. Cohen from Partnership for Community Health.

For more information on World AIDS Day activities, visit the Health Department's website at www.westchestergov.com/health.