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AIDS Walk Los Angeles Relocates to Grand Park for 2016 Event

Los Angeles, CA (June 2016)—AIDS Walk Los Angeles organizers today announced that, beginning this year, the event will take place in Grand Park, a large and vibrant public space located in the heart of Downtown Los Angeles. The 2016 event will be held on Sunday, October 23.

“We were drawn to Grand Park because of its versatility, size, and easy accessibility by public transit,” said Craig R. Miller, the event’s founder and senior organizer. “The space, the setting, the surroundings are all stunning,” Miller added. “The park is situated such that the iconic City Hall tower will serve as a dynamic backdrop to our stage and program.” Participants taking Metro by rail will ascend an escalator right into the middle of the venue. Free nearby parking will be provided to those coming to the event by car.

Downtown is home to many of the AIDS Walk’s corporate sponsors and employee fundraising teams, and Grand Park is adjacent to the seats of both city and county government, each of which have employee groups that have long been active in the event. The 10-kilometer route will pass the historic and architecturally rich center of Los Angeles, passing by such landmarks as the Walt Disney Concert Hall, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, and the Broad Museum, among many others.

The 2016 AIDS Walk Los Angeles, by design, will also coincide with a series of Día de Los Muertos art installations that will be placed throughout Grand Park for a two-week period. The organizers of those installations are working hand in hand with AIDS Walk Los Angeles to create a piece that honors those who have been lost to the epidemic.

The inaugural AIDS Walk Los Angeles was held at Paramount Pictures’ famous Melrose Avenue studio in 1985, where it remained for 15 years. Due to security concerns in the aftermath of the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Paramount was unable to continue hosting the event. The City of West Hollywood very generously welcomed AIDS Walk Los Angeles, while Paramount Pictures remained (and continues to be) a vital sponsor of the event. West Hollywood Park served as the starting and ending point of the Walk through 2015.

“We are deeply grateful to West Hollywood for its many years serving as host city of our organization’s largest and longest standing fundraising event,” said Craig E. Thompson, chief executive officer of APLA and APLA Health & Wellness. “We are also excited that so many of the elected officials, business owners, and residents of West Hollywood will be joining us downtown this fall and standing by us to help end the epidemic.”

The move comes as APLA continues to expand its role as a primary medical care provider for people living with and/or at risk of HIV/AIDS and for the LGBT community as a whole.. The organization began operating a federally qualified health center, the Gleicher/Chen Health Center, in Baldwin Hills two years ago and just recently inaugurated in the Long Beach Health Center to serve the low-income individuals in need of services in that city and surrounding South Los Angeles County neighborhoods. AIDS Walk Los Angeles will now help fund these new locations and services, along with the wide variety of other HIV/AIDS programs APLA offers, including eight food pantries, housing assistance, counseling services, and much more.

“We believe that the new venue for the Walk in downtown Los Angeles will better position the event for communities that have often felt disenfranchised, underserved, and on the periphery,” Thompson said.

Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis, whose district includes Grand Park, expressed enthusiasm for the move. “We are so pleased to welcome AIDS Walk back to Los Angeles,” Supervisor Solis said. “Grand Park is the people’s park, and the AIDS Walk is the people’s response to the HIV epidemic. It’s a perfect match, and we couldn’t be prouder to host this important community event.”

Registration is free and open to everyone at la.aidswalk.net.

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About APLA: APLA provides life-saving services for people living with and/or at risk for HIV/AIDS across Los Angeles County, including medical, dental, and behavioral health care, as well as HIV testing, prevention, and education programs. APLA delivers care to over 14,000 people annually and is a leader on policy and legislation that affects the HIV/AIDS and LGBT communities. For more information, please visit apla.org and aplahw.org.

About AIDS Walk Los Angeles: Since 1985, AIDS Walk Los Angeles has raised more than \$82 million for HIV programs and services throughout Los Angeles County, and has grown into one of the largest AIDS fundraising events in the country. In 2015 alone, 20,000 participants, many of whom were members of 1,600 corporate and community teams, raised more than \$2.4 million for AIDS Project Los Angeles and 20 other AIDS service organizations. For more information, please visit la.aidswalk.net.

About MZA Events: AIDS Walk Los Angeles was founded in 1985 by Craig R. Miller and his organization of activists, MZA Events. Miller is the AIDS Walk Founder and Senior Organizer and has produced hundreds of public service campaigns and fundraising events, generating more than \$400 million for major AIDS organizations throughout the country. For more information, please visit mzaevents.com.