

Pallotta TeamWorks.
AfricanAIDSTrek

Media Contacts:

Wylie Tene/ Calvin Fleming
Pallotta TeamWorks
(323) 342-1049/ 342-1072
wtene/ cfleming@pallottateamworks.com

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**150 ORDINARY PEOPLE TAKE AN EXTRAORDINARY
7-DAY, 75-MILE TREK THROUGH SOUTH AFRICA
TO RAISE AWARENESS AND MONEY FOR AN AIDS VACCINE**

African AIDSTrek April 2-8 through Cederberg Wilderness Area in South Africa

LOS ANGELES – February 27, 2002 – African AIDSTrek participants gear up for a groundbreaking, 75-mile journey through South Africa as they do their part to make a difference in the fight against AIDS. For seven days, 150 individuals have dedicated their lives to the forgotten people of Africa, where it is estimated that in some regions one of every three adults is already infected with HIV. The crisis is so substantial in South Africa that life expectancy has plummeted to less than 35 years old, left over 12 million children orphaned and is affecting the nation's economy because much of the workforce is dying.

From April 2-8, 2002, African AIDSTrek participants will hike through the Cederberg Wilderness area (northwest of Capetown) showing support in finding solutions to this epidemic. The exploration of this land goes beyond the boundaries of anything ever imagined and shows the dedication of individuals to Africa, a region in desperate need of help.

To participate, each person commits to raising a minimum of \$10,000. Net proceeds go to help find an AIDS vaccine, as well as to help provide local AIDS services in the region. Specifically, net proceeds will benefit the work of scientists at two of the world's leading university research facilities — the **UCLA AIDS Institute** and the **Emory Vaccine Center** — as well as organizations on the ground in sub-Saharan Africa providing critical medical services to the indigent. The AIDSTrek will also fund research in Africa.

“The AIDS crisis continues to devastate the continent of Africa, leaving behind little hope for the poor who do not have access to the drug cocktails that are saving lives here in the United States,” said Richard Apodaca, an African AIDSTrek participant who first tested HIV positive 19 years ago. “I’m fortunate enough to have access to these medications. Our group is bringing hope in the form of funding research for an AIDS vaccine that will help prevent even further infections and stop this deadly disease in its tracks.”

Mr. Apodaca has been making a difference in the fight against AIDS for over two decades. In addition to participating in the African AIDSTrek, Mr. Apodaca coordinates efforts in gathering unused AIDS drugs that are then shipped to South Africa. Last summer, he was told he had little hope to walk again. After experimental drug treatment, he was able to walk 60 miles in the Avon Breast Cancer 3-Day, Los Angeles, by October in memory of his sister and was running in the Honolulu Marathon by December.

For more information on the African AIDSTrek visit www.BeThePeople.com or call 1-800-825-1000.

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