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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**AIDS Cycle, Inc., AIDS Events, Minnesota, AIDS Network and Pallotta TeamWorks Mutually Agree to End Joint Production of Heartland AIDS Ride After 2002**

**7<sup>th</sup> Annual Ride Will Be the Last After Netting Over \$15 Million for HIV/AIDS**

July 27, 2002—Chicago – AIDS Cycle, Inc., AIDS Events, Minnesota, AIDS Network and Pallotta TeamWorks have mutually agreed they will no longer jointly produce the Heartland AIDS Ride in 2003. The joint decision was reached after discussions among all parties. This year's Heartland AIDS Ride 7, which began in Minnesota's Twin Cities on July 22nd will finish in Chicago on July 27<sup>th</sup>, proceeded as planned. More than 1,100 riders participated.

“Over the past 7 years, the people of the Midwest have shown tremendous support and enthusiasm for raising funds and awareness for HIV/AIDS,” said Courtney Reid, President of AIDS Cycle. “The funds and awareness from the Heartland AIDS Ride have been critical, as we have been able to provide more HIV prevention and testing services, more housing, food and medical care for people with HIV, and raise awareness about our services. The time has come though to examine changes in our overall strategy and approach to fundraising. We are thankful to have had AIDS Events Minnesota, AIDS Network and Pallotta TeamWorks as AIDS Ride partners for seven years. The events have been safe and successful, but the time has come to re-examine our fundraising program.”

“AIDS Cycle, AIDS Events Minnesota, and AIDS Network want to thank all past and current riders, crew and donors who have made the last seven years of AIDS Rides such a success,” said Bob Power, Executive Director of AIDS Network. “Through their efforts, more than \$15 million has been raised to provide lifesaving health care and food to thousands of residents of Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota who are struggling with HIV and AIDS.” The money raised from the AIDS Rides was split between all the beneficiaries based on a predetermined percentage formula.

“We will never forget the Heartland AIDS Riders, or the way the communities throughout the Midwest have supported this event over the years,” said Steve Bennett, President of Pallotta TeamWorks. “AIDS Cycle, AIDS Events Minnesota, and AIDS Network represent some of the finest AIDS service organizations in the nation and have been exceptional partners. These agencies and the Riders that sweated through hundreds of miles for AIDS are heroes.”

“Each of the three Beneficiaries will be exploring opportunities to create new events in each of their states,” said Reid. “We hope that all who have ridden, crewed or volunteered over the past 7 years will support us in our ongoing efforts to serve people living with HIV and AIDS.”

Heartland AIDS Ride net proceeds have benefited AIDS Cycle, Inc., AIDS Events Minnesota, and AIDS Network, Inc. since 1996. The three umbrella organizations serve 16 beneficiaries in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois. Funds enable such services as housing, free medical care, outreach prevention, alternative treatment, nutrition counseling, and mental health care among other programs.

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