



PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Bruce E. Smail, M.A.

Executive Director, The MOCHA Center, Inc.

585.420.1400 x 17

bsmail@mochacenter.org

The MOCHA Center Hosts Open Houses for the Community

Rochester, NY – September 12, 2011. The MOCHA Center, a nonprofit organization providing health and wellness programs and services for communities of color with an emphasis on LGBTQ communities, will introduce its new Executive Director, Board of Directors, and staff to the communities of Buffalo and Rochester this month. With over 15 years of service, and operations in Buffalo, Rochester, Niagara Falls, and New York City, the MOCHA Center reaches local, regional, state, and national constituencies. The Welcome Events are as follows:

Buffalo Open House

Thursday, September 22, 2011

5:00 – 7:00 pm

The MOCHA Center

1092 Main Street. Buffalo, NY

Rochester Open House

Thursday, September 29, 2011

5:00 – 7:00 pm

The MOCHA Center

107 Liberty Pole Way, Rochester, NY

Bruce E. Smail, the new Executive Director, joined the MOCHA Center team on July 1, 2011. He brings a wealth of experience in advocating for communities of color, LGBTQ, and HIV/AIDS equality issues. Smail is excited to meet the community and reminds everyone that “last month’s release of new estimated HIV incidence rates in the United States for 2006-09 emphasized the importance of engaging all communities around HIV prevention and services for people living with HIV/AIDS.” He further stated, “the Open House is one of the many ways that the MOCHA Center is reaching out to local communities and creating opportunities for everyone to have a voice in the MOCHA Center. The improvement of health and wellness amongst people of color and LGBTQ communities is a collective responsibility. LGBTQ, people of color, and people living with HIV/AIDS are active members of all organizations, businesses, places of worship, and our community. Collectively we must address the health disparities in this country as well as in this community.”

Excitement for the Open Houses was echoed by Dr. Edward Brockenbrough, President of the MOCHA Center’s Board of Directors and a faculty member at the University of Rochester’s Warner School of Education, where his research focuses on the educational experiences of LGBTQ youth of color. “This is an exciting moment in MOCHA’s history,” stated Brockenbrough. “Most of our board members, myself included, are relatively new, as is our executive director. All of us are committed to building upon the strengths of MOCHA’s past

while moving the organization forward in new and creative ways. These Open Houses will give our communities the chance to experience and be a part of the new energy within the organization. We really want to make sure that community members have opportunities to become involved in and take ownership of our collective work.”

The event is an opportunity to meet the new Executive Director, Board of Directors and staff; learn more about the programs and services of the MOCHA Center; explore opportunities to connect with the MOCHA Center; and to share your perspectives about the MOCHA Center. The event is free and open to the public. Please register online for the receptions:

Buffalo: <http://mochaopenhousebuffalo.eventbrite.com>

Rochester: <http://mochaopenhouserochester.eventbrite.com>.

On August 3, 2011, the Centers of Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) released its new estimated HIV incidence rates in the United States for 2006-2009. The new estimates showed that the annual number of new HIV infections was stable but the following groups experienced increases:

- Estimated 21% increase in HIV incidence for people aged 13-29
- The 13-29 aged groups saw a 34% increase in young MSM
- Within the 13-29 MSM group, Black/African American MSM increased significantly (48%) from 2006-2009
- African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos are the racial/ethnic groups most affected by HIV. African Americans represent approximately 14% of the US population, but accounted for 44% (21,200) of all new HIV infections in 2009. Hispanic/Latinos represent approximately 16% of the total US population, but accounted for 20% (9,400) of all new HIV infections in 2009.
- Overall, in 2009, African American men had the highest rate of new HIV infections (103.9 new infections per 100,000 persons), followed by Hispanic/Latino men (39.9 per 100,000), and African American women (39.7 per 100,000).

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The MOCHA Center, Inc. is a Western New York based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization providing service to Rochester, Buffalo, Niagara Falls, and New York City. Our mission is to improve health and wellness in communities of color through intervention and service with an emphasis on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) programming.

The MOCHA Center, Inc.

Buffalo Office: 1092 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14209 | (716) 852-1142 phone | (716) 852-1518 fax

Rochester Office: 107 Liberty Pole Way, Rochester, NY 14604 | (585) 420-1400 phone | (585) 420-1409 fax