



The Museum of Discovery and Science Partners with AIDS Healthcare Foundation to Develop “Wise Bodies”

The interactive educational program for high school students tackles topics such as HIV and other infectious diseases

FORT LAUDERDALE (September 19, 2019) – The **Museum of Discovery and Science (MODS)**, has partnered with **AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF)**, the world’s largest non-profit public health organization focused on HIV/AIDS, to develop “**Wise Bodies**,” a student-centered interactive program designed to provide high school students with a new perspective on the infectious disease epidemic that is impacting their generation. The purpose of the program is to build students’ knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes about health in an effort to motivate students to improve and maintain their health, prevent disease, and reduce risky behaviors.

“Health is one of our educational pillars at the Museum of Discovery and Science. This innovative partnership with AHF allows us to deliver a free program to Broward County Public School students that use science to raise awareness of the threats of STIs,” said Joseph P. Cox, MODS president & CEO.

Together, the staff at MODS, AHF’s healthcare centers, the public health division in Fort Lauderdale and Broward County educators, created a 45-minute module about HIV and other infectious diseases. The Wise Bodies curriculum will provide students with a better understanding of the basic function of the immune system, how people contract infectious diseases, learn the meaning of the words: pathogen, virus, vaccine, HIV, AIDS, and gain a concrete knowledge of what they are, how the body defends itself against infection and how to prevent and fight the spread of disease.

“The southern United States, including Florida, is home to nearly half of the people living with HIV in the country, with Miami and Fort Lauderdale being among the highest rates,” said Ebonni N. Chrispin, legislative affairs and community engagement manager with AHF. “We are thrilled to partner with MODS to create and deliver a program that will not only greatly impact our youth but will hopefully change the stigma surrounding these diseases.”

The Wise Bodies presentation is taught by members of the MODS STEM education team. The program will include a discussion about fear in relation to infectious diseases and is followed by a group lab on the transmission of HIV and other infectious diseases.

The presentations will take place throughout the 2019-20 school year, can be facilitated at any location, and can accommodate a full assembly of students.

“It is vital that we implement a program like this in our school system,” said Heather P. Brinkworth, chair of the School Board of Broward County and member of the MODS Board of Trustees. “With the rate of

diseases such as HIV/AIDS on the rise, it is crucial that we dispel myths and educate students on infectious diseases and how to prevent them.”

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ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF DISCOVERY AND SCIENCE (MODS): The mission of MODS is to provide experiential pathways to lifelong learning in science for children and adults through exhibits, programs and films. Founded in 1976 as The Discovery Center, the nonprofit facility serves approximately 400,000 visitors annually. Major operational support for the Museum is provided through generous support by Leadership Guild members including Citrix, Jet Blue, JM Family Enterprises, Inc. and Wells Fargo.

The Museum of Discovery and Science is open every day of the year including Thanksgiving and Christmas except for one-day in the fall for its annual Gala on October 26, 2019, and one-day in the spring for its annual Wine, Spirits and Culinary Celebration on March 13, 2020. The Museum is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. The Museum is located downtown at 401 SW Second Street, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33312. For more information about the Museum, visitors should call 954.467.MODS (6637) or visit mods.org.

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ABOUT AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION (AHF):

AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), the largest global AIDS organization, currently provides medical care and/or services to over 1,000,000 individuals in 44 countries worldwide in the US, Africa, Latin America/Caribbean, the Asia/Pacific Region and Eastern Europe. To learn more about AHF, please visit our website: www.aidshealth.org, find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/aidshealth and follow us on Twitter: @aidshealthcare and Instagram: @aidshealthcare

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