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**PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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**Friday, January 20, 2006**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Health is Wealth Forum Set For Feb. 18**

The annual “**Health is Wealth**” **Forum**, sponsored by the **PATRICIA Consortium** - in collaboration with the Pinellas County Health Department’s Office of Minority Health, the TEETH Program, and the Injury and Violence Prevention Program, will take place **Saturday February 18**, from **11:00am to 2:00pm** at the **Enoch Davis Center - 1111 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in St. Petersburg**.

The forum is held during Black History Month to increase awareness of the health disparities between blacks and whites and to increase accessibility to health services addressing many of the chronic diseases in which these disparities exist.

This event, which is free and open to the public, will feature **health services for the entire family** - including free health screenings, health counseling, refreshments, educational materials and a grand prize drawing. Free screenings and services include: HIV and pregnancy testing, screening for prostate cancer, diabetes, cholesterol, dental, and blood pressure screening, as well as flu shots, breast exams, and teeth sealants and cleanings for children under 18.

### **About the PATRICIA Consortium**

In 1999, a diverse group of concerned citizens began studying and analyzing existing racial disparities in infant mortality rates in Pinellas County. The **PATRICIA** Group (**P**inellas **A**frican American **T**argeted **R**eduction in **I**nfant mortality using a **C**ommunity **I**ntervention **A**pproach) was formed, and initially operated as a community-based initiative with the support of the Healthy Start Coalition of Pinellas, Inc.

**(MORE)**



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Initially, PATRICIA included representatives of the African American community, experts in maternal and child health, managed care organizations, elected officials, social service providers, physicians, corporate representatives, members of the faith community, public school personnel and private citizens. The vision of the group was to mobilize the community to eliminate racial disparities in infant mortality. The mission of the group was to foster community mobilization and the organization of resources to develop effective programs to achieve the vision.

The group addressed multi-faceted issues with the hope of bringing about societal change that would improve the overall quality of life for the African American members of the community. The premise of their work is based upon the concept that health status is related to a host of factors including housing, education, economic viability, relationships, and social support and the impact that racism has on each of these. The group members continue to articulate their belief that gains in reducing health disparities will only occur through a holistic approach that involves the community as a whole.

In 2001 the Coalition received funding for the PATRICIA group for two years from the Allegany Franciscan Foundation. A Coordinator was hired to staff the group.

Funding for the program ended in July 2003 and the program was transitioned to the Pinellas County Health Department to serve as the consortium to the Federal Healthy Start Project.

**For additional information, registration or to become a vendor or sponsor please contact Kiya Broughton at (727) 824-6900 Ext. 11260.**

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*The mission of the Pinellas County Health Department is to promote, protect and improve the health and safety of residents and visitors through public and private community efforts.*  
[www.PinellasHealth.com](http://www.PinellasHealth.com)