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Out in the Mountains

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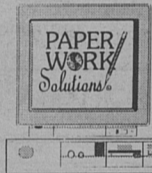
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Vermont AIDS Symposium: Large Gathering Tackles Tough Issues

BURLINGTON — Over 300 people will gather in Burlington for Vermont's first large-scale conference on AIDS-related issues for service providers in over eight years. The Vermont AIDS Symposium is scheduled for May 8-9 at the Sheraton Conference Center.

The Symposium will bring Vermont providers up-to-date information on the rapidly changing medical treatments for HIV-related illnesses. It will also provide an opportunity for a wide range of professionals and those living with HIV to discuss strategies for treatment and care as we move into the next century.

The conference's subtheme, "Issues in Mental Health, Substance Use and Pain Management," recognizes the interconnected nature of the most pressing medical and social issues of our age. Over thirty workshops will address the twin epidemics of HIV and addiction; the challenges of homophobia, racism and geographic isolation; and the breakthroughs in medical treatment that cannot be separated from issues of access to those treatments.

The Symposium was first conceptualized by the AIDS Professional Training Group and later identified as a priority during an extensive statewide needs assessment undertaken by the Vermont HIV/AIDS Care Consortium. The Consortium is charged with overseeing the effective delivery

of services throughout the state and has received seed money from the New England AIDS Education and Training Center for the conference. Additional sponsors include the Vermont Department of Health/AIDS Program and University of Vermont College of Medicine

The event, an intensive skills building, training and networking opportunity, targets physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, home health providers, mental health workers, social workers, substance abuse counselors, and case managers. Up to sixteen hours of Continuing Education credits will be made available to participants.

A Thursday evening banquet will feature Karen Williams, an African-American lesbian comic who has been dubbed the "Diva of Comedy" and "Queen of Improv." Williams tackles tough issues in her humor, a balance the entire Vermont AIDS Symposium has striven for. The banquet will also be a benefit for the Vermont PWA Coalition, the Twin State Women's Network, and the ALANA Health Care Organization.

For a detailed brochure or to register, contact the Continuing Medical Education office at (802)656-2292. For scholarship information for people living with HIV/AIDS, call Rachel Lurie at the Vermont Department of Health at (800)244-7639 or (802)651-1534.

Don't forget your rubbers.

You don't get it from toilet seats. You don't get it from coffee cups. You don't get it from desk tops in a school room. It doesn't fly through the air or swim around in hot tubs. You don't catch it from shaking hands, kissing, sneezing, wrestling or dancing.

According to the Surgeon General, your best protection against AIDS, barring abstinence, is use of a condom. For the facts about AIDS, call the Vermont AIDS Hotline.

VERMONT AIDS HOTLINE: 1-800-882-AIDS

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