

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **AmistadesHTX highlights HIV/AIDS Awareness Month with free resources and community support for Houston's Latino/a/x men**

**HOUSTON, TX (November 30, 2024)** – December is HIV/AIDS Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness, encourage prevention, and foster support for those impacted by HIV. [AmistadesHTX, a program of Legacy Community Health](#), empowers Houston's Latino/a/x community by reducing stigma, providing education, and offering accessible care in affirming spaces.

AmistadesHTX provides free HIV testing, connections to care, and a range of programs tailored to the needs of Latino/a/x men. Initiatives like Café con Leche, a closed, status-neutral discussion group, and the Como Soy / As I Am visual campaign promote open conversations and visibility, encouraging individuals to overcome stigma and seek care.

"We focus on opening conversations around HIV prevention, sexual health, and mental well-being—topics that are often taboo in Latino culture. Through our programs, we're fostering an environment where these discussions are normalized and encouraged," said Miguel Jacquez, program lead for AmistadesHTX.

#### **Comprehensive Services for Empowerment and Inclusion**

AmistadesHTX offers:

- **Free HIV testing** and connections to prevention tools, including PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis), which reduces the risk of contracting HIV.
- **Café con Leche**, a group that fosters community and discussion.
- **Como Soy / As I Am**, a campaign sharing personal stories to inspire resilience and healing.
- **A safe space** where Latino/a/x men can connect, build friendships, and foster a healthy community.

Jacquez emphasized the transformative power of storytelling within the Como Soy / As I Am campaign: "When someone shares their story of overcoming stigma, it resonates in

a way that statistics never can. One participant, for example, spoke about his journey with substance use, hitting rock bottom, and rediscovering himself. His words—‘What did I win when I actually lost? I found myself’—have inspired others to seek mental health services and addiction recovery. Storytelling is a bridge to healing.”

During a Café con Leche session, a participant disclosed his HIV-positive status for the first time. “He reflected on how far medical advancements have come, saying, ‘If we had today’s medication technologies in the 80s, we wouldn’t have lost so many lives.’ That conversation deepened empathy and highlighted the importance of prevention and early testing,” Jacquez said.

AmistadesHTX also highlights the importance of family in breaking stigma. Jacquez shared the story of a mother who joined the Como Soy / As I Am campaign after her son came out as gay and HIV-positive.

“She embraced him fully and used her story to encourage other parents to support their children. Her message—‘As parents, we need to step up and support our children. We are their safe space’—had a profound impact, proving the power of love and acceptance in breaking cycles of silence and shame.”

### Legacy Community Health: Expanding Access to Testing

Legacy Community Health offers free, fast, and confidential HIV testing at locations across Greater Houston and Beaumont, with many providing walk-in options. Regardless of test results, Legacy offers affordable prevention and treatment options tailored to individual needs.

HIV continues to disproportionately impact Hispanic and Latino/a/x communities, who represent nearly 20% of the U.S. population but account for more than one-third of new HIV infections. Through culturally competent care and resources, Legacy Community Health and AmistadesHTX aim to close this gap.

For more information about Legacy Community Health’s HIV and STI screening and treatment services, visit <http://legacycommunityhealth.org/services/hivstd-screening-treatment>.

### Join the Movement

AmistadesHTX invites the Houston Latino/a/x community to join their initiatives and become part of a growing familia dedicated to health, inclusion, and acceptance. [Follow @AmistadesHTX on social media](#) for updates on events and opportunities.

Together, let’s make December a month of awareness, action, and hope for a healthier future.

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### About Legacy Community Health

Legacy Community Health (Legacy) is a full-service network of community health clinics offering primary and specialty care in the Texas Gulf Coast region. Services include adult primary care, behavioral health services, community outreach, dental care, endocrinology, geriatrics, comprehensive HIV/AIDS care, nutrition and wellness, OB/GYN and maternity care, pediatrics, pharmacy, public health, school-based health, social services, and vision care. With more than 57 locations across Houston, Baytown, Deer Park, Stafford and Beaumont, Legacy is the largest Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in Texas. Legacy has been a United Way-affiliated agency since 1990. To learn more, visit [www.legacycommunityhealth.org](http://www.legacycommunityhealth.org).