The Minneapolis Urban League will observe National HIV Testing Day Friday, June 26, 2009 by offering free, rapid, confidential HIV testing from 9 am until 2 pm at its North Minneapolis location, the Glover-Sudduth Center 2100 Plymouth Avenue North. Every ninth person tested will receive a gift card and light refreshments will be served. There will also be a prize drawing at the end of the day.

According to recent statistics, the number of Minnesotans living with HIV is approximately 2,500. However, the Minneapolis Urban League estimates that this number is much higher, and is disproportionate among the African American and African-born communities in Minnesota.

According to Minnesota Department of Health there were 326 per 100,000 people in Minnesota living with HIV/AIDS. For African/African American women this number was 105 per 100, 000 and for African/African American males it was 54 per 100,000. African/African American women have the fastest rate of infection, more than any other population being infected by this disease (for more information on these statistics visit www.health.state.mn.us and click on HIV Statistics).

The Minneapolis Urban League reports that those individuals who know their HIV status, are better able to protect themselves and any person that they are having sexual relations with. "If the individual is a pregnant woman, she can protect her unborn child," says Kris Hammes, another HIV/AIDS case manager with the Minneapolis based non-profit.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call (612) 302-3134. Walk-ins are encouraged.

For information about the Minneapolis Urban League and directions, please visit our web site at www.mul.org.