



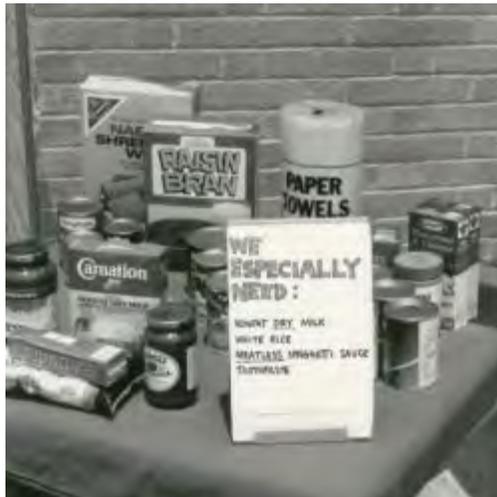
## For Immediate Release

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## APLA's Vance North Necessities of Life Program Marks 30 Years of Service

*The country's largest food pantry network for people living with HIV/AIDS commemorates an important milestone and releases a video detailing history of the program*



(Los Angeles; May 25, 2016)—AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA) is commemorating the 30th anniversary of our Vance North Necessities of Life Program (NOLP), the nation's largest network of food pantries serving people living with HIV/AIDS, with a **new video** about the history and impact of the program.

The Necessities of Life Program had its origins in a food pantry started by Ken and Alfia Hollywood, who ran a \$35-a-week food voucher program out of their movie memorabilia store. In 1986, APLA worked with the Hollywoods to open the first Necessities of Life Program food pantry. Today, NOLP serves nearly 2,000 people and distributes nearly 140,000 bags of groceries each year from eight different locations throughout Los Angeles County, including: Long Beach, South Los Angeles, Pasadena, Claremont, Santa Monica, Lancaster, North Hollywood, and Koreatown. In its 30-year history, NOLP has distributed nearly 2.7 million bags of groceries to those in need.

“We are 35 years into the AIDS epidemic and have been running NOLP for 30 years, and though we’ve made amazing strides in that time, there remains a critical need for our food pantries,” APLA Chief Executive Officer Craig E. Thompson says. “NOLP is a testament to the dedication of our supporters, staff, and volunteers, who work to ensure that we can continue to assist the people who need us most and provide them with food that not only sustains them, but helps them lead longer, healthier lives.”

Every week, NOLP clients pick up grocery bags filled with dry and canned goods, along with fresh produce, meat, eggs, and dairy products. They also have access to other basic necessities such as cleaning and hygiene products, including toothbrushes, shampoo, and more. In addition, NOLP offers bilingual nutritional education—a service that is crucial for people living with HIV who often face additional health issues.

NOLP has a long history of community support. More than 50% of items distributed to clients come from food drives and donations from supermarket partners, and the program relies on dozens of volunteers each week. In 2011, philanthropist Bob North and his wife, Lois, donated \$3.5 million to the Necessities of Life Program in memory of their son, Vance, who died of AIDS-related complications in 1995.

Tonya Washington-Hendricks, program manager for NOLP, notes that the 30th anniversary shows both how far we have come in fighting HIV/AIDS but also how far we still have to go. “Thirty years for NOLP means we are surviving, we are evolving, we are supported,” she says. “But we must be able to maintain the quality of the program in order to reduce the burdens HIV and AIDS bring to thousands of people in Los Angeles County.”

To view the NOLP 30th anniversary video, please visit [www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4hf5hO2uyc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4hf5hO2uyc).

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AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA) was founded in 1983 and is one of the largest nonprofit HIV/AIDS service organizations in the United States. APLA provides bilingual support to more than 6,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in Los Angeles County annually and leadership on HIV/AIDS-related policy and legislation. Additionally, APLA conducts behavioral research designed to inform the development of evidence-based interventions and assists health departments in evaluating their HIV/AIDS services to ensure the delivery of effective and quality programs. APLA also provides administrative and fiscal support to the Global Forum on Men Who Have Sex With Men (MSMGF), which promotes and advocates for the health and human rights of MSM internationally. APLA is proud to be a community-based, volunteer-supported organization with local, national, and global reach. For more information, please visit [apla.org](http://apla.org).

APLA Health & Wellness (APLAHW) provides primary medical and oral health care, behavioral health services, HIV testing, PrEP counseling and management of eligible clients, STD screening/treatment, and health education and HIV-prevention services, with a specific focus on low-income LGBT people of color living in Los Angeles County. APLAHW is a federally qualified health center that includes: the Gleicher/Chen Health Center in South Los Angeles; the Wilshire Dental Clinic downtown; the S. Mark Taper Foundation Dental Clinic in South Los Angeles; Behavioral Health Services at the David Geffen Center in Mid-City; and a mobile dental facility. APLA Health & Wellness serves more than 8,000 people each year. For more information, please visit [aplahw.org](http://aplahw.org).