



Red Ribbon Committee

Dear Friend:

There are occasions in our life when an event or a situation happens that demands the very best that is within us. One such situation exists today. This letter concerns the skilled nursing and hospice care that some in our community must face alone without resources. In time, each of us will make a similar search for the comfort of measured care as we walk toward a death with dignity. The patients at the San Antonio AIDS Foundation (SAAF) deserve the same dignity and our help is required.

This past April, you may have read the San Antonio Express articles which reported that federal funding for skilled nursing and hospice care service provided by SAAF was cut from \$470,000.00 in 2005 to \$190,000.00 in April 2006. Consequently, SAAF was forced to turn away terminally ill HIV/AIDS patients who would otherwise qualify for its skilled nursing and hospice care services. Moved by this gut-wrenching story, a group of concerned community leaders established the Red Ribbon Committee to help SAAF bridge the funding gap of \$280,000 for this year and future funding problems.

SAAF is the only service provider of residential skilled nursing and hospice care for terminally ill HIV/AIDS patients in San Antonio and 11 South Texas counties. Virtually all clients have incomes of less than \$9800, which is the 2006 Federal Poverty level.

SAAF accepts persons 17 years or older infected with HIV. SAAF offers 24 hour nursing care 7 days a week, pain management, bereavement counseling, pastoral care, and ongoing care as directed by patient's physicians. SAAF's daily cost of \$120.00 per day for skilled nursing care can be compared to the customary hospital charge of \$475.00 per day. San Antonio has been designated a "late to care" city by the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, which means 25% of its HIV/AIDS patients are diagnosed very late in their infections, rather than discovered by early testing.

The story of HIV/AIDS is still being written. Over half of all new infections are occurring in people under 25, which means a whole new generation is now in the crosshairs of the pandemic.

Our request for your help challenges the capacity to love and touches the human spirit in each of us 'to take care of one another'. The term "there but for the Grace of God, go I" applies in this caring effort at the SAAF house.

The enclosed brochure provides a way for you to help bridge the gap. Please give of yourself to this worthy cause.

The Red Ribbon Committee:

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