



For Immediate Release –

“A Dare to Remember” Challenges Ordinary Canadians to do Extraordinary Things for AIDS in Africa

– *k-os and others take on personal “dares” to support the Stephen Lewis Foundation* –

Toronto, August 31, 2009 – Can you imagine k-os helping you pick out a toy at your local department store? What about seeing someone portage a canoe for 5km through Toronto’s busy downtown core? Or joining friends for a 12-hour mahjongathon? These are just a few of the “dares” that Canadians are challenging themselves to do on behalf of the Stephen Lewis Foundation (SLF) to help raise awareness – and much needed funds – for AIDS-ravaged communities across Africa.

Beginning on August 31, 2009, the Stephen Lewis Foundation is challenging all Canadians – including celebrities like k-os – to do something extraordinary to help turn the tide of AIDS in Africa. People across the country are being asked to choose any kind of “dare” (funny, healthy, sporty), set a personal fundraising goal and encourage friends, family and colleagues to sponsor them. Each dare will be performed during the nationwide *Dare to Remember* fundraising week, which runs from October 17-25, 2009.

“In Africa, the AIDS pandemic forces ordinary people to defy unimaginable odds every single day and do extraordinary things to keep families together, feed and educate children and comfort those reeling from grief,” says Stephen Lewis, Chair of the SLF. “A Dare to Remember celebrates the remarkable strides African communities have made in restoring hope to families and in beating back the AIDS pandemic. We want Canadians to stand behind these efforts.”

For celebrities such as k-os, the opportunity to choose a personal dare – *any dare* – provides a refreshing and unique approach to supporting a charitable cause.

“My dare will take me back to my youth. I’m going to work a shift at my first job in the toy section of a major department store,” says musician k-os. “I like the fact that people can use their imagination and choose a dare that is relevant to them and then collect pledges to help raise funds for African communities. I hope that my dare inspires others to take action, as I am a firm believer that when united for a single cause we can all make a difference.”

Additional daredevil celebrities who are participating in the campaign include: Natalie Brown (star of CBC’s *Sophie*), Jake Gold (renowned artist manager and judge on CTV’s *Canadian Idol*), Jeff Kassel (star of Gemini-nominated comedy series, *Testees*), Romina D’Ugo (actress and top 20 finalist from last season’s *So You Think You Can Dance Canada*), Amy Lalonde (actress on CBC’s *Wild Roses*) and Ngozi Paul (star of Global TV’s Gemini-nominated *Da Kink in My Hair*).

The official website (adaretoremember.com) offers the public numerous suggestions for dares, such as taking up a new sport, quitting smoking, playing a violin concerto in public, going vegetarian, or attempting to live completely off the grid for a week. Whether people choose to run a half-marathon, sky-dive, or take circus acrobatics lessons, the more daring the act, the more likely it will be to raise significant funds.



Dozens of Canadians have already signed up for dares. Heather MacKenzie from Edmonton, AB, will bungee jump 111 metres off Victoria Falls in Zambia. Toronto-born, Alexandra Bono, will rollerblade 26.2 miles through Berlin in a rollerblading marathon. Nine-year old Esther Stewart, from Ottawa, ON, whose dream it has been to go up the CN Tower, will climb 1,776 symbolic steps this fall, representing the ascent to the Tower's main observation deck. Dr. Rochelle Tucker, a professor from Burnaby, BC, has challenged her students to do a dare, and they have challenged her back! Canadian grandmothers are challenging friends and family to host 1,000 fundraising dinners across the country from October 17-25 through *A Dare to Dine*.

For those that have an excess of daring ideas and need an outlet for their creativity, the SLF is calling on Canadians to submit dare proposals for Stephen Lewis to consider performing during the week of *A Dare to Remember*. The public can submit dare ideas to: dare@stephenlewisfoundation.org

Proceeds from A Dare to Remember will be used by the Stephen Lewis Foundation to support community-based organizations in 15 sub-Saharan African countries. These grassroots groups are pioneering approaches that are changing the course of the AIDS pandemic. They provide counseling and education about HIV care, prevention and treatment; distribute food, medication and other necessities; reach the sick and vulnerable through home-based health care; help orphans and vulnerable children access education and work through their grief; and support grandmothers caring for their orphaned grandchildren.

For more information about *A Dare to Remember* or to accept a *dare* yourself, please visit: adaretoremember.com

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The Stephen Lewis Foundation supports community-based organizations working to turn the tide of HIV/AIDS in Africa. Since 2003, it has funded more than 300 projects in 15 sub-Saharan African countries. To learn more, visit www.stephenlewisfoundation.org.