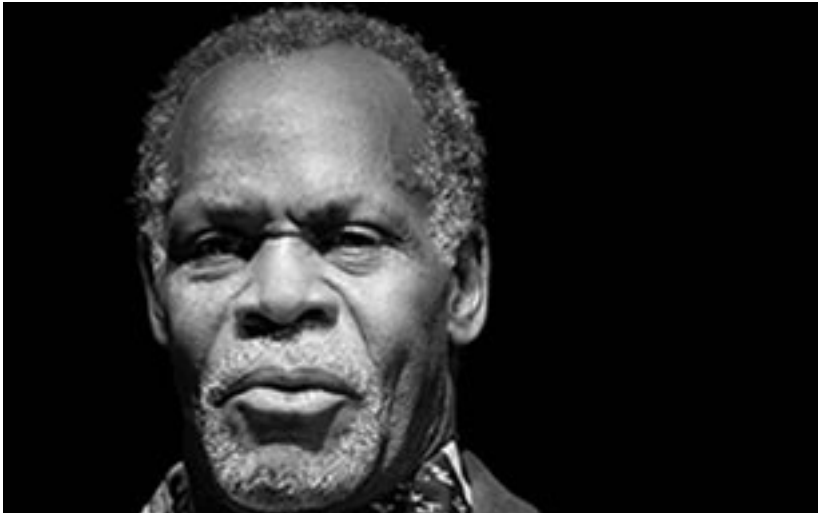


Written by Forward Times Staff
Thursday, 02 August 2012 08:27



Known for Hollywood blockbuster successes such as *The Color Purple*, and *Lethal Weapon*, these days, actor and activist Danny Glover is using his celebrity and fame to raise awareness to a new “Lethal Weapon”: the AIDS Epidemic.

Danny Glover joined more than 25,000 advocates, policymakers, researchers, and pharmaceutical companies from around the world for the 19th International AIDS Conference (IAC) in Washington, DC on July 22, in an effort to address the global HIV/AIDS crisis.

Glover, who turned 66 years old on July 22nd flashed his youthful smile, and exclaimed proudly, “ I always try to do something special and meaningful on my birthday.”

The conference, which is held every two years in a different country, returned to the U.S. after a more than 22 years travel ban that prevented HIV-positive individuals to enter this country. In an act of protest, conference organizers refused to convene the conference in the United States.

The ban was lifted after President Obama signed the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Extension Act of 2009. President Obama called the 22-year ban on travel and immigration by HIV-positive individuals a decision “rooted in fear rather than fact” and announced the end of the rule-making process lifting the ban.

According to the conference website, “The return of the International AIDS Conference to the

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United States ...represents a significant victory for public health and human rights. The selection of Washington, D.C. as the site for the XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012) is the result of years of dedicated advocacy to end the nation's misguided entry restrictions on people living with HIV – restrictions that were based on fear, rather than science.”

Glover joined other dignitaries and celebrities including Hillary Clinton, Sir Elton John , and Bill Gates in calling for an end to the AIDS Epidemic.

Glover speaks out about HIV/AIDS around the world, but the root of his involvement began closer to home. His brother has AIDS. He has also lost several friends to the disease.

His earliest loss was the death of a friend and fellow actor in 1987. Glover acknowledged that, “In my industry there were men who were dying of HIV/AIDS. Who were infected...there was a whole stigma around it. A dear friend, and fellow actor died in 1987, during the shooting of Lethal Weapon. We were close...people even said we looked alike. In fact, we'd go on auditions, and he would get the part. As he got sicker, I would go by a soul food joint that we both loved, and bring him food.”

When asked about the role of other celebrities, Glover was hesitant to place the burden of responsibility on their shoulders. “When we look at celebrities, we think of them as ‘larger than life’...they are marketed that way. Everyone, not just athletes, actors or famous people should help to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS,” Glover stated. “Chances are, you know someone infected with the disease or you will be affected by it, so we are all in this together.”

This report was written by Glenn Ellis:

Remember, I'm not a doctor, I just sound like one. Take good care of yourself and live the best life possible!

Glenn Ellis, is a Health Advocacy Communications Specialist. He is the author of “Which Doctor?”, and is a health columnist and radio commentator who lectures, and is an active media contributor nationally and internationally on health related topics. His second book, “Information

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is the Best Medicine," was released in January 2012. For more good health information, visit:
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