



**WHITTIER STREET HEALTH CENTER**

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**Actor from the “NOTORIOUS” B.I.G. movie Sean Ringgold to be  
Keynote Speaker at Whittier Street Health Center’s  
6<sup>th</sup> Annual Men’s Health Summit  
*Local Health Heroes to be Honored***

ROXBURY, MA (MAY 28, 2009) –“One Life to Live” actor Sean Ringgold will deliver the keynote address at Whittier Street Health Center’s Men’s Health Summit on Saturday, June 6, 2009 at the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center at Roxbury Community College. Ringgold appeared in the movie “Notorious ” the life and death story of Notorious B.I.G., playing the role of CEO and music mogul of Death Row Records Marion “Suge” Knight. Ringgold, who hails from Rockaway, Queens, will share an inspirational life story upholding his deep commitment to underserved populations and youth. This year’s Summit, centered on the theme *How Families Can Stay Healthy in Challenging Times*, will bring health education, screenings and resources to an expected 500 attendees, helping at-risk men and their families make health a priority during difficult economic times.

“As a community health and wellness leader, Whittier’s responsibility doesn’t stop at just treating our patients; it extends to offering a hand and finding those who need our care the most,” said Frederica Williams, President and CEO of Whittier Street Health Center. “Our Men’s Health Summit is designed to proactively engage local men to take charge of their health, ensure their family’s health and empower their futures. During this difficult economic climate, many of those living in our community are struggling and families need help with insurance, primary care, screenings, social programs and overall wellness. We need to let our community know that we are here for them, and can help with their health and social needs.”

An integral component of Whittier’s Men’s Health Program is to connect at-risk populations to primary care in order to address disparities in health outcomes. The Men’s Health Summit is a community driven event that is intended to be a health festival for men and their families filled with engaging and informative activities to present a holistic approach to health, fitness, stress management, access to care, and behavioral health, all in a fun and entertaining environment.

“In Boston, Black male death rates are higher for many leading causes of death, including heart disease and prostate cancer,” said Dalton Skerritt, Whittier’s Director of Men’s

Health. “Furthermore, Black and Latino men access a consistent source of health care at a much lower rate than the rest of the population. With limited use of primary care and preventative care, Black and Latino men are at greater risk for chronic diseases.”

In addition to a wealth of health resources for the community, the Summit will feature an expert panel discussion about men’s health, health care and maintaining good health in challenging times. Additionally, Whittier will honor six local health heroes with their Health Champions Award, which recognizes outstanding work in reducing health disparities for men. The honorees include: **Paul Francisco**, President of the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting, **Dr. Rich Kalish**, Chief Medical Officer of the Boston HealthNet, **Robert Lewis, Jr.**, Vice President for Program at the Boston Foundation, **Keith McDermott**, Executive Director of the Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center, **Eno Mondesir**, Program Coordinator at the Boston Public Health Commission and Boston City Councilor **Sam Yoon**.

**Whittier’s Men’s Health Summit 2009** is scheduled for **Saturday, June 6, 2009, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Reggie Lewis Center**. The health fair, screenings, and demonstrations will run from 9:00 am – 11:00 am. The keynote address, awards and panel discussion will run from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm and screenings and demonstrations will resume at 2:00 pm. Sean Ringgold will speak from 12:30 pm to 1:00 pm. Lunch is provided and there will be entertainment. The Summit is a free event and is open to the community, and welcomes family members of all ages. Activities will be available for children.

For more information about Whittier’s Men’s Health Summit, please call (617) 989-3028.

#### **About Whittier Street Health Center**

Whittier Street Health Center ([www.wshc.org](http://www.wshc.org)) is a Joint Commission accredited, private, non-profit, independently licensed community health center dedicated to providing high quality, reliable and accessible primary health care and support services for diverse populations to promote wellness and eliminate health and social disparities. Serving more than 12,000 clients with approximately 60,000 clinic visits and 20,000 community outreach visits annually, Whittier has a patient base which is ethnically and racially diverse and includes significant numbers of individuals from Roxbury, Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, the South End and Greater Boston. Whittier provides a comprehensive array of 30 healthcare programs and services designed to meet the primary health care, behavioral health, and social needs of the community.

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