

Brian Hodes Goes Full Cycle for HIV/AIDS

LOS ANGELES, CA – November 25, 2009 – On Sunday, November 29th, thousands of cyclists worldwide will take a 29-mile trek to mark 29 years of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Brian Hodes, the man at the helm of this international phenomenon, didn't plan on being an event organizer and AIDS activist. But with millions of lives hanging in the balance, he couldn't help but saddle up.

An avid cyclist, Brian got involved with HIV/AIDS by participating in AIDS/LifeCycle's *Ride to End AIDS*. The 7-day, 545-mile bike ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles raises money and awareness about AIDS. "I didn't know a lot about the effects of the disease until I became friends with several HIV+ cyclists," he said. "The more I learned, the more committed I became to the cause."

Brian founded **UTACVelo** two years ago to organize World AIDS Day Bike Rides that put a much-needed spotlight on the AIDS pandemic. The father of two, Brian focused on youth and AIDS during the 2008 ride and used a novel approach to get the kids' attention: he rode his bike for 24-hours around a track at his daughter's school, Beverly Hills High. "A lot of kids wore red ribbons and walked alongside me for a few laps. During the course of the ride, the entire [2,500-member] student body held an assembly to hear members of Positive Pedalers talk about living with HIV/AIDS," he said. "The kids took it very seriously. They asked a lot of great questions."



This year's Southern California collective will raise awareness by riding through African American communities where rates of new infection are disproportionately high. Riders, supporters and interested parties will be invited to record the names of people they've lost and gather by the Marina for a brief memorial. A portion of the AIDS quilt will be there. After a solemn moment, the names will be released into the air via helium balloon.

With each passing year, Brian sets his sights higher. A photographer by trade, Brian's work takes him to the world of professional cycling. He hopes to have a pro cycling team wear the red ribbon and get active in the HIV/AIDS fight. In the meantime, his efforts are gaining traction. Manufacturer HUDZ has agreed to donate a portion of its sales of red brake hoods to the Until There's A Cure® Foundation during 2010-2011.

Brian and his UTACVelo teammates will continue to ride... Until There's A Cure.

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Headquartered in Redwood City, CA, Until There's A Cure® Foundation is a national organization dedicated to AIDS awareness and prevention education, care and services for those living with AIDS, and vaccine development.

Founded by Brian Hodes, UTACVelo (Until There's A Cure Velo, the French word for bicycle), is an association of cyclists who use their sport to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and help break stigmas associated with the disease. For more information, send an email to: brain@veloimages.com.