



BY NIKKI KAHN — THE WASHINGTON POST

Mauro Ruiz left Mexico to escape the stigma of being gay. In the United States, he found friendly men and crystal meth — and he contracted HIV.

AIDS Among Latinos on Rise

Hispanics in U.S. Face Unique Obstacles to Diagnosis, Treatment

By CECI CONNOLLY
Washington Post Staff Writer

SAN YSIDRO, Calif. — AIDS rates in the nation's Latino community are increasing and, with little notice, have reached what experts are calling a simmering public health crisis.

Though Hispanics make up about 14 percent of the U.S. population, they represented 22 percent of new HIV and AIDS diagnoses tallied by federal officials in 2006. According to a survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation, Hispanics in the District have the highest rate of new AIDS cases in the country.

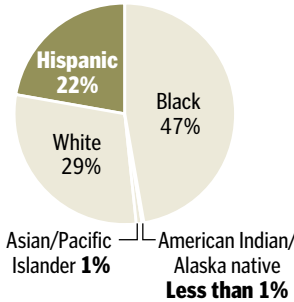
So far, the toll of AIDS in the nation's largest and fastest-growing minority population has mostly been overshadowed by the epi-

demic among African Americans and gay white men. Yet in major U.S. cities, as many as 1 in 4 gay Hispanic men has HIV, a rate on par with sub-Saharan Africa.

Blacks still have the highest HIV rates in the country, but language difficulties, cultural barriers and, in many cases, issues of legal status make the threat in the Hispanic community unique. For those who arrived illegally, in particular, fear of arrest and deportation presents a daunting obstacle to seeking diagnosis and treatment.

"Officials need to stop downplaying or ignoring what's happening among Latinos," said Oscar De La O, president of Bienestar, a Latino service organization. "We are at the center of the storm."

Rate of new HIV/AIDS diagnoses by race/ethnicity in 33 states and Puerto Rico, 2006:



SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Even with the United States embroiled in a fierce debate over immigration policy, the problem of AIDS in Latinos had received scant attention from political and

public health officials. At the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, where only two of 17 approved HIV programs target Hispanic Americans, officials have added Spanish-language hotlines, confidential testing sites and other initiatives aimed at filling the gap.

"Hispanics are overrepresented in this epidemic, and we need to target our efforts to them," CDC epidemiologist Kenneth Dominguez said in an interview.

Officials do not have a precise tally of HIV infection nationwide, because many states have not reported figures to the CDC. The 22 percent, a figure that has not been previously released, includes 33 states and Puerto Rico, but not

See AIDS, A7, Col. 1

After Visit, Obama Defends Iraq Plan

Pullout Tied to Boosting Afghan Mission

By DAN BALZ
and SUDARSAN RAGHAVAN
Washington Post Staff Writers

AMMAN, Jordan, July 22 — Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama on Tuesday defended his proposal to withdraw U.S. forces from Iraq over a 16-month period despite opposition to any timeline from the top U.S. commander there, Gen. David H. Petraeus. More forces are needed to combat a perilous situation in Afghanistan, Obama said.

"I believe that the best way to support Iraqi sovereignty and to encourage the Iraqis to stand up is through the responsible redeployment of our combat brigades," Obama told reporters after completing a four-day visit to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Looking ahead to meetings with Israeli and Palestinian leaders Wednesday, the Illinois senator also pledged that, if elected president, he would provide "sustained energy and focus" to help forge a peace agreement ending their conflict. But he noted that "it's unrealistic to expect that a U.S. president alone can suddenly snap his fingers about bringing about peace in this region."

Obama, who flew to Israel late Tuesday after a meeting and dinner with Jordan's King Abdullah II, will on Wednesday abruptly shift from Iraq and Afghanistan to the Israeli-

Inside



COURTESY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

THE FORGOTTEN WAR: Cpl. Gunnar Zwilling is one of 52 American soldiers killed since May 1 — in Afghanistan. **A2**

ANALYSIS: Obama's trip redefines the election's foreign policy debate. **A8**

PROGRESS IN IRAQ? Parliament takes a key step toward setting elections, but Kurds balk. **A10**

Palestinian conflict and to questions about Iran's nuclear ambitions and their threat to the Israelis and the region. By affirming his commitment to Israel's security, Obama will also attempt to overcome doubts at home among many Jewish voters.

Declining to speak in detail about

See OBAMA, A8, Col. 1

U.S. Rushes to Change Workplace Toxin Rules

By CAROL D. LEONNIG
Washington Post Staff Writer

Political appointees at the Department of Labor are moving with unusual speed to push through in the final months of the Bush administration a rule making it tougher to regulate workers' on-the-job exposure to chemicals and toxins.

The agency did not disclose the proposal, as required, in public notices of regulatory plans that it filed in December and May. Instead, Labor Secretary Elaine L. Chao's intention to push for the rule first surfaced on July 7, when the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) posted on its Web site that it was reviewing the proposal, identified only by its nine-word title.

The text of the proposed rule has not been made public, but according to sources briefed on the change and

to an early draft obtained by The Washington Post, it would call for re-examining the methods used to measure risks posed by workplace exposure to toxins. The change would address long-standing complaints from businesses that the government overestimates the risk posed by job exposure to chemicals.

The rule would also require the agency to take an extra step before setting new limits on chemicals in the workplace by allowing an additional round of challenges to agency risk assessments.

The department's speed in trying to make the regulatory change contrasts with its reluctance to alter workplace safety rules over the past 7½ years. In that time, the department adopted only one major health rule for a chemical in the workplace,

See LABOR, A4, Col. 5

Big GOP Donor Faced Trouble Back Home

By MATTHEW MOSK
Washington Post Staff Writer

On the day Republican Sen. John McCain surged to victory in Florida's presidential primary, a group of supporters gathered at the elegant Tampa Club for a luncheon held by Gov. Charlie Crist and Sen. Mel Martinez.

Mingling with some of the state's business and political elite that January day was a Florida newcomer, an Oregon venture capitalist named

Craig Berkman. Unbeknownst to the guests, Berkman's life was crashing around him.

For two years, Berkman had been battling his investment partners after admitting that he had lent himself \$5 million of their money without telling them. A civil fraud case against him was about to go to trial.

Berkman continued to raise money for McCain. He and his wife have donated \$50,000 to Republican candidates and party committees this election cycle, including a \$28,500

check to the Republican National Committee's Victory Fund on May 29 to support McCain's bid. Berkman's political generosity, who prevailed in court but have not seen a penny of the \$28 million in civil damages that a jury awarded them.

This week, the McCain campaign said that it has given Berkman's donations to charity and that it will ask the Republican National Committee to do the same.

The failure to earlier identify

See DONOR, A9, Col. 1

■ The GOP's Internet guru tries to capture the buzz. | C1

INSIDE

THE WORLD

A Secret Life Unmasked

Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb fugitive and most wanted man in Europe for more than a decade, was hiding in plain sight as a New Age doctor in a graying hippie disguise. **A10**

THE REGION

Mid-Life Moment for Tysons

While planners and politicians map the redevelopment of Tysons Corner, the region's biggest mall turns 40. **B1**

OBITUARIES

Charles Z. Wick: Member of President Reagan's "kitchen cabinet" and USIA director. **B7**

Estelle Getty: "Golden Girls" actress and Emmy winner. **B7**



FOOD

The Buzz Around Town

The specialty end of the coffee market is getting ever bigger as new cafes pop up in the region. **F1**

BUSINESS

Downturn for Wachovia

One of the leading banks in the Washington area posts a second-quarter loss of \$8.9 billion and plans to eliminate over 10,000 jobs. **D1**

Comcast Service Ranked Last

The nation's largest cable operator struggles to achieve customer satisfaction after years of explosive growth and growing revenue. **D1**

SPORTS

Sheriff Gonna Getcha Matures

Redskins running back Clinton Portis reflects on what he's lost and gained since last season. **E1**

WHO KILLED CHANDRA LEVY?

Chapter 10: A JAILHOUSE INFORMANT

A Wild Tale of Murder for Hire

By Sari Horwitz, Scott Higham and Sylvia Moreno
Washington Post Staff Writers

On Sept. 11, 2001, terrorists struck the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and the Chandra Levy story quickly dropped off the front pages of newspapers around the world.

In Modesto, Calif., the satellite television trucks that had been parked outside Robert and Susan Levy's home pulled away. In Washington, law enforcement resources were shifted from Chandra's case to terrorism-related tasks.

It had been four months since Chandra disappeared. During one of her last Internet searches on the day she vanished, she had pulled up a map of Rock Creek Park. Police recruits had looked for her there. But neither the D.C. detectives nor the prosecutors on the case had focused on a man who confessed July 2 to his involvement in attacks on two women in the park.

The man, a 20-year-old Salvadoran named Ingmar Guandique, did not catch the attention of prosecutors until mid-September, when they heard that he allegedly told a jailhouse

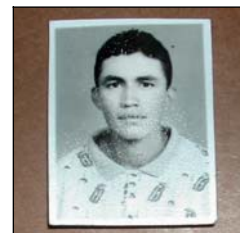
informant that he had killed Chandra.

On Sept. 21, Guandique was removed from his jail cell and brought to the U.S. attorney's office in Washington for questioning by prosecutors and D.C. detectives. He was accompanied by a public defender.

Guandique was shown a picture of Chandra. He said the only place he had ever seen her was on television.

That contradicted what a former Park Police detective later told The Washington Post. Joe

See CHANDRA, A6, Col. 1



Ingmar Guandique, in a 1999 photo for his Salvadoran national ID card.

PREVIOUSLY: D.C. police on the Levy case learn about a man attacking women in Rock Creek Park but don't immediately investigate. Rep. Gary Condit gives his fourth and final interview to investigators. A storied FBI agent comes away thinking Condit is not involved.