

Maria Davis Bio

Music industry insider Maria Davis was diagnosed with HIV in 1995 after unknowingly contracting the virus from the man whom she was planning to marry, and has since become a devoted advocate for HIV awareness and education. Since her diagnosis, Maria has been very vocal about living with HIV to lend a voice to women impacted by the epidemic. She has dedicated her life to educating women, men and children about HIV, especially in the New York City area where she was raised and has lived since.

Maria has leveraged her position in the entertainment industry to educate the community about HIV by partnering with organizations such as Life Beat: Music Industry Fights HIV and BET Rap it Up Community Service, as well as serving as a key note speaker for the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS, Inc. Maria also regularly volunteers her time in the community, speaking to educators, health care providers, and other members of the community regarding the importance of HIV/AIDS awareness.

This passion and dedication to HIV education drove Maria to collaborate with Merck on *I Design*, a national HIV education campaign aimed at helping to empower people with the disease to play an active role in designing their treatment plan with their doctors. Through *I Design*, Maria shares her experience living with HIV and encourages others living with the disease to “vocalize” how their treatment is working for them in discussions with their healthcare team.

In addition to being known for her HIV advocacy work, Maria has become known as one of New York’s premiere promoters. She produced, directed and promoted her newly created, legendary music showcases known as “Mad Wednesday’s,” which provide venues for signed and unsigned R&B and hip-hop artists and comedians who have had no other performance options. Through this work, Maria has created an outlet for young people to express themselves artistically.

More information on *I Design* is available at www.ProjectIDesign.com.