



**Partnership for
Prescription Assistance**

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**Montel Williams and ‘Help Is Here Express’ Bus Tour Coming to Lansing
to Help Patients in Need Obtain Prescription Medicines**

Lansing, MI– The “Help is Here Express” national bus tour will roll into Lansing today along with Emmy-winning syndicated talk show host, author and motivational speaker Montel Williams, stopping at Capitol to help uninsured Americans who are having trouble affording their prescription medicines. Since its launch in April 2005, the bus tour -- sponsored by America’s pharmaceutical research companies -- has visited all 50 states and more than 1,000 cities to raise awareness about patient assistance programs. The “Help is Here Express” is part of the Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPA), a national effort that has helped more than 3.4 million patients, including more than 115,000 in Michigan, find programs that provide prescription medicines for free or nearly free.

The “Help is Here Express” is staffed by trained specialists able to quickly help low-income, uninsured or under-insured patients access more than 475 patient assistance programs, including more than 180 programs offered by pharmaceutical companies. More than 1,300 national, state and local partners, including Scleroderma Foundation, National Kidney Foundation, Michigan Association of United Ways and the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan are working with America’s pharmaceutical companies to spread the word about the program. When the “Help is Here Express” moves on, patients in need can visit PPA’s easy-to-use Web site (www.PPARX.org) or call the toll-free phone number (1-888-4PPA-NOW) where trained operators field calls in more than 150 languages.

On a national level, the PPA is represented by Emmy-winning syndicated talk show host Montel Williams, named PPA’s national spokesman in January 2006. In addition, nationally recognized Telemundo talk show host and author Mayte Prida leads the PPA’s Hispanic outreach effort.

“Since January of 2006, I’ve been traveling the country talking about the Partnership for Prescription Assistance – urging people to make one call that can change their lives and help them afford their prescription medications,” said Williams. “And the word is getting out. But our job is not done; and for the millions still in need of assistance, I urge them to pick up the phone, log on to our Web site or visit the big orange PPA bus to see if they may qualify for assistance.”

The PPA specialists work with doctors, pharmacists, health care providers and community groups, educating them on the PPA process. Over 2,500 different brand-name and generic prescription medicines are available through participating patient assistance programs. In addition, the PPA provides information on nearly 10,000 free healthcare clinics and has connected more than 100,000 patients with clinics and health care providers in their communities.

“The PPA is a concerted and effective effort to reach those who still need help,” said Williams. “And I’m going to do everything I can to get the word out. As a patient who must cope every day with the effects of multiple sclerosis, I understand only too well the importance of having access to the medicine you need.”

Prior to hosting his own television show, Williams was a special duty intelligence officer in the Navy, specializing in cryptology. A graduate of the Naval Academy, he received a number of military awards and citations during his naval career. Before attending the Academy, he had enlisted in the Marine Corps after graduating from a Baltimore, Maryland high school. Last year, he was named chairman of the National Veterans Association (NVA) and has taped public service announcements for both NVA and the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA).

He has worked with an array of charitable organizations, including The Make A Wish Foundation, The Joey DiPaolo AIDS Foundation, Diamonds for Humanity and The Humane Society of the United States. Currently, he serves on the boards of the We Are Family Foundation, devoted to promoting tolerance and diversity through educational programs aimed at the youth of America, the PVA and The Montel Williams MS Foundation.

Williams' 2004 autobiography, "Climbing Higher," a New York Times best-seller, details his struggles with multiple sclerosis. He is also the author of another New York Times best-selling autobiography, "Mountain Get Out of My Way."

To find out if there are patient assistance programs that may meet their needs, patients should call toll-free **1-888-4PPA-NOW** (1-888-477-2669) to speak with a trained specialist or visit www.pparx.org.

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