

# Minnesota State University Reporter

## MSU to celebrate World AIDS Day Tuesday

by Heather Moeller

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Two Mankato groups are coming together to increase awareness of World AIDS Day.

John Lee, program advisor of Minnesota State's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Center, said World AIDS Day, Tuesday, is a time worldwide when people come together to commemorate those with HIV/AIDS, those seeking treatment and those who have lost their lives to the disease. According to Lee, the commemoration is led by the World AIDS Campaign.

"It's universal, which is why I like [World AIDS Campaign]," Lee said.

According to Lee, World AIDS Day is the LGBT Center's biggest event during the year in the terms of specific programming. The LGBT Center will continue to have a table in the main area of the Centennial Student Union through Wednesday.

The center will pair up with the Rural AIDS Action Network to offer a free HIV testing on Wednesday. According to Jennifer Kolstad, RAAN, the test consists of a mouth swab and results are given in 20 minutes. RAAN also plans to have information available at the table for anyone interested.

"We're really hoping that people will get facts about HIV and learn how to keep themselves and others safe," Kolstad said, "and how to support people with HIV and reduce the stigma [of HIV]."

Lee said the LGBT Center doesn't have literature on AIDS itself, thus the partnership with RAAN. The center will hand out free condoms at the table. According to Lee, condoms and dental dams are also available at the LGBT Center for anyone who wants to take some.

Interested people can also sign up for the HIV testing on Tuesday and Wednesday at the LGBT table.

"HIV is out there in rural Minnesota," Kolstad said, "I think getting the test is one of the best things [people] can do for themselves."

*Heather Moeller is a Reporter staff writer*