



# Media Advisory

*From State Representative La Shawn Ford*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
AUGUST 30, 2016

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
State Rep. La Shawn Ford  
Office: 773-378-5902

## **FORD WILL ANNOUNCE THE FORMATION OF THE WEST SIDE HEROIN TASK FORCE**

**CHICAGO, IL** - August 31, 2016, 9AM on International Overdose Awareness Day Representative Ford will announce the formation of the West Side Heroin Task Force (WSHTF) at the Thompson Center. WSHTF is a partnership between Rep. La Shawn K. Ford (8th), Loretto Hospital, Roosevelt University's Illinois Consortium on Drug Policy and dozens of social service providers, community leaders, elected officials and community members. WSHTF formed to bring attention to the severe heroin problem that is impacting West Side residents. Despite media depictions that paint heroin users as located in the suburbs, the West Side is the epicenter of the crisis.

"The availability of heroin is rising across the country, and the west side has borne the brunt of the crisis in terms of addiction and overdose deaths. Much can be done to treat those suffering from heroin use disorders and to reverse overdose so that they aren't fatal," said Rep. La Shawn K. Ford (8th) and co-sponsor of House Bill 1, The Heroin Crisis Act, which became law in Sept. 2015 and includes coverage of addiction, enforcement of parity regulations, and coverage of the important lifesaving drug naloxone under Medicaid. Roosevelt University will release a paper titled "Hidden in Plain Sight: Heroin's Impact on Chicago's West Side," which details the health and criminal justice impacts on this community. Chelsea Laliberte, the executive director of Live4Lali, lost her brother to a heroin overdose in 2009. Laliberte will conduct a training in the use of naloxone, the drug used to reverse overdose.

Some of the organizations representing WSHTF include: Loretto Hospital, Illinois House of Representatives; Office of Congressman Danny K. Davis; Roosevelt University; Chicago Recovery Alliance; PCC Community Wellness; Community Outreach Intervention Projects, School of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago; Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities, Inc. (TASC); Adapt Pharma; St. Anthony Hospital; Biodelivery Sciences; West Suburban Medical Center; Cook County Justice Advisory Council; Alumni Association; Health & Medicine Policy Research Group; Habilitative Systems, Inc.; Peer Services; The Kennedy Forum; Cook County; Community Behavioral Healthcare Association of Illinois; Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association (IADDA); Chicago Department of Public Health; Stroger Hospital; Family Guidance Centers, Inc.; Cap Quality Care; Soft Landing Recovery; Heartland Health; Healthcare Alternative System; St. Anthony Hospital; Rincon Family Services; City of Chicago; Live4Lali and St. Martin de Porres Church.

**MEDIA ADVISORY CONT.**

<b>Who:</b>	State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford, Dr. Sonia Mehta / Loretto Hospital CEO, Kathie Kane Willis / Illinois Consortium on Drug Policy Roosevelt University Director, Congressman Danny Davis, George A. H. / TASC VP Williams, Jamella R. Hand / Overdose Prevention Advocate, Doris Davenport / Center of Community Connections President, Marianne Schiavone / West Suburban Medical Center Chairperson, Chelsea A. Laliberte / Live4Lali, Inc. Executive Director & Co-Founder
<b>What:</b>	West Side Heroin Task Force Press Conference
<b>When:</b>	Wednesday, August 31, 2016 9:00 A.M.
<b>Where:</b>	James R. Thompson Center 100 W. Randolph 15 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Blue Room Chicago, IL 60601

For more information, contact Rep. Ford's office at [773-378-5902](tel:773-378-5902), or visit [www.lashawnford.com](http://www.lashawnford.com).