

Vitiligans Get Ready To Rally At The Capitol

The fifth annual World Vitiligo Day will take place at the Capitol this weekend.

June 25th is World Vitiligo Day - a date where millions of people across the world come together to increase awareness of vitiligo, fight prejudice and raise funds for research, support and education.

Backed by support from nearly a dozen of US State Governors, we aim to re-introduce to the Congress the National Vitiligo Control Act from 1977 – arguably the most dated bill to ever come back!

June 25th is a significant date in the calendar because it marks the passing date of Michael Jackson. The King Of Pop suffered from this debilitating skin disease from his childhood. “Heal the World”, the song he was most proud to have created, was probably inspired by his vitiligo.

Recognition for vitiligo is growing, particularly since vitiligan Winnie Harlow competed on America’s Next Top Model in 2014, then appearing in campaigns for top brands like Sprite, Diesel, Desigual. Winnie was featured in Beoynce’s latest video release, Lemonade. Vitiligo has made news headlines multiple times in popular sites such as CNN, Cosmopolitan, Daily Mail, Huffington Post, Vogue and many other.

Support for the event is huge and over half a million people have now signed a petition that asks the UN Secretary General to officially designate June 25th as World Vitiligo Day.

Vitiligo is an under-investigated, non-communicable, autoimmune skin disease that affects nearly 95 million people worldwide, or up to 2.4% of the population. Vitiligo causes the skin to lighten in patches across the face and body; it also affects internal organs. The burden of vitiligo falls particularly hard on developing countries, due to misdiagnosis of the disease, little or no access to effective treatments, and widespread stigmatization and discrimination.

World Vitiligo Day was born from the determination of non-profit organizations VR Foundation (USA) and VITSAF (Nigeria) in 2011. The campaign aims to persuade major organizations such as the US Congress, United Nations and World Health Organization to give vitiligo the attention it deserves and instil change in the national healthcare policies of member states.

The rally at the Capitol in Washington DC this weekend will be attended by members of vitiligo support groups, researchers, doctors, famous people with vitiligo, and also by city Mayor and state representatives. Event starts with informal gathering the night before and rolls out to the next day, with speeches starting at 12 noon.

Campaign website: www.25June.org

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