“I think [The Global Village is] a great strategy to bring the organizations and people who provide HIV work together.”

By RHONDA CROWDER
Staff Reporter

A wide array of art, dancing, performances, music, dialogue, interesting promotional items and lots and lots of information can be found in the Global Village at AIDS2012, XIX International AIDS Conference in Washington, D.C.

The Global Village is a section of the conference that allows communities from all over the world to gather, meet, share, and learn from each other. A diverse and vibrant space, it gives organizations dedicated to fighting HIV/AIDS an opportunity to demonstrate the application and science of good leadership.

It also invites conference delegates as well as the general public to see how science translates into community action and intervention.

“There are things here I could never take back to my state; for example, the sex workers. I can’t take [what they shared] back the way I saw it,” said Dr. Bambi Gaddist, executive director of South Carolina HIV/AIDS Council in Columbia, South Carolina.

AIDS2012 is the first conference Gaddist has attended. “I’m a little overwhelmed at the gravity of this epidemic after 30 years,” she said. “It’s leadership, not the people, in need of evaluation.”

AIDS2012 is the third conference Kwavena Rainey Cheeks, pastor of Inner Light Ministries in D.C., has attended. “I think it is good networking. It allows people who wouldn’t normally come together to come together,” he said of The Global Village.

He also said it provides new perspectives to the problem. “We have cultural differences. It allows us to experience the cultural differences. I find it very interesting.”

Actress Sheryl Lee Ralph was seen in the Global Village Monday afternoon, urging women to take a stand against HIV/AIDS. “If women could bring life to this world, we could bring life to this fight,” she yelled to everyone in earshot while taking pictures with friends at The Women’s Collective.

At the same time, a small group of female dancers gathered around the Caribbean Liming Zone, showing off their moves.

Anzaira Roxas, 26, of the Philippines, was in the Global Village representing Family Planning Organization of the Philippines and International Planned Parenthood. She promoted the “Criminalize Hate Not HIV” campaign. This is the first conference she’s attended.

“I think [The Global Village is] a great strategy to bring the organizations and people who provide HIV work together.”

Speaking of the Youth Pavilion, Roxas also said, “I’m glad the youth have space. We can be the solution.”