



MARIELA LOMBARD

Chris Norwood, one of 1,000 women from 200 countries nominated collectively for the Nobel Peace Prize, is fighting to get more HIV/AIDS services in the city.

Novel pick for Nobel

She's 1 of 1,000 women tapped

A BRONX WOMAN who introduced peer training to poor minority women affected by HIV/AIDS has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

But she's not alone.

One thousand women from 200 countries, chosen for their diverse work with local communities, have been nominated as a single group in an unprecedented bid for this year's prize.

As the only Bronx representative of the 40 American nominees, Chris Norwood was "especially pleased" to accept the nod because it highlights grass-roots endeavors.

"New York has the worst health statistics in the country and it's hard to see any other way to fiercely get ahead without people-building," she said.

Describing the joint nomination as "groundbreaking," Norwood is not optimistic about winning. Since 1905, when the Peace Prize was first awarded to a woman, only 12 women have won it.

But organizers of the joint bid say peace isn't an individual act, and that if the group triumphs, any prize money will be donated to the nominees' projects.

For Norwood and Health People, a women's AIDS prevention and support program she started in 1990, funding and support have been sore points over the years. Children affected by HIV/AIDS, she said, have largely been ignored.

"In New York City, we have the country's largest number of AIDS orphans but they get nothing," Norwood said. "The

BY LOUISE WONG
DAILY NEWS WRITER

most you could've given these kids was brief grief counseling when their parents died. There's close to zero money. It's tragic."

She said the children are not entitled to regular health services because they haven't contracted the virus.

Yet there are now about 80,000 people under age 18 who have a family member with HIV/AIDS in New York, she said.

The South Bronx-based program now offers a full range of HIV/AIDS services for men, women and families. It also trains residents of communities with widespread chronic disease to be leaders and educators and shares its peer education model with health officials from other countries and across the nation.

What Norwood hopes to gain, if not the Nobel Peace Prize itself, she said, is serious recognition for educating and empowering communities to understand they can take command of their own health.

It's about sharing information and engaging with the community, not just collecting data from it.

"You can't cure someone on a computer," she said.