# AIDS Memorial Quilt Goes South

The Change the Pattern initiative honors those lost to HIV.

November 14, 2022 By Trent Straube

Sections of the AIDS Memorial Quilt toured the Southern United States as part of an initiative to honor Black and brown lives lost to HIV and to raise awareness of racial disparities that continue to fuel the epidemic.

The Change the Pattern initiative launched in Jackson, Mississippi, September 28 to October 4, with Quilt displays, educational forums, storytelling, advocacy, panel-making and other free programs. The Change the Pattern display and events then moved to other Southern locations.

The multicity initiative is funded by a $2.4 million grant from Gilead Sciences, which manufactures many HIV medications, in partnership with the National AIDS Memorial, which is the custodian of the Quilt, and the Southern AIDS Coalition.

Eligible organizations received up to $5,000 each to support hosting local quilt-making workshops to ensure that the stories of lost Black and brown lives are captured through newly sewn panels on the Quilt through the Memorial's Call My Name program.

The events in Jackson included a display of more than 500 hand-stitched panels, many from the region, which marked the largest display of the Quilt in the state.

Each block of the Quilt measures 12 feet by 12 feet and is made up of eight 3-foot-by 6-foot panels. Roughly the size of a grave, each panel represents someone lost to the epidemic.

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