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Clinton County Health Department Press Release

Adirondack Tobacco Free Network "Recognition Event" June 2006

Adirondack Tobacco Free Network (ATFN) and area Tobacco Control Program partners hosted a recognition event on June 8, 2006 in Saranac Lake. The event was organized to honor individuals and organizations who have demonstrated a commitment to decrease the social acceptability of tobacco products, limit youth exposure to tobacco industry advertising and promotion, or support current smokers' efforts to quit. ATFN partners include Reality Check of Franklin County, Reality Check of Clinton and Essex County, North Country Tobacco Cessation Center and Tobacco-Free School Policy Initiative. Approximately 50 awards were presented highlighting participant and agency involvement in various statewide tobacco control initiatives.

The guest speaker for the event was Ursula Bauer, Ph.D., Director of the New York State Department of Health Tobacco Control Program. Bauer outlined the comprehensive strategic plan of the tobacco control program to reduce morbidity and mortality and alleviate the social and economic burdens caused by tobacco use in New York State. The plan includes four main goals:

1. Eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke.
2. Decrease the social acceptability of tobacco use.
3. Promote cessation from tobacco use.
4. Prevent the initiation of tobacco use among youth and young adults.

Tobacco use remains the number one preventable cause of death in the United States. The tobacco industry spends about \$22.5 million a day to promote their product, which according to Bauer is "a product so defective that it kills half the people who use it". The New York State Tobacco Control Program has set a goal of one million more non-smokers in New York State by the year 2010.

Being responsible for over 450,000 deaths in the U.S. every year is a public relations nightmare. Tobacco companies would rather be known for their generosity than their deadly product. Therefore, they use corporate giving and sponsorship to enhance their image and promote their products. Several local organizations were recognized for adopting written policies refusing any tobacco industry sponsorship or funding and ultimately protecting the health and safety of their communities. "No Thanks Big Tobacco" awards were presented to:

Northern Adirondack Planned Parenthood, Clinton County Health Department, Franklin County Public Health Services, North Country Healthy Heart Network and the Lake Placid, NY - I Love Barbeque Festival and Set the Night to Music Festival.

Awards were presented to health care providers and substance abuse clinics for incorporating practices that actively promote and foster cessation. Area schools and businesses were awarded for measures to shield youth from tobacco industry marketing.

“Tonight is all about partnership” stated Ms. Karen Derusha, Tobacco Control Specialist for the Adirondack Tobacco Free Network. “We are not doing this work alone. Human service organizations, healthcare providers, schools, businesses and individuals are among those we count as partners in this effort.”

Present to receive awards that evening were:

- Champlain Valley Family Services
- Clinton County Addiction Services
- Twin Oaks
- Saranac Lake School District
- Northern Adirondack Central School District
- Northeastern Clinton Central School District
- State Theater in Tupper Lake
- Trevor Jones
- Katsitsoionni Fox
- Mountain Health Services
- Hamilton County Public Nursing
- Brushton Moira “Parents are Key”
- Reality Check of Franklin County – Joey Bernier, Kristen Walton, Katie Stone, Beth Berkman, Bob Helm, Kyle Compeau, Nathan Marshall and Megan Marsh
- Reality Check of Clinton and Essex County – Sarah Jennette, Erica Olmstead, Shawna Armstrong, Sabrina Maple and Lacy Kitchin

Endorsed by: _____

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