



PRESS RELEASE

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Students from Across State Nominated for Tobacco-Use Prevention Work Winners to be named at 6th Annual Fame & Shame Awards in May

ALBUQUERQUE—A total of 20 middle- and high-school students from across the state were nominated for their outstanding work to prevent tobacco use by their peers and in their communities. Three students each from the high school group and the middle school group will be selected to receive the Youth Advocate of the Year Award. The honors will be bestowed at the 6th Annual Fame & Shame Awards ceremony, which takes place on May 8 in Albuquerque.

The students span the state from Farmington to Las Cruces, and represent communities as diverse as Taos and Clovis. A list of the students is attached separately. Each student works with a school-based tobacco-prevention group. The groups are part of the statewide YEAH! Coalition (Youth Empowerment Advocacy Heroes!). Youth Link, a program of New Mexico Voices for Children, coordinates the coalition's activities, which include various trainings, planning sessions, and the Fame & Shame Awards.

"When it comes to influencing teens, particularly around behavior issues like smoking, other teens can be the most effective messengers," said Rasa Herzog, Youth Link Program Manager. "Teens want to be accepted by their peers, and the decision to smoke – or not smoke – is often a matter of doing what your friends are doing. So these kids are really making a difference. At the same time, they're learning skills like leadership and team-building that will help them as they make their way in the world as young adults," she added.

The Fame & Shame Awards is Saturday, May 8, 4:30-7:30pm at the KiMo Theatre in Downtown Albuquerque. The awards ceremony is the "fame" portion of the event; the participants also "shame" Hollywood for its portrayal of tobacco use in youth-rated movies (P, PG and PG-13). The youths dress up as actors and accept the "Shamie" award, which is a tub of popcorn littered with cigarette butts. The event is conceived and planned by the youths and cosponsored by the New Mexico Media Literacy Project with funding from the Department of Health's Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Program. Admission is free and open to the public.

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Youth Link is a program of New Mexico Voices for Children and is funded by the New Mexico Department of Health Tobacco Use Prevention and Control Program. New Mexico Voices for Children is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advocating for policies to improve the health and well-being of New Mexico's children, families and communities. 2340 Alamo SE, Suite 120, Albuquerque, NM 87106-3523; 505-244-9505 (p); www.nmvoices.org

2010 Youth Advocates of the Year Award nominees

High School Nominees:

Arthur Armijo/Raton Arthur is a member of the Raton SWAT Team (Students Working Against Tobacco), where he worked on getting the school to implement an educational alternative to the suspension program that was in effect for students caught using tobacco on campus.

Jennifer Campos/Clovis Jennifer is a member of SCAT (Students Concerned About Tobacco) and has used her bilingual skill to educate the area Spanish-speaking community about the harmful effects of tobacco use.

Robbie Carpenter/Taos Robbie completed an internship with the Taos High School Tobacco Prevention Coordinator, during which he created a MySpace page for the Taos YEAH group, DRIVEN.

Erik Clem/Truth or Consequences Erik is a member of T-MAD (Teens Make a Difference), where he helped produce a “Talk Back to Big Tobacco” public service announcement.

Hannah Neann Folk/Farmington Neann is a member of the Farmington PIRATEs (Peers In Rage Against Tobacco Everywhere), through which she presents media literacy programs about how tobacco products are marketed to young people. “I love seeing the ‘Ah ha’ moment on my peers’ faces,” she said.

Michael Jimenez/Las Cruces Michael is involved in the Las Cruces SHOUT (Students Helping Others Understand Tobacco) group, through which he’s participated in anti-tobacco events such as Kick Butts Day, World No Tobacco Day, and an educational booth at the Southern NM State Fair.

Rakel Jones/Gallup Rakel is involved with the Coalition for Healthy & Resilient Youth. As a member of the Navajo Nation, she likes to educate her peers about the differences between commercial tobacco and the traditional tobacco used for ceremonial purposes.

Amanda Kerr/Kirtland Amanda is a member of the San Juan County YCAT (Youth Community Action Team). As a member of the Navajo Nation, she advocates on behalf of implementing a clean indoor act on the reservation.

Dominique Kescoli/Farmington Dominique has a leadership role in the CAUTION (Control Alcohol Use Tobacco Issues On Native Americans) Coalition at Navajo Preparatory School. Although she goes to school in Farmington, Dominique has participated in several anti-tobacco events in Shiprock, including educational events at Mesa Elementary.

Kyle Lease/Tucumcari Kyle is president of the Quay County ASAP Coalition (Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention) and was honored with a Youth Advocate of the Year Award while in middle school. Among the many events he’s organized include The Great American Smoke Out, Through with Chew Week – The Great American Spit Out, and the Red Ribbon Campaign.

Richard Lucero/Salem Richard has been involved with the Hatch SHOUT (Students Helping Others Understand Tobacco) youth action team for six years. He recently met with his state

representative and the mayor of Hatch about his group's activities and presented them with a report documenting the state's progress toward lowering tobacco-use rates.

Hanson Oxford/Socorro Hanson is involved with STAT (Socorro Teens Against Tobacco) where he has been active educating other youths as well as adults about the dangers of tobacco use and smoking in movies. Hanson also works closely with his state representative.

Amie Lee Padilla/Grants Amie has participated in tobacco prevention efforts for four years through the Cibola County Youth Council. She has made presentations at local schools and the family center, and created and distributed flyers with facts about tobacco-related health problems.

Courtney Sandy/Tucumcari Courtney has helped recruit members to the Quay County ASAP Coalition (Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention). She also recorded two anti-tobacco public service announcements that aired on a local radio station, as well as helped with a storyboard for the "Talk Back to Big Tobacco" contest.

Catalena Vega/Las Cruces Catalena is active in the Las Cruces SHOUT (Students Helping Others Understand Tobacco) group, through which she's worked on getting local rodeos to find non-tobacco sponsors. She's also educated peers about tobacco at numerous community events.

Middle School Nominees:

Karina Dominguez/Moriarty Karina is a delegate of the Talking Talons YEAH! Action Team at Moriarty Middle School. Karina has focused her advocacy efforts on wildlife and the harmful effects tobacco has on them.

Maria Gonzales/Hatch Maria is a member of SHOUT (Students Helping Others Understand Tobacco.) She enjoys teaching young children about tobacco risks and being an example to others. Maria has been instrumental in helping with her school's Through With Chew event and in assisting with Kick Butts Day.

Monique Granados/Las Cruces Monique is a member of SHOUT (Students Helping Others Understand Tobacco) at Zia Middle School in Las Cruces. Her involvement with the coalition includes participating in Kick Butts Day, World No Tobacco Day, Relay for Life, and spit tobacco education at the Southern New Mexico State Fair.

Corey King/Tijeras Corey is a delegate with Talking Talons YEAH! Action Team, and serves as a leader among his peers, helping to teach the new members in the coalition the importance of tobacco prevention. Corey's enthusiasm for tobacco prevention is unwavering, and is fueled by his personal experiences.

Isaac Vega/Las Cruces Isaac is a member of the Las Cruces SHOUT (Students Helping Others Understand Tobacco) youth coalition. He has participated in World No Tobacco Day, Relay for Life, Great American Smoke Out, NMSU Rodeo, Buck Tobacco Sponsorship observations, and spit tobacco education at the Southern New Mexico State Fair.

For contact information for the nominees and their nominators call Rasa Herzog at 505-244-9505 ext. 28 or email rherzog@nmvoices.org.