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CONTACT: Deborah Burke Henderson
508-481-3568
dbhenderson@sadd.org

Gardner South Wilmington High School, IL SADD Chapter Captures Key Field Award at SADD National Conference

Activity of the Year Award Acknowledges Extraordinary Creativity and Commitment to the SADD Mission

Marlborough, MA – SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) is proud to recognize Illinois' Gardner South Wilmington High School SADD S.T.U.D.S. (Safe Teen Ultimate Driving Squad) with the **2010 SADD National Activity of the Year Award**, presented by SADD President and Executive Director Penny Wells at the recent 2010 SADD National Conference Awards Banquet in Orlando, Florida, before more than 600 attendees.

"We are pleased to recognize this Illinois chapter for its extraordinarily creative spirit and deep commitment to the SADD mission of promoting safe and healthy decision-making among youth," remarked Wells. "Gardner South Wilmington High School SADD's "Road to Reality – Beyond the Mock Car Crash" program updated a traditional SADD event with innovative prevention strategies, touching the students, parents, and community members involved and generating tremendous public awareness of the harsh consequences that can result from one poor decision. We encourage other SADD chapters to model this program going forward."

Through a series of dramatic scenes portrayed in and outside the school, travelers of the road witness firsthand how one decision can change many lives. Student actors worked alongside local emergency personnel, doctors, policemen, and lawyers demonstrating such scenes as an underage drinking party, car crash, hospital emergency room, court trial, jail, memorial tribute, and more. The event was experienced by more than 400 people - many of whom felt strong emotions and now better understand the dangers of making destructive decisions. This event received significant media coverage and community support, extending its impact to an even greater audience.

"I am thrilled Gardner South Wilmington High School SADD captured this honor," stated Robyn Block, Illinois SADD Coordinator. "I was impressed by the level of community involvement and the direct role professionals played in addressing parents about their responsibility in keeping youth safe. This program provided a comprehensive and invaluable approach to changing behaviors and perceptions, and was recognized as a regional winner in Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) Operation Teen Safe Driving Program," Block added.

About SADD

SADD, the nation's leading peer-to-peer youth education, prevention, and activism organization, is committed to empowering young people to lead initiatives in their schools and communities. Founded in 1981, today SADD has thousands of chapters in middle schools, high schools, and colleges. SADD highlights prevention of many destructive behaviors and attitudes that are

harmful to young people, including underage drinking, other drug use, risky and impaired driving, and teen violence and suicide. More information about SADD can be found at sadd.org.

About Illinois SADD

Illinois Students Against Destructive Decisions is a part of The Student Assistance Center at Prevention First, a statewide nonprofit resource center focused on drug abuse prevention and education. For more information about go to ilsadd.org or prevention.org.

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