



MEDIA ADVISORY
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SADD YOUTH CELEBRATE THE START OF FOUR-DAY LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Washington, D.C. – The 2009 SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) National Conference began yesterday with more than 500 students and adult advisors from 33 states celebrating the “Climbing the Hill” camping theme by making mud pies, creating swamp monsters, and learning camp songs. Today, participants begin attending motivational presentations, seminars, and activities aimed at exchanging new approaches in prevention education and gathering ideas they can share with their communities. The conference is being held at the Bethesda North Marriott and concludes Wednesday, July 15.

Highlights of the conference include the following:

- **Keynote Speakers**

Ty Sells – Monday, July 13, 8:30-9:30 a.m. – Sells will challenge students to examine the way they treat others and explore the consequences of making decisions based on what is “cool.”

Leon Quan – Tuesday, July 14, 9-10 a.m. – Quan will speak about the challenges faced by campuses and companies as they look to develop effective leaders.

John Morello – Tuesday, July 14, 1:45-3 p.m. – Morello will present his one-man show, “Dirt,” which addresses substance abuse, self-esteem, and depression.

Patty Hendrickson – Tuesday, July 14, 4:30-5:30 p.m. – Hendrickson’s high-energy and interactive keynote address will focus on encouraging the audience members to examine themselves and take action.

- **SADD Awards Banquet** – Tuesday, July 14, 7-9 p.m.

SADD will recognize the stellar work of its most dedicated students and advisors by presenting national awards for Chapter of the Year, Activity of the Year, and Advisor of the Year. In addition to these field awards, the SADD National Board of Directors will present the following accolades: The Office of the Surgeon General will be recognized with SADD’s Outstanding Contribution Award for Academic Excellence for its work to develop *The Surgeon General’s Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking*. Cheryl Neverman, a highway safety specialist with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, will be presented with the SADD Lifetime Achievement Award for her dynamic leadership, enduring passion, and tireless commitment to the health, safety, and well-being of America’s youth. Finally, SADD will officially induct the 2009-2010 National Student Leadership Council.

- **Rally on Capitol Hill** – Wednesday, July 15, 9-9:30 a.m.
SADD students and adult advisors will gather in Upper Senate Park to address SADD's 2009 legislative priorities: teen traffic safety, underage drinking and other drug use, and teen violence, suicide, and mental health. Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and Representative Michael Capuano (D-MA) will each be honored with the 2009 SADD Excellence in Government Award for their commitment to advancing SADD's objectives regarding teens and alcohol, other drug use, violence, and other risky behaviors. The rally will be followed by visits with the students' elected representatives to discuss teen traffic safety issues.

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**.

For more information about the 2009 SADD National Conference, contact Communications Coordinator Stacey Hart at 617-359-9662 or shart@sadd.org.

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