



MEDIA ADVISORY
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HUNDREDS OF SADD YOUTH RALLY TO SUPPORT TEEN-FOCUSED LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

WHO: The rally will bring together more than 500 SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) students and adult advisors attending the 2009 SADD National Conference, including 21 students chosen to participate in SADD SPEAKs, a two-day pre-conference youth advocacy program. Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND) and Representative Michael Capuano (D-MA) have been invited to attend and will receive the 2009 SADD Excellence in Government Award.

WHEN: Wednesday, July 15, 9-9:30 a.m.

WHERE: Capitol Building, Upper Senate Park

WHAT: The 2009 SADD National Conference concludes with a rally on Capitol Hill to promote youth health and safety issues. SADD SPEAKs (Students for Policy, Education, Advocacy and Knowledge) delegates, along with SADD Executive Director Penny Wells and 2008-2009 Student of the Year Stephen Winkler of Seneca, Kansas, will take this opportunity to address SADD's legislative priorities.

SADD's 2009 legislative priorities focus on three overarching issues of critical importance to the SADD movement: teen traffic safety, underage drinking and other drug use, and teen violence, suicide, and mental health.

During the rally, SADD will honor Senator Dorgan and Representative Capuano for their commitment to advancing SADD's objectives in regards to teens and alcohol, other drug use, violence, and other risky behaviors. The rally will be followed by visits with the students' elected representatives. These visits are an opportunity for students to discuss teen traffic safety issues with their senators and congressmen.

In addition to their prominent role at the rally, SPEAKs delegates are participating in advocacy training and skill-building workshops and are planning a workshop for all conference attendees: "SADDvocracy 101." This workshop will teach SADD students how to influence public policy in their local communities and states and even at the federal level. Delegates are also developing materials that will be used by SADD students during legislative visits on Capitol Hill. SPEAKs delegates are an integral part of this year's SADD National Conference.

These are the 2009 SADD SPEAKs delegates:

- Jenessa Beem of Shelton, Washington; Shelton High School
- Taylor Birrenkott of West Fargo, North Dakota; West Fargo High School
- Emily Booth of Richland, Mississippi; Richland High School
- Matthew Cooley of Vossburg, Mississippi; Quitman High School
- Midnight Deeds-Rookstool of Topeka, Kansas; Highland Park High School
- Jamie Eastman of Wells River, Vermont; Blue Mountain Union High School
- Logan Gerber-Chavez of Farmington, Utah; NUAMES Early College High School
- Samantha Harmon of Live Oak, Florida; Suwannee High School
- Gina Marcucci of Coon Rapids, Minnesota; Anoka High School
- Elizabeth Matthews of Sherborn, Massachusetts; Dover-Sherborn High School
- Nicolas McClure of Sheffield, Vermont; Lyndon Institute
- Brittany Neely of Cameron, West Virginia; Cameron High School
- Jordan Plaisance of Metairie, Louisiana; Mt. Carmel Academy
- Pedro Ramirez-Francisco of Russellville, Alabama; Russellville High School
- Jessica Roscoe of New Rockford, North Dakota; New Rockford-Sheyenne High School
- Rachel Smith of Florence, Mississippi; McLaurin Attendance Center
- Victoria Stone of Pittsford, Vermont; Stafford Technical Center
- Brooke Sweeney of Norfolk, Massachusetts; King Philip Regional High School
- Devin Unrein of Kokomo, Indiana; St. Theodore Guerin High School
- Cecile Vocelle of Vero Beach, Florida; Sebastian River High School
- Kate Warner of Ruston, Louisiana; Ruston High School

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.

To schedule an interview with SADD SPEAKs delegates, or for more information about the 2009 SADD National Conference, contact Communications Coordinator Stacey Hart at 508-481-3568 or shart@sadd.org.

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