

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APRIL 12, 2005

NC Teens Celebrate 10th Anniversary of Kick Butts Day!
Local tobacco prevention events reflect vitality of NC's TRU campaign

Raleigh –Hundreds of teens across the state will rally on Wednesday in support of kicking butts – cigarette butts, that is. The activities mark the tenth anniversary of “Kick Butts Day,” an annual (statewide or national) event designed to empower young people in the fight to reduce and prevent tobacco use.

Kick Butts activities in your area may include youth-led health fairs and information booths, petition signings in support of 100% tobacco-free school policies, performances and contests. A complete listing of events is provided on page two.

The Kick Butts events are sponsored by community-based teen tobacco prevention programs. Most of these local efforts are funded by the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) through its statewide teen tobacco use prevention and cessation initiative. Teen advocates are leading these events with the same enthusiasm they brought to HWTF's TRU (Tobacco. Reality. Unfiltered) multi-media campaign. In December of 2004, North Carolina jumped from 30 to 21 in the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids' annual ranking on state funding for tobacco prevention and was recognized as one of the states making the most improvement in funding programs to protect young people from the dangers of tobacco use.

“The North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund and our local grantees have been turning up the heat on tobacco prevention, and the Kick Butts activities further reflect that energy and commitment,” said Alison K. McLaurin, HWTF's marketing and public affairs director. “This is a great and important opportunity for communities to tune in to what their young people are saying about the dangers of tobacco as well as what they're doing to save lives. .”

Currently, tobacco use is North Carolina's leading cause of preventable death. Approximately 36 percent of high school students in North Carolina smoke, with more than 3,000 kids taking up this fatal habit each day. Accordingly to recent statistics, roughly one-third of these young people will die prematurely from a tobacco-related disease.

ABOUT TRU:

Tobacco. Reality. Unfiltered., commonly known as **TRU**, is North Carolina's first-ever statewide youth tobacco prevention multi-media campaign that uses testimonials of real North Carolina teens as well as hard-hitting facts to dissuade young people from using tobacco. This campaign is part of the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund's (HWTF) teen tobacco use prevention initiative. Funded at \$28 million from HWTF, this grassroots initiative includes the **TRU** media campaign, as well as a grant program including 70 grants (50 community-based grants, 4 statewide grants and 16 tobacco free school mini-grants) to a total of 55 organizations. To find out more about **TRU**, please visit www.realityunfiltered.com

ABOUT THE NC HEALTH AND WELLNESS TRUST FUND:

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund makes North Carolina stronger, both physically and economically, by funding programs that promote preventive health. Created by the General Assembly in 2000 to allocate a portion of North Carolina's share of the national tobacco settlement, HWTF has invested \$127 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$78 million to fund a prescription drug assistance program. For more information, please visit www.hwtfc.org.

- MORE -

Kick Butts Day/Page 2

All Kick Butts Day activities and events listed below are scheduled for **Wednesday, April 13, 2005**:

Grantee: Surry County Health & Nutrition Center

Event: What's really in a cigarette?

Time: 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Contact information: Brooke Worsley at (336) 401-8545

Event Background: A display will be set up in the Elkin High School Lunch Room, depicting the substances and chemicals that are in cigarettes.

Event: Tobacco Poster Contest

Contact information: Brooke Worsley (336) 401-8545

Event Background: Elkin Elementary's fourth to sixth grade students will participate in a Poster Contest for Kick Butts Day. The winning poster will be chosen on April 13th. April. The winning posters will be placed on the VW Beetle Tobacco Free Car.

Grantee: Alleghany County Schools

Event: Memorial Wall

Contact: Lidjea Andrews at (336) 372-8546

Event Background: The Glade Creek TATU club will be doing a memorial wall to honor those who have lost their lives to tobacco and to send a message to the tobacco industry. They will organize a memorial and have participants gather messages in memory of loved ones lost and tell the tobacco industry to stop targeting kids as replacement customers.

Event: Smoke-Free Dining

Contact: Lidjea Andrews at (336) 372-8546

Event Background: The Alleghany High School Health Promotion Club will work with local restaurants to support Smoke-Free Dining Day. Teen advocates will also record a PSA and will list the local restaurants that will participate in the event.

Grantee: Ashe County Schools

Event: Cigarette Butt Clean-up at the Park

Time: 11:a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Contact: Callie Yates at (336) 384-3591; Cell (336) 977-9407

Event Background: In conjunction with Kick Butts Day, a cigarette butt pick-up will be held at the local community park.

Grantee: Healthy Caldwellians

Event: "What's in a Cigarette?" skit

Contact: Ron Speights at (828) 426-8533

Background: Healthy Caldwellians in conjunction with the student health club is going to present "What's in a Cigarette?" at Hibriten High School.

Event: "Know Tobacco" Quiz

Contact: Ron Speights at (828) 426-8533

Event Background: Healthy Caldwellians, in conjunction with the student health club, Warriors on the Horizon, is going to present "know tobacco" quiz at West Caldwell High.

Grantee: Health Caldwellians

Event: "What's in a Cigarette?"

Contact: Ron Speights (828) 426-8533

Background: Healthy Caldwellians, in conjunction with the student health club, is going to present "What's in a Cigarette?" at South Caldwell High.

Kick Butts Day/Page 3

Grantee: Union County Public School (UCPS)

Contact: Kim Bayha (704) 225-2742

Event Background: UCPS's two middle and five high schools will plan a variety of tobacco awareness promotions, including tobacco-free pledges, a Memorial Wall and distributing the "1200" red wristlets from Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids.

Grantee: Mecklenburg County Health Department

Contact: Joy Beck at (704) 336-4680

Event Background: Butler, Garinger, Midwood and Hopewell High School students will celebrate Kick Butt's Day by creating health fairs, signing petitions and speaking out on teen tobacco issues.

Grantee: Chowan Regional Health Care Foundation

Contact: Jean Bunch at (252) 482-6755

Event Background: Students will be collecting tobacco advertisements from magazines from January 13th to mid-April, and will send them to the publishers of those magazines with letters from youth at Chowan Middle School.

Grantee: Cancer Services of Gaston County

Contact: Karen Cox at (704) 864-1271

Event Background: Cancer Services will be at Gaston College on Kick Butts Day raising awareness and furthering interest in tobacco-free communities by distributing surveys and other information.

Grantee: Catawba County Health Department

Contact: Candice Justice at (828) 695-5862

Event Background: The Council on Adolescents will be setting up tobacco informational booths during lunchtime at three area high schools. The booths will have cessation information, prevention brochures, the lung comparison kit, the jar of tar, and students will receive incentives. The Catawba County Health Department will be setting up display tables outside each clinic (spit tobacco at dental, pregnancy and smoking at prenatal, teen smoking at the teen clinic, etc.), Ciggy Butts will be giving out stickers and incentives, the lung comparison kit and jar of tar will be set up in the lobby, prevention announcements will be read over the PA system all day, and patients and visitors will be encouraged to trade in their tobacco products for tobacco survival kits.

Grantee: Chatham County Public Health Department

Contact: Joan Phillips-Trimmer at (919) 545-8386.

Event Background: Sage Academy youth will man a booth in cafeteria at lunchtime with a "What's in tobacco" display, distribute a survey for youth interested in tobacco prevention programs, distribute pencils and make intercom announcements that stress the importance of being tobacco free.

Grantee: Halifax County Schools

Contact: Barbara Wilkins at (252) 586-4158

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Event Background: The Kick Butts Day Wall of Hope and Promise will involve two banners, that will be displayed at all Halifax middle and high schools. Teens will sign the banners, pledging their support of tobacco prevention initiatives. Teen advocates will read facts over the intercom and will offer resources to help other teens quit, who are currently using tobacco. Tobacco prevention information will be on a table near the Wall of Hope and Promise. T.A.T.U. (Teens Against Tobacco Use) peer educators will monitor the activity.