



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Champaign-Urbana Public Health District**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
October 18, 2007

**Contact:** Nikki Hillier, Program  
Coordinator, (217) 531-2914  
Lori A. Holmes, Public Relations,  
(217) 531-2927

## **Area Students Will Watch Their Promises Bloom and Grow with the Help of the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District**

### ***Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Partners with Local Schools to Promote Tobacco-Free Lifestyles for Students***

Champaign, IL – The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) has partnered with Leal Elementary School and Ludlow Elementary School to promote tobacco-free lifestyles for both the students and their communities. Each school is committed to planting 500 red tulips in gardens on school grounds. Each tulip will represent a student who made a promise to lead a tobacco-free lifestyle.

“Many people think it is hard to live tobacco-free”, said one student. “I hope they see our garden (in the spring) and see how many of us are living tobacco-free. Maybe it will help them.”

“Plant a Promise” is a state-wide initiative in conjunction with Red Ribbon Week, a national movement memorializing Kiki Camarena, a DEA agent murdered in Mexico City by drug traffickers in 1985. Red tulip bulbs are planted to celebrate those who have chosen to be tobacco-free and to honor those whose lives have been touched by a tobacco-related disease.

Last year CUPHD and local schools planted over 1200 red tulip bulbs in Champaign-Urbana communities. CUPHD hopes for more participation this year, and encourages community members to plant tobacco-free gardens at work, with a club, or at home. CUPHD will happily present an official “Plant a Promise” sign for these gardens. Participants may request these free signs by calling 217-531-2915.

“Creating a tobacco-free community starts with awareness”, said Nikki Hillier, Program Coordinator at CUPHD. “Often people are so inundated with commercials and advertisements about the benefits of living tobacco-free, that they “tune them out”. “Plant A Promise” gardens are hard to miss, and they always generate a positive response not only from participants, but from the public at large.”

“Plant A Promise” is funded by the Illinois Department of Public Health, and is a state-wide event involving several Illinois counties. Champaign County’s “Plant A Promise” is being organized by CUPHD, The Champaign County Health Department, and The Champaign County Tobacco Prevention Coalition.

For more information on this or any of the many other CUPHD programs, please call 217-352-7961 or visit our website at [www.cuphd.org](http://www.cuphd.org).

###