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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

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Centennial High School Students “Commercialize” The Benefits of a Tobacco-Free Life to Peers & Public

Champaign, IL – Centennial High School students had their first taste of Hollywood – Illinois-Style when they volunteered to assist the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District and REALITY Illinois in making two commercials to be broadcasted on Insight Media cable and the local CW. On April 17, 2007 the commercials entitled “Sucker” and “Voicemail” were recorded at Centennial High School using scripts provided by REALITY Illinois. These commercials are currently airing throughout the month of June on Insight Media Cable on such youth popular stations as “Comedy Central”, “FX” and “MTV”.

“Being in a commercial was really hard work,” said one Centennial High School student, “We had to shoot one part 8 times because we kept laughing and messing up, but you can’t tell on the final commercial. Since the commercial has been on TV, kids I don’t know me stop me and say “Hey, I saw you on TV last night – that’s cool.” I just hope they remember smoking isn’t cool.”

“Kids are a powerful part of the solution to reducing youth tobacco use,” said Jennifer Jackson, Health Educator for CUPHD, “Centennial High School students are sending the message that smoking is not acceptable and the consequences are both dire and preventable.”

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, killing more than 400,000 people each year. Everyday, more than 4,000 kids try their first cigarettes; another 1,000 kids become addicted smokers, one-third of whom will die prematurely as a result.

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