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Raze unveils campaign featuring real stories from State teens

Officials at the West Virginia Department of Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health, say Raze, West Virginia's youth-led tobacco prevention movement, will release a media campaign that will feature teens from around the state who are telling their personal stories about how tobacco has affected their lives.

This campaign is an extension of last year's "I did it" campaign, which encouraged teens to submit their stories about how tobacco has affected them personally. The "I did it" campaign was launched in August 2010 and included television commercials, print ads, mall displays, movie theater advertising and sponsored local events. Following the campaign, Raze received more than 600 stories from teens all over the state, sharing their personal stories about tobacco.

These stories were used as the foundation of the latest campaign, entitled "Raze for Real." Specific teens' stories were chosen to spotlight as part of the campaign and these teens were showcased in television commercials, print ads, billboards, social media initiatives and more. The campaign is set to launch in early fall 2011.

As part of the campaign, Raze created its own Facebook and Twitter pages, as well as its own YouTube channel, where teens can go and find out more information about the program and the teens featured in the campaign. In addition, the Raze website will receive a "Raze for Real" facelift and continue to serve as a resource for teens to learn more about Raze activities and membership opportunities.

The "Raze for Real" campaign will continue to the strong messaging against tobacco use amongst West Virginia youth. While smoking prevalence is declining among West Virginia's youth, according to a recent state Youth Tobacco Survey, 22 percent of West Virginia's high school students continue to smoke.

With its newest campaign, Raze is giving a voice to a generation that is still very affected by tobacco use and giving a face to the tobacco prevention movement. From the tragic to the inspiring, these stories tell the truth about tobacco – for users and for their loved ones.

For more information on the campaign and the program, please visit www.razewv.com.

About Raze

Raze is a teen anti-tobacco movement with a membership of thousands of West Virginia youth. It is a campaign funded and facilitated by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health's Division of Tobacco Prevention, in collaboration with the state American Lung Association. Raze is represented in all 55 West Virginia counties. Since its inception in 2001, nearly 15,000 teens have helped in the fight against Big Tobacco.