

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund announces \$1.2 million in grants awarded to reduce tobacco use among NC college students

North Carolina leads the nation in number of tobacco-free colleges

Raleigh, NC – The North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) announces \$1.2 million in grant funding awarded for Phase III of its Tobacco-Free Colleges (TFC) Initiative to combat tobacco use and prevent exposure to secondhand smoke among students in the state's colleges, universities and community colleges. Grant awards range from \$200,000 to \$300,000 for a two-year period beginning July 1, 2010.

Phases I and II of the TFC Initiative resulted in tremendous change. Currently, North Carolina leads the nation in the number of tobacco-free colleges with one-third of the state's colleges and universities having adopted the tobacco-free policy (37 out of 110). Phase III will have full-time grant coordinators that will serve a minimum of 12 campuses each.

"The groundwork laid in Phases I and II has already made North Carolina a national leader," said HWTF chair, Dr. Chuck Willson. "In this next phase, we want to continue to build on this momentum and are supporting a regional approach and disseminating best practices statewide."

Tobacco use has been identified as the number one preventable cause of premature death and disease in the country. More than a quarter (28%) of 18-24 year-old North Carolinians smoke, representing the highest smoking rate across all age groups in our state.

A UNC-Chapel Hill evaluation concluded that HWTF's Tobacco-Free Colleges Initiative successfully accelerated tobacco-free policy adoption, created new campus coalitions, increased QuitlineNC promotions to young adults, and received strong support from college officials. A news release issued yesterday by UNC-Chapel Hill evaluators led by Dr. Adam Goldstein stated that the policies promoted through the TFC Initiative protect more than 159,000 college students -- as well as faculty, staff and campus visitors -- from secondhand smoke.

Phase III grant recipients include East Carolina University, Guilford County Department of Health, Mecklenburg County Health Department, and UNC-Wilmington. A sum of \$200,000 was also allocated to the initiative for technical assistance.

Grant recipients will work on college and university campuses to prevent the initiation of tobacco use, promote tobacco use cessation, and eliminate tobacco-related health disparities among college students, as well as to eliminate exposure to second hand tobacco smoke on college and community colleges campuses.

The HWTF's Tobacco-Free Colleges Initiative was launched in January 2006 to combat an increase in smoking among college students that was observed in the 1990s. Phase I awarded grants to 20 organizations working with 58 college campuses in North Carolina. In Phase II, HWTF awarded more than \$1.4 million in grant funding to 14 institutions bringing the total number of campuses served to 64.

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For more information about HWTF's Tobacco-Free Colleges Initiative, visit the Web site at: <http://www.tobaccofreecollegesnc.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 \$199 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$116 million to fund prescription drug assistance programs. For more information, please visit www.HealthWellNC.com.

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All grant recipients are listed by name, amount awarded, and counties and campuses served in the table below.

LEAD ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT AWARDED	COUNTIES SERVED	CAMPUSES SERVED
East Carolina University	\$200,000	Beaufort, Edgecombe, Halifax, Johnston, Wayne, Nash, Pitt, Wilson	Beaufort CC, Edgecombe CC, Halifax CC, Johnston CC, Miller-Motte College, Mt. Olive College, Nash CC, Pitt CC, Wilson CC
Guilford County Department of Health	\$300,000	Guilford, Davidson, Alamance, Forsyth, Randolph, Surry, Wilkes	Bennett College, Davidson CCC, ECPI College of Technology, Elon University, Forsyth Technical CC, Greensboro College, Guilford College, Guilford Technical CC, UNC School of the Arts, NC A&T, Randolph CC, Salem College, Surry CC, UNCG, Wake Forest University, Wilkes CC, Winston-Salem State University
Mecklenburg County Health Department	\$300,000	Mecklenburg, Iredell, Gaston, Catawba, Jackson, Avery, Staley, Cleveland	Johnson C. Smith University, Queens University, Davidson College, Johnson & Wales, Art Institute of Charlotte, Gaston College, Belmont Abbey, Lenoir-Rhyne University, Catawba College, South Piedmont CC, Western Carolina University, Southwestern CC, Mayland CC, Lees-McRae College, UNC-Charlotte, Catawba Valley CC, Stanly Community College, Gardner-Webb University
UNC-Wilmington	\$200,000	Nash, Brunswick, New Hanover, Harnett, Pasquotank	Nash CC, Southeastern CC, Campbell University, Brunswick CC, Robeson CC, College of the Albemarle, UNC-Asheville, UNC-Wilmington