

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NEWS ADVISORY
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TOBACCO PREVENTION EVENT OFFERS TRIANGLE TEENS THE CHANCE TO BE “BUTT-KICKING” TV STARS

TRU ROAD TRIP BRINGS TOBACCO PREVENTION MESSAGE TO FORMER SITE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTION ON JULY 17

(Durham, NC) –Triangle-area teens will have a chance to star in a new series of teen tobacco use prevention television spots when the Tobacco. Reality. Unfiltered. (TRU) Road Trip comes to Durham's **American Tobacco Historic District** on **Saturday, July 17**, from **3 to 6 p.m.**

TRU, the state's teen tobacco prevention and cessation initiative sponsored by the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF), will offer local teens a unique opportunity to speak out about the dangers of tobacco use based on their personal experiences in the very buildings that were once devoted to the mass production of cigarettes. In addition, the TRU Road Trip will present a series of thought-provoking exhibits on tobacco's hazards. Victims of tobacco-related illnesses will also be on-hand to share their personal experiences.

The TRU Road Trip, traveling to six North Carolina cities and towns this summer, is gathering teen testimonials for new TV commercials that will air in the fall. Visitors will also have a chance to win prizes, including tickets to Carolina Hurricanes games and the TJ Maxx 2004 Tour of Gymnastics Champions. WQOK 97.5 FM radio station will broadcast live from the event. The Durham Chamber of Commerce will also be on hand at the event.

Specific youth groups participating include:

- EYES Incorporated of Wake County
- Question Why? Central Youth Empowerment Center
- The TRU Group of Orange County

“The dangers of tobacco use are impossible to ignore,” said Lt. Gov. Beverly Perdue, HWTF chairperson, during a June press conference in Raleigh announcing the TRU Road Trip. “We need to get tobacco products out of our children’s reach and out of our schools.” Lt. Gov. Perdue noted that when the first TRU TV campaign launched in April,

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visits to the campaign's Web site, www.realityunfiltered.com, shot up 140 percent from the site's previous high mark and that traffic has remained higher in 2004 than in 2003. "Teens are definitely interested," Lt. Gov. Perdue said. "Now is the time to act."

The TRU Road Trip's schedule as it continues to trek through North Carolina is as follows:

- Durham (July 17, 3 - 6 p.m., American Tobacco Historic District at the corner of Jackie Robinson Place and Blackwell Street across from the Durham Bulls Athletic Park)
- Fayetteville (July 24, 1 - 4 p.m., Cross Creek Mall)
- Wilmington (July 30, Time TBD, Legion Stadium, Wilmington Sharks baseball game)
- Hickory (August 27, 5:30 - 8 p.m., L.P. Frans Stadium, Hickory Crawdads baseball game)

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 \$55 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$78 million to fund a prescription drug assistance program. For more information, please visit www.hwtfc.org.

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