

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund Named
National Finalist for Teen Tobacco Use Prevention Campaign**
PRWeek Awards to be announced on March 5

Raleigh, NC – The TRU (Tobacco.Reality.Unfiltered.) campaign, part of the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund's (HWTF) statewide teen tobacco use prevention initiative, has been named a finalist for PRWeek's "Public Sector Campaign of the Year." The national honor recognizes HWTF's integrated media campaign to prevent teen tobacco use in North Carolina through a series of five provocative television spots, grassroots outreach and a Web-based recruitment effort that enlisted teens to take a tobacco-free pledge. The PRWeek awards will be announced later this week.

"We are honored to receive national recognition for this important campaign. The focus of our tobacco use prevention campaign is to educate young people in North Carolina about the dangers of tobacco use. This research-based campaign has resonated with teens across the state and continues to move us towards our state's first tobacco-free generation," said Vandana Shah, HWTF's Executive Director.

The TRU Recruitment Campaign, which launched in 2007, was a year-long initiative with the goal to recruit 5,000 North Carolina teens to take a tobacco-free pledge and become youth advocates for the TRU movement. Teens logged on to the TRU Web site (www.realityunfiltered.com) and signed a pledge to live tobacco-free. With help from HWTF grantees across the state, the campaign surpassed its goal of 5,000 signatures well before the June 2008 deadline.

HWTF supplemented its recruitment efforts with a statewide television campaign, featuring an emotional testimonial about the adverse health consequences of prolonged tobacco use. The television spots focus on Asheville resident Reena Roberts, 29, who started smoking at 13 and was diagnosed with cancer at 21. She had her larynx removed and now speaks with an electronic device. The spots were launched across North Carolina on teen-oriented networks such as MTV, BET, Fox and Comedy Central.

The TRU Recruitment Campaign and the TV spots were developed in partnership with HWTF's media vendor, Capstrat, a Raleigh-based communications agency.

The 2009 PRWeek awards will take place on March 5, 2009 in New York. Entries are submitted from all 50 states and several foreign countries, and are judged by top professionals in advertising, public relations, education, government and marketing.

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 \$102 million to fund prescription drug assistance programs. For more information, please visit www.HealthWellNC.com.

ABOUT CAPSTRAT

Capstrat, a communications agency based in Raleigh, N.C., solves the complex issues that health care, technology, energy/infrastructure and financial organizations face at critical moments. We blend marketing communications, interactive communications, public relations and public affairs to tell stories with power and persuasion. Visit us at www.capstrat.com.

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