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HWTF'S QUITLINE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES ON TV, FEATURES COACHES

NC State Football Coach Tom O'Brien stars in newest ad

(Raleigh, NC) — Just in time for the ACC Men's Basketball Tournament, the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF) will launch its first television ad promoting the Quitline and featuring NC State University Football Coach Tom O'Brien. The television campaign is designed to encourage 18 to 24-year-old smokers to call the Quitline to get help in quitting smoking. As part of this campaign, Quitline TV spots are airing on CBS affiliates in the Triangle, Triad and Charlotte metropolitan areas.

Quitline is a component of HWTF's statewide Tobacco-Free Colleges initiative, which includes \$1.6 million in grants to 20 college and community college-based programs. Studies show that 18 to 24-year-olds represent the *only* demographic in the United States in which smoking rates have increased in recent years. Nearly 28% of these NC college-aged youth are smokers. Providing Quitline services to college-aged smokers is a key element in the Trust Fund's strategy to reverse that troubling trend. This strategy builds on HWTF's success in reducing smoking rates among NC youth.

In addition to promoting use of the Quitline by college students, HWTF's Tobacco-Free Colleges grantees are charged with promoting the adoption of smoke-free policies at their own institutions. Since the New Year, several colleges involved in the grant program have announced their success in adopting smoke free campus policies, including Gardner Webb University, Stanly Community College, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College and College of the Albemarle.

The Coach O'Brien Quitline TV ad is the first in a series of ads featuring college coaches from across the state. The success of the HWTF-funded Quitline is based on effective one-on-one coaching designed to help young smokers quit. **The ad can be viewed online at HealthWellNC.com (click on the Quitline logo to find the spot).** Free Quitline services are also available to smokers over the age of 24 through funding provided by NC Department of Health and Human Services. In the next few weeks, HWTF will begin airing a second television ad that features East Carolina University's Football Coach Skip Holtz. ECU, in Greenville, is also one of HWTF's Tobacco-Free College grantees.

HWTF Chair Lt. Gov. Bev Perdue said the televised ACC Men's Basketball Tournament is the perfect vehicle to promote healthy lifestyles.

"We are excited that our ads will be featured during the ACC Men's Basketball Tournament as HWTF continues to find ways to reduce the number of college-aged students who use tobacco products," said Lt. Gov. Bev Perdue. "I am encouraging young ACC fans who smoke, especially those who are 18 to 24-years-old, to call the Quitline to find out how they can kick the habit that deprives them of the chance to live a healthy life."

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 \$127 million to support preventive health initiatives and \$78 million to fund a prescription drug assistance program of seniors. For more information, please visit www.HealthWellNC.com.