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WASHINGTON-METRO TEENS **LAUDED FOR THEIR FIGHT AGAINST** **UNDERAGE DRINKING**

LOCAL ALCOHOL-EDUCATION GROUP RECOGNIZES AREA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR DOING “THE RIGHT THING”

Washington, D.C., April 24 – Calling it recognition of high school students “doing the right thing,” a local alcohol-education group today awarded four Washington-metropolitan area high school student groups with honors for their efforts in fighting underage drinking.

At this morning’s awards ceremony at the Verizon Center in Washington, D.C., the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) presented its 17th-annual GEICO Student Awards to:

- **H.D. Woodson High School’s** SADD Club, District of Columbia;
- **James Madison High School’s** SADD Club, Fairfax County, Virginia;
- **Watkins Mill High School’s** Hispanic Heritage Club, Montgomery Co., Maryland;
- and **Eleanor Roosevelt High School’s** SADD Club, Prince George’s Co., Maryland.

(SADD: Students Against Destructive Decisions.)

The GEICO Student Awards, now in their 17th year, were presented by WRAP to Washington-metropolitan area high school student groups promoting alcohol and drug-free lifestyles to their peers. The popular awards – judged by members of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments’ (COG) Drug Prevention and Education Committee in tandem with WRAP – were presented to just one student group in each of the Greater Washington counties and or cities served by WRAP. (Entries came from the District of Columbia, Fairfax, Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties).

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Student groups were judged on their leadership, effectiveness, innovation and involvement of both the student body and community in their efforts to prevent underage drinking. Activities of the winning groups included a variety of creative initiatives including: developing “contracts” between students and parents regarding the refraining from alcohol and drug use; organizing alcohol-free teen social events and forums; establishing mentoring relationships between high school and intermediate and elementary school students; and participating on town governing bodies.

At a packed awards ceremony this afternoon at the Verizon Center’s Acela Club, nearly 150 high school students gathered and applauded while the four winning student groups received both plaques and \$ 500 each from GEICO to continue their efforts of keeping their peers on the right track.

ABC7 anchor Alison Starling served as the day’s Master of Ceremonies while speakers included Virginia State Police Senior Trooper Michael Middleton as well as award sponsor Janice Minshall, Assistant Vice President, Corporate Communications with GEICO.

“In 2007, nearly one-third of all teen drivers killed in this country’s traffic crashes had been drinking,” said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP’s President. ***“Today’s student group winners represent the front line in the fight against underage drinking in Greater Washington and we commend their efforts in this far from won battle.”***

Founded in 1982, the Washington Regional Alcohol Program is an award-winning public-private partnership working to prevent drunk driving and underage drinking in the Washington-metropolitan area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro-Washington area’s alcohol-related traffic deaths consistently lower than the national average. WRAP, however, may best be known to area residents via the organization’s popular free cab ride service for would-be drunk drivers, *SoberRide*. For more information, visit WRAP’s web site at **www.wrap.org** .

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