

**CONTACT:** Kurt Gregory Erickson  
President

**PHONE:** W. 703 / 893-0461  
**MOBILE.** 703 / 625-2303

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**May 16, 2014**

## **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., May 16** – 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 Maggiano’s Little Italy in Washington, D.C., the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) presented its 22<sup>nd</sup> -annual GEICO Student Awards to:

- 1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE (TIE): **Eleanor Roosevelt High School**, SADD Club, Prince George’s County, MD and the **Unified Prevention Coalition Youth Council**, Fairfax County, VA;
- 2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE: **Fairfax High School**, Fairfax Against Substance Abuse Group, Fairfax Co., VA;
- 3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE: **Academy of the Holy Cross**, SADD Group, Montgomery County, MD.

*(SADD: Students Against Destructive Decisions)*

In addition, WRAP bestowed Honorable Mention honors to the following Greater Washington area high school student groups: DeMatha Catholic High School, Prince George’s County, Maryland; Gar-Field Senior High School, SADD Club, Prince William County, Virginia; Quander Road School, Men of Character, Fairfax County, Virginia; T.C. Williams High School, Above the Influence Group, Fairfax County, Virginia; and Yorktown High School, Above the Influence Group, Arlington County, Virginia.

The GEICO Student Awards, now in their 22<sup>nd</sup> 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 were judged by a panel of area substance abuse prevention professionals including representatives from local traffic safety organizations and prevention coalitions.

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: signing “pledges” to refrain from alcohol and drug use during prom season; active use of social media to promote healthy lifestyles; organizing alcohol-free teen social events; and reenactments demonstrating the devastating effects of alcohol.

At a packed awards ceremony this morning at Maggiano’s Little Italy, over 100 high school students gathered and applauded while the four winning student groups received both plaques and monetary awards of up to \$1,000 each from GEICO to continue their efforts of keeping their peers on the right track. Each student group earning Honorable Mention honors were presented with both a certificate and a \$ 100 award to sustain their “lifesaving work.”

Today’s speakers included local drunk driving victim and Executive Director of the Montgomery County, Maryland-based anti-drunk driving nonprofit organization, Rory J. Weichbrod Unfinished Business, Inc. and award sponsor Janice Minshall, Assistant Vice President, Corporate Communications with GEICO. Today’s Master of Ceremonies was ABC7 News Reporter Jennifer Donelan.

***“According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administrative figures, over a quarter (28%) of all teen drivers involved in fatal crashes in the U.S. in 2012 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](http://www.wrap.org).

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