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## **Kick Butts Day will Unite Salt Lake Youth Against Tobacco**

Salt Lake City, March 28 - On March 28, 2007, Kick Butts Day will unite local youth in the fight against tobacco. Members of Teen Advocates Against Tobacco will creatively illustrate the toll taken by the tobacco industry when they hang a large graffiti wall at Sugarhouse Park.

Jasmena Nersesian, a ninth grade student at Bonneville Jr. High used her artistic abilities to graffiti "1200 Everyday" in the center of the wall. 1,200 is the number of Americans who die from tobacco related disease, including disease caused by secondhand smoke, every day. The public is invited to come sign the graffiti wall in remembrance of someone whose life has been affected or lost due to tobacco or in objection to the predatory marketing practices of the Tobacco Industry.

"In the two minutes it takes me to brush my teeth, big tobacco spends more than \$58,000 enticing people to smoke," says Marissa Beckstrom, and eleventh grader at Cottonwood High School. "Teen Advocates Against Tobacco exposes the tobacco industry's manipulation to get youth like us hooked on a deadly habit just so they can make a profit."

According to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, each day in the U.S. 1,000 youth become regular smokers. Roughly one-third of these youth will die prematurely due to tobacco-related diseases. Tobacco use kills more people than alcohol, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined.

"More than seven percent of Utah's youth smoke," says Kathy Baebler, Tobacco Prevention and Control Manager at Salt Lake Valley Health Department. "By giving them the facts about tobacco, we can help them avoid this deadly addiction."

Kick Butts Day activities are being held across the state. Young people are aiming to make tobacco statistics much more personal by standing up for the 1,200 people who die each year due to tobacco-related illness. Although adult smokers are quitting, a steady supply of youth move in to replace them. According the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, "Big Tobacco" views these youth as "replacement smokers," and targets them as tomorrow's potential life-long customers. Almost 90 percent of people start smoking before the age of 19 and, the younger one starts to smoke, the more addicted one becomes.

For more information about Utah's war against tobacco visit [www.warriorsagainsttobacco.com](http://www.warriorsagainsttobacco.com). Kick Butts Day is nationally led by the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. Youth events will be taking place all across the country on March 28, 2007. For more information visit [www.kickbuttsday.org](http://www.kickbuttsday.org).

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