

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 20, 2012

Kick Butts Day, March 21

LAS VEGAS – If it's March 21 . . . it's Kick Butts Day. The Southern Nevada Health District's youth advocacy group called Evolvment and the Student Tobacco Awareness Coalition (STAC), a UNLV student group, will commemorate the day with a display of 648 pennants at the UNLV Alumni Amphitheatre. The display highlights the 648 colleges and universities with comprehensive smoke-free policies and will be available between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. In addition, a collection of cigarette butts picked up on campus during a three-day period will be displayed at the same time. Kick Butts Day is a nationwide initiative, sponsored by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids to stop tobacco use by children and young adults. For information or directions to the event, contact Malcolm Ahlo, (702) 460-2946.

Evolvment and STAC work together to encourage UNLV to adopt smoke-free policies campus wide as a measure to protect the health of staff, students, faculty and visitors. Approximately 82 percent of UNLV students are non-smokers.

It is estimated that each day across the nation, about 3,500 children under the age of 18 will try their first cigarette while another 1,000 children who have already tried their first cigarette will now become regular smokers. Each year, approximately 2,700 Nevadans under age 18 become daily smokers; approximately 5.7 million packs of cigarettes are bought or smoked by children in Nevada. About 80 percent of adult smokers became regular smokers before the age of 18.

There is good news . . . tobacco use continues to drop across the country, including rates in Nevada. In a 2009 report, adult smoking prevalence in Clark County was 22.3 percent compared to 26.6 percent in 2002. Youth smoking rates have declined in Clark County as well, from 30.7 percent in 1999 to 12.8 percent in 2010.

The health district's Tobacco Control Program combats youth tobacco use by developing programs that go beyond traditional methods, such as extensive social marketing programs, teen-focused counter-advertising activities, community outreach programs that reach into minority communities, and campaigns developed for alternative lifestyles. By using CDC's Best Practices models, the Tobacco Control Program has developed activities and policy efforts that have contributed to a significant decrease in youth and adult smoking rates, expanded programs directed toward diverse communities, and increased knowledge of the dangers of secondhand smoke.

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Kick Butts Day – add one

Smokers can contact the Nevada Tobacco Users' Helpline at 1-800-QUIT NOW for free assistance to help them quit smoking. They can speak with a professional, licensed counselor for confidential assistance. Smokers can also visit the health district's Get Healthy Clark County website, www.GetHealthyClarkCounty.org find tips to help them quit smoking and additional resources.

Updated information about the Southern Nevada Health District can be found on Facebook www.facebook.com/SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict, on YouTube www.youtube.com/SNHealthDistrict or Twitter: www.twitter.com/SNHDInfo, Ez2stop: www.twitter.com/ez2stop, or Get Healthy Clark County: www.twitter.com/gethealthycc. The health district is now available in Spanish on Twitter www.twitter.com/TuSNHD. Don't have a Twitter account? Follow the health district on your phone by texting "follow SNHDInfo" to 40404.