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Wenatchee Youth's Anti-Bullying Effort wins Grand Prize Trip to DC

GRAND MOUND, Wash.—A group of young women from Wenatchee shared their efforts to prevent bullying in their schools and community and won the Grand Prize at the 2013 Spring Youth Forum-- a \$3,000 partial scholarship to an upcoming prevention leadership conference in Washington, DC.

The group competed against 40 other youth teams who won scholarships to the Spring Youth Forum at the Great Wolf Convention Center. The groups shared their efforts to fight drugs, alcohol, tobacco, bullying, suicide, gang violence and other destructive behaviors in their schools and communities in a daylong competition for prizes.

Now in its fifth year, the Washington Prevention Spring Youth Forum is presented by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery with support from the Washington Attorney General's Office.

The 41 teams were divided into seven rooms where they first presented their projects to each other. Their peer teams and adult judges then assessed each presentation in five categories: innovation, sustainability, impact, presentation style and professionalism and collaborations and partnerships.

The top teams from each room then presented their projects to the entire group. Teams received gift cards for either winning their room or receiving the highest score in a given category.

Along with the **Wenatchee Youth Coalition**, the top teams from each room were:

- **The Darrington Youth Coalition**, whose Step Up Campaign was an on-going project that targets alcohol and marijuana abuse as well as bullying;
- **The Maple Valley Youth Council**, who created an instructional video and poster contest in South King County to emphasize the dangers of problem gambling
- **Quincy Youth Action**, who developed the "Family Fun in the Park" project to provide fun, safe, positive activities for youth in Quincy
- **Granite Falls "Be the Change" Youth Coalition**, who worked to prevent destructive behaviors by emphasizing youth can make one choice to change a life
- **Whatcom Prevention Coalition's Making a Difference (M.A.D)** team, who engaged community members and leaders to fight suicide in Whatcom County

- **Wahki' Hi' Prevention**, who put eighth-grade students through a three-day “prevention boot camp,” where high school students reinforced positive behaviors and provided tips on how to enjoy a successful high school experience.

Category winners included:

- **White Swan Dream Makers**, the 2011 Grand Prize winners, who won this year's Sustainability award for their continued work to address destructive teen behaviors. This year's “Know the Facts” project was designed to raise awareness of the dangers of underage marijuana use
- **Dayton High School SHEO (Students Helping Each Other) Club**, who won the Innovation award for their two-day Spring Into Action regional high school conference, developed in collaboration with the Maple Valley Youth Council, featuring guest speakers and youth workshop presenters
- **Making a Change in Sequim**, who won the Collaboration award for their summer food program, where they partnered with the City Council, Boys & Girls Club, Sequim Food Bank, Sequim School District and the County Commission to address the rising rates of free and reduced lunches in their school district
- **Southeast Asian Young Men's Program**, the 2012 Grand Prize winners, who won the 2013 Professionalism award for their presentation on their latest film project, designed to prevent gangs in SE Asian American communities
- **Lincoln YLC (Youth Leading Change)**, who won the Impact award for their campaign to stop dating violence.