

NEWS ADVISORY

For Release: March 3, 2009

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Prescription Drug Abuse Warning: *Youth advocates speak out*

WHO: Youth volunteers in a high school public health internship program, *Students Together Against Alcohol 'N Drugs* (STAAND). STAAND interns represent public and private high schools in the East County.

Speakers include:

- Ivette Navarro (Bilingual Spanish/English), Steele Canyon Charter High School
- Kelly Phung, Mt. Miguel High School
- John Wilde, Special Agent, Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement
- Leyla Tran, PharmD, Sharp Grossmont Hospital
- Bennet Blancaflor, PharmD, Sharp Grossmont Hospital

WHAT: 2009 marks the **14th Annual Safe and Sober Youth Journalist Event**. Each year STAAND volunteers organize an event to brief the media, including high school journalism students, about a timely health issue that impacts area teens. This year's event will expose the myths that drive prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse among youth and reveal the truth. More than 100 journalism students will participate this year.

WHEN: **Wednesday, March 4, 2009**
10:00 am – 1:00 pm (one-on-one interviews available throughout the event)

WHERE: **La Mesa Community Center**
4975 Memorial Drive, La Mesa 91941

WHY: **More teens abuse prescription drugs than any illicit drugs except marijuana**

- 24% of East County teens (11th grade) abused prescription painkillers compared to 19% of their peers (11th grade) throughout San Diego County as a whole. (2006/07 California Healthy Kids Survey)
- 56% of teens don't see great risk in using prescription painkillers without a doctor's prescription (Partnership Attitude Tracking Study 2007)
- Among teen 12 and older, first time use of pain relievers to get high surpassed marijuana for the first time in 2006 (National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Sept. 2007)