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Two colleges in Alaska take “1DayStand” against tobacco

Colleges and universities throughout the Northwest go smoke- and tobacco-free

ANCHORAGE — The University of Alaska Anchorage and Alaska Vocational Technical Center will join 10 other Northwest campuses in going smoke- or tobacco-free Nov. 21 to support the American Cancer Society’s Great American Smokeout.

The region-wide “1DayStand” invites people who smoke to give up the habit for a day and raises awareness about the role tobacco-free campuses play in reducing tobacco use and exposure to second hand smoke. The event is a project of the Fresh Air Campus Challenge, an effort to get colleges in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington to go smoke- or tobacco-free by 2016. Twenty-one campuses have signed on to the Challenge so far, including UAA, Alaska Christian College, Alaska Job Corps Center, and Ilisagvik College.

“We are proud that UAA and AVTEC are taking this one-day stand against tobacco,” said Dr. Ward Hurlburt, chief medical officer for the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. “Colleges have a unique opportunity and responsibility to provide a safe community and a foundation for healthful living. Implementing a smoke- or tobacco-free policy is one of the best ways to do that.”

During the day-long stand, UAA’s Smokefree Task Force and advocates at AVTEC will disseminate information about Alaska’s Tobacco Quit Line and cessation programs.

“We hope this day helps individuals looking to quit and starts a long-term discussion on each of these campuses for permanent policy change,” said Molly Reece, administrator of the Fresh Air Campus Challenge.

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To date, more than 51 college campuses throughout the Pacific Northwest have gone smoke- or tobacco-free, and more than 1,130 campuses have done so nationally, including three in Alaska: The Alaska Job Corps Center, Alaska Bible Institute and Wayland Baptist University in Anchorage.

The Fresh Air Campus Challenge brings college campuses together with local, state, and federal tobacco control programs. For information on how to quit tobacco, or for more information on the 1Day Stand and the Fresh Air Campus Challenge, visit: www.1DayStand.org.

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