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Michigan Surgeon General Hosts Generation With Promise Youth Summit 2009

Students will enjoy a day of activities to promote healthy behavior

(Detroit, MI) - Michigan Surgeon General Kimberlydawn Wisdom, M.D., M.S. is hosting the second annual "Generation With Promise (GWP) Youth Summit 2009" on Tuesday, March 31, from 8 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., at the Ford Community and Performing Arts Center, at 15800 Michigan Ave. in Dearborn.

The GWP Youth Summit brings together 300 middle school students and adult leaders from 16 schools in Detroit, Highland Park, Hamtramck, Pontiac and Benton Harbor for a day of fun, interaction, teamwork and learning.

The youth are members of their schools' Student Action Teams (SATs) who work throughout the school year to make changes in policy that will promote a healthier school environment for students and staff.

As a result of GWP student teams, some of the schools have developed tobacco-free policies on their campuses, increased time for physical education and recess, added healthy snacks to vending machines, and made nutrition a part of science classes. In addition, salad bars are now part of some school cafeterias, announcements are made over the PA system about healthy eating, walking clubs have been formed and healthy foods are now part of fundraisers and school-wide events.

"The policy, environmental and behavioral changes these students are making is truly remarkable," said Dr. Wisdom. "We know that childhood obesity among our youth is a growing epidemic. The students involved in GWP are learning about making healthy choices that will not only last them a lifetime, but will also influence their peers, families and the community."

Schools attending the Youth Summit include Burns Elementary/Middle School; Hutchins/McMichael Elementary/Middle School, J.F. Nichols Elementary School; Taft Middle School, Trix Elementary/Middle School; Greenfield Union Elementary/Middle School, Mark Twain School & Academy; Ronald McNair Technical Middle School; Murphy

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Elementary/Middle School; Phoenix Multicultural Academy and Peter Vetel Elementary/Middle School—all in **Detroit**. Two GWP schools in **Benton Harbor** will be attending. They include Fair Plain Renaissance Middle School and Hull Middle School in Benton Harbor. Other GWP schools attending include Madison Middle School in **Pontiac**, Kosciuszko Middle School in **Hamtramck**, and Barber School of the Gifted and Talented in **Highland Park**.

Facilitators from the Michigan Program for Youth and Community, University of Michigan School of Social Work will be helping the youth enhance leadership skills and develop action plans they can take back to their schools. The Youth Summit also features S.T.E.P.S., Inc.—an adventure challenge teambuilding program with lots of physical activity. Music, food and entertainment make the day an enjoyable learning experience for the students to remember when they return to school to continue making healthy choices.

Generation With Promise is a \$5-million initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and led by Dr. Wisdom and a multidisciplinary team organized through the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH). The project links Governor Jennifer M. Granholm’s Cities of Promise initiative in underserved communities with MDCH and the “Michigan Steps Up” healthy lifestyles initiative. The three-year project empowers Student Action Teams to drive change related to health priorities for their schools.

In addition to the Cities of Promise, other partners with MDCH for “Generation With Promise” partners are the Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness, Health & Sports/Michigan Fitness Foundation, Michigan Department of Education, Michigan Action for Healthy Kids Coalition, Cities of Promise, local health departments, Healthy Kids Healthy Michigan Coalition, Henry Ford Health System, the Michigan State University Extension, University of Michigan and Wayne State University.

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