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**PENNSYLVANIA GIRLS' RESEARCH PROJECTS ON ENERGY DRINKS AND MIGRAINES
EXPOSE HIDDEN HEALTH THREATS TO TODAY'S TEENS,
EARNING TOP PRIZES IN NATION'S LEADING
PUBLIC HEALTH COMPETITION FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

**SHOSHANNA GOLDIN OF ALLENTOWN AND GAZELLE ZERAFATI OF VILLANOVA
WIN \$50,000 SCHOLARSHIPS IN
THE YOUNG EPIDEMIOLOGY SCHOLARS (YES) COMPETITION**

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 26, 2010 — Two high school girls from Pennsylvania today swept the top honors in the prestigious Young Epidemiology Scholars (YES) Competition (www.collegeboard.com/yes), the nation's leading public health research competition for high school students. Their research on rising consumption of energy drinks among adolescents and underdiagnosed migraines in teenage girls puts a spotlight on little recognized health threats to today's teen population. The two juniors, Shoshanna Goldin of Allentown and Gazelle Zerafati of Villanova, each received a \$50,000 college scholarship, the top award in the YES Competition, which distributes nearly \$500,000 annually to America's most promising young public health scholars.

Shoshanna Goldin, a 17-year-old student at Moravian Academy in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, won for her research project entitled, "Energy Epidemic: Teen Perception and Consumption of Energy Drinks." When energy drinks took her school by storm, Shoshanna became wary of the dangers they posed. "I wondered if they were aware of the ingredients and understood the potential health risks." To help raise awareness, she surveyed her peers on their consumption and knowledge of these stimulants.

Shoshanna discovered that teens were unaware of the amount of stimulant, side effects, and risks stated on the labels. She also learned that males consume more energy drinks than females. "The most compelling surprise of the study was the young age at which middle school students began consuming energy drinks," she said. Shoshanna hopes her research will lead teachers of health classes to include information on

the subject in high school and middle school and that regulations to prevent the sale of energy drinks to minors will be implemented.

“Shoshanna investigated a problem that no one has previously paid much attention to and showed that the use of energy drinks with high amounts of stimulants is common among adolescents,” said lead judge Lorna Thorpe, Ph.D., M.P.H., Associate Professor, Director, Epidemiology and Biostatistics Dept., City University of New York School of Public Health. “Teens are being exposed to a relatively new product marketed towards them for which the health ramifications are not well understood. She is asking what the long-term implications of these drinks are for children and adolescents.”

Shoshanna became aware of epidemiology and its potential to improve an entire community’s health after working at Philadelphia’s Children’s Hospital. She is the founding member of the Lehigh Valley Youth Volunteer Association and a recipient of the United States Presidential Volunteer Service Gold Award and Prudential Spirit of Community Service Award. She plans to become a pediatric neurosurgeon or an epidemiologist.

Gazelle Zerafati, a 16-year-old student at Baldwin School in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, won for her project entitled, “Epidemiology of Migraine in Teenage Girls, A Student Population Based Study.” She has a very personal connection to her YES project: both she and her family suffer from migraines. In her study, Gazelle surveyed female high school students to determine the prevalence of migraine among teenage girls and assess their knowledge of this common neurological disorder. Her study showed that a great majority of the students were poorly informed about migraine symptoms and treatment, and that migraine is seriously under-diagnosed and undertreated. “I was surprised to find that a large portion of the students who had migraine were not aware of it, and therefore never sought medical attention.”

The results of her study encouraged her to apply for Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from a local medical school to expand her research to other high schools. So far, Gazelle has recruited seven high schools to participate. “Our new protocol allows for providing education material regarding migraine to the students after taking the survey.”

“Gazelle looked at a health condition that is affecting teens, but hasn’t been well described,” said judge Jonathan Samet, M.D., M.S., Professor and Flora L. Thornton Chair, Department of Preventive Medicine, Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California, and Director, University of Southern California Institute for Global Health. “She found that it is common, underdiagnosed, poorly recognized by the girls themselves, and substantially undertreated.”

Gazelle aspires to a career in public health as a geneticist or physician. She volunteers at a local hospital, writes a medical column for her school newspaper, and has interned with a geneticist and a neurosurgeon. Fluent in Farsi, Gazelle is a two-year gold medal winner in the National Latin Exam and received the Excellence in Student Science Research Award from the Pennsylvania Society for Biomedical Research. A skilled violinist, she plays first violin with the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra.

The public health workforce is diminishing even as the population increases. By 2020, the United States will face a shortfall of more than 250,000 public health workers, according to the Association of Schools of Public Health. The YES Competition was established in 2003 by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the College Board to inspire talented high school students to apply epidemiological methods to the investigation of health problems and, ultimately, encourage the brightest young minds to enter the field of public health.

This year, 639 students entered the YES Competition. Sixty Regional Finalists from 21 states were invited to compete in Washington to present their projects to a panel of distinguished judges comprised of leading public health experts and educators. In total, 12 National Finalists received scholarships today, ranging from \$15,000 to \$50,000. The remaining 48 Regional Finalists each received \$2,000. The other 10 National Finalists and their projects are:

- \$35,000 Scholarship: Hannah Borowsky, Hopkins High School, Minnetonka, Minnesota, “Adolescent Smokers’ Perceived Risk of Cigarette Use”
- \$35,000 Scholarship: Jessica Hart, Brighton High School, Cottonwood Heights, Utah, “Comparative Risk Assessment of Female Infertility and Pregnancy Problems from Exposure to Toxicants Discovered in a Residential Neighborhood Located in the Mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon in Salt Lake County, Utah”
- \$20,000 Scholarship: Otana Jakpor, Woodcrest Christian School, Riverside, California, “Indoor Air Pollution: The Pulmonary Effects of Ozone-Generating Air Purifiers and Other Ozone-Generating Household Devices”
- \$20,000 Scholarship: Jeffrey Wang, Auburn High School, Rockford, Illinois, “A Spatial Approach to Epidemic Dynamics Using Stochastic Cellular Automata with a Case Study of Novel H1N1 in Illinois”
- \$15,000 Scholarship: Jan Gong, Garden City High School, Garden City, New York: “Myocardial Infarction in Chinese Populations: A Genome-Wide Association Study”
- \$15,000 Scholarship: Joan Kim, Amity Regional High School, Woodbridge, Connecticut: “Does Facebook Prevent Alzheimer’s? The Relationship Between Online Social Networking and Cognitive Function in Senior Citizens”
- \$15,000 Scholarship: Matthew Lam, Jericho Senior High School, Jericho, New York, “Epidemiological Study of Cancer Pain in New York City Chinese Immigrants and the Role of Education in Overcoming Barriers to Pain Treatment”
- \$15,000 Scholarship: Anisha Mudaliar, Pacific Ridge School, Carlsbad, California, “An Epidemiological Analysis of Youth-Onset Diabetes Mellitus in India”
- \$15,000 Scholarship: Carl Nist-Lund, Canterbury School of Fort Myers, Florida, “Emerging Threats of Mosquito-Borne Diseases in Southwest Florida, Specifically Dengue Fever and Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever”
- \$15,000 Scholarship: Haley Shopp, Grace Preparatory Academy, Arlington, Texas, “Effects of Vaccination on Spread of Influenza Strain H1N1”

“With the nation facing a potentially catastrophic shortage of public health professionals, it is critical that we cultivate the next generation of public health talent,” said Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, M.D., M.B.A.,

President and CEO, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. “These students’ outstanding work demonstrates that the future of epidemiology holds great promise.”

“These students are addressing national and global health issues that are shaping the world around us,” said Gaston Caperton, President of the College Board. “We look forward to seeing the outcomes of their hard work in the future.”

To date, the YES Competition has awarded more than \$3.2 million in scholarships. More than 4,000 students from all 50 states, as well as Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia and American Samoa, have entered the YES Competition since its inception. Past winners have worked with AIDS patients in South Africa, volunteered at clinics after Hurricane Katrina, studied the risk factors for obesity, and researched teen drug abuse, among many other urgent public health challenges of our time.

Images and video of the 2009-10 YES Competition winners is available at
www.dentsucommunications.com/yes

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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The College Board

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board is composed of more than 5,700 schools, colleges, universities and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves seven million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,800 colleges through major programs and services in college readiness, college admission, guidance, assessment, financial aid and enrollment. Among its widely recognized programs are the SAT[®], the PSAT/NMSQT[®], the Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP[®]), SpringBoard[®] and ACCUPLACER[®]. The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities and concerns. For further information, visit www.collegeboard.com.

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