

Meth Project ads bring in honors

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By The Gazette Staff

The Montana Meth Project recently received two Gold Effie Awards for its public-awareness campaign, "Not Even Once." The Effie awards annually honor the most significant achievements in marketing communications, with emphasis given to the effectiveness of the work.

The Meth Project was the runner-up for the "Grand Effie" prize, which ended up going to Apple for its Mac vs. PC campaign.

Peg Shea, executive director of the Montana Meth Project, said that interviewing kids from throughout the state and using their suggestions has made the campaign a standout.

"Anytime you rely on your target population - that's what makes it so successful," she said.

"Kids basically told us, 'You need to get our attention. It's got to be something that grabs our attention.' "

The campaign uses graphic print, television, radio and Internet advertising that portrays the devastation the drug brings to the user, friends and family.

Recently, the campaign also received a National Silver ADDY Award, one of the advertising industry's largest annual competitions, and the Cannes Bronze Lion Award. The Cannes judges noted the project's Paint the State project and its success in going beyond the traditional advertising channels to get the message out.

Paint the State was a public-art contest that attracted more than 660 works of anti-meth art created by teens across Montana's 56 counties.

Also this week, Rep. Denny Rehberg secured \$500,000 in funding for the Montana Meth Project in the Commerce, Science, and Justice Appropriations bill.

If the measure is approved by the full Congress, the funds will be used for TV, radio, print and Web site development for the organization.

"We're breaking ground," Shea said.

"We just have to be proactive and creatively move forward."