

MONTANA METH PROJECT

Montana High School Rodeo Hosts Montana Meth Project Event

Teen Riders Lead Effort to Drive Meth from State on “Black Saturday”

Missoula, MT—May 21, 2009— The Montana High School Rodeo Association (MHSRA) and the Montana Meth Project today announced “Black Saturday” to be held at the student rodeo state finals On Sat., June 13, all rodeo contestants, their parents and rodeo officials will wear black wristbands as a sign of solidarity against the scourge of Meth in Montana.

“We encourage all Montanans to stand with us on “Black Saturday” to send a message that Meth will not be tolerated in our communities or schools,” said Kwinci Tatarka, host committee president, Montana High School Rodeo Association. “As a show of support, our teens dedicated this day to the Montana Meth Project to continue to shed light on this critical issue.”

The participation of the Montana High School Rodeo Association builds upon the tradition of teen involvement in the Montana Meth Project. In February, more than 2,300 teens from around the state participated in the “March Against Meth” in Helena.

“We are honored teen riders are supporting the Montana Meth Project with this unique event,” said Bill Slaughter, executive director of the Montana Meth Project. “Since the inception of this project, our youth have taken a strong stance to drive Meth from Montana in remarkable ways.”

Prior to the Montana Meth Project’s launch in 2005, Montana ranked #5 in the nation for Meth abuse and Meth-related crime.ⁱ Since the Montana Meth Project began its integrated campaign, the state has witnessed a 62% decrease in Meth-related crimes,ⁱⁱ and teen Meth use has declined by 45%.ⁱⁱⁱ The Montana Meth Project’s successful prevention model has been adopted in states such as Idaho, Arizona, Wyoming, Illinois, Colorado, and Hawaii.

The MHSRA State Finals Rodeo, held June 10-14 at the Gallatin County Fairgrounds in Bozeman, will showcase the finest roping, riding, and racing by Montana high school students. The top four contestants in each event will represent Montana in the National High School Finals Rodeo, held from July 19-25 in Farmington, N.M. Additionally, all contestants are eligible for college scholarships and scholarship assistance through a variety of funds and programs dedicated to the higher education of Montana youth.

About the Montana High School Rodeo Association

The Montana High School Rodeo Association (MHSRA) is one of the 41 states, 5 Canadian provinces, and Australia that is involved in the National High School Rodeo Association (NHSRA). Founded in 1947 by Claude Mullins, there are currently 10,500

students in the NHSRA competing in over 1,100 sanctioned rodeos every year. For more information on the rodeo, trade show, or sponsorship opportunities, please call the Host Desk at (406) 475-3675 or go to www.hsfinalsrodeo.org.

About the Montana Meth Project

Launched in September 2005, the Montana Meth Project, a not-for-profit organization headquartered in Missoula, Montana, implements a range of advertising and community action programs aimed at reducing methamphetamine use in the state. Combining extensive research with a hard-hitting, integrated media campaign, it has been repeatedly cited as an effective response to a devastating social problem. For more information, visit www.montanameth.org.

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ⁱ Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Pushing Back Against Meth: A Progress Report on the Fight Against Methamphetamine in the United States*, November 2006

ⁱⁱ Montana Attorney General, Mike McGrath, *Methamphetamine in Montana: A Follow-up Report on Trends and Progress*, April 2008

ⁱⁱⁱ Montana Office of Public Instruction, *2007 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, September 2007