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Alliance for a Healthier Generation Announces 2009 Youth Advisory Board
25 Exceptional Young People Selected to Help Empower Kids to be Healthy

(NEW YORK) July 21, 2009 – In an effort to raise youth voices in the fight against childhood obesity, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, a joint initiative between the American Heart Association and the William J. Clinton Foundation, today selected 25 young people to serve on the 2009 Youth Advisory Board.

By working with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, these 25 extraordinary kids will inspire all kids to make healthy behavior changes and to become leaders and advocates for healthy eating and physical activity. Also, they will help craft relevant messages for the empowerME Movement, a by kids, for kids campaign the Alliance for a Healthier Generation created. To date, more than 1.38 million tweens and teens across the nation have joined the Movement.

“Nearly one in three children and teens in the U.S. is already overweight or obese. The result is an increase in serious health problems early in life. High cholesterol, high blood pressure, stroke, type 2 diabetes and depression are now a part of more and more kids’ lives,” said Ginny Ehrlich, Executive Director of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. “We believe that youth voices are critical to inspiring kids across the country to eat better and move more.”

The Board members, ranging in age from 8-17 and representing 19 diverse states, will build on the work the inaugural Youth Advisory Board members began implementing during the past year. Since the launch of the Youth Advisory Board in 2008, members have led the way in their communities and amongst their peers as they spread the word about the importance of healthy eating and physical activity.

Their work over the past year has included appearances in local and national media, creating MySpace and Facebook pages on healthy living, testifying at city and state hearings, creating health-promoting art, initiating change in their schools, and hosting youth forums where they lead their colleagues in discussions about ways they can take charge of the environment at home, at school, and in their communities to combat childhood obesity.

“Serving on the Youth Advisory Board has empowered me to share my own experiences of healthy living with millions of kids in my own community and across the nation,” says Carson Miller, 13 from Santa Fe, NM, a returning member of the Youth Advisory Board. “When adults talk to kids about the importance of eating better and moving more, sometimes we just tune them out. But when kids can talk directly to kids, we inspire each other to make changes in our own lives.”

Members of the 2009 Youth Advisory Board are: Members of the 2009 Youth Advisory Board are: Isabella Acosta Barna, 15, Bend, OR; Madison Burke, 17, Chesterfield, MO; Sarah Chastain, 9, Louisville, KY; Anjelica Chickara, 16, Holmdel NJ; Scotie Connor, 16, Oklahoma City, OK; Madeline Cumbey, 8, Fort Wayne, IN; Justin DeParis, 13, Allendale, NJ; Janice Guzon, 16, Hoffman Estates, IL; Kirsten Holston, 13, Carmel, IN; Robert Hsu, 15, Novi, MI; Isaiah Huerta, 9, El Monte, CA; Connie Lim, 17, Bellevue, WA; Dawson MacKay, 10, Bethesda, MD; Karina Malave, 16, Harlem, NY; Coleton Meseke, 12, Chatham, IL; Austin Miller, 11, Holly, MI; Carson Miller, 13, Santa Fe, NM; Wendi Oppenheim, 16,



Southwest Ranches, FL; Kierstyn Ramos, 11, Pasco, WA; David Sanchez, 17, Racine, WI; Melinda Sartor, 11, Plano, TX; Kenderick Scorza 15, North Little Rock, AR; Desiree Toledo-Leyva, 12, Tucson, AZ; Jacob Vasquez, 11, San Antonio, TX; Elizabeth Wyatt, 17, Tuscaloosa, AL.

The empowerME Movement is the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's strategy to engage kids across the country to take charge of their health, get educated and get activated. Any young person can go online and make a commitment to healthy living at www.empowerME2b.org where they can share their stories and find resources to help them have a positive impact on their own communities.

About the Alliance for a Healthier Generation

The American Heart Association and the William J. Clinton Foundation joined forces in May of 2005 to create a healthier generation by addressing one of the nation's leading public health threats – childhood obesity. The goal of the Alliance is to reduce the nationwide prevalence of childhood obesity by 2015, and to empower kids nationwide to make healthy lifestyle choices. The Alliance works to positively affect the places that can make a difference to a child's health: homes, schools, restaurants, doctor's offices and communities. For more information please visit: HealthierGeneration.org.

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