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# MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

## Red Deer Students Ignite Awareness About Tobacco Use!



(Red Deer, Alberta) Recognizing the commitment of Alberta youth to be tobacco free, The Lung Association, Alberta and NWT (“TLA”) will be in Red Deer today to present the Second Place prize to the winner of the 2011 “BLAST Off.... to a Tobacco Free Life!” T-shirt design contest.

During the months of April and May, The Lung Association’s BLAST program (Building Leadership for Action in Schools Today) challenged Alberta youth in Grades 7-9 to get creative and design a T-shirt telling the world why they choose to be tobacco free. Students were invited to be positive in their approach, encouraging their peers and others in their community to choose not to use tobacco.

The contest sparked the imagination of 110 students from 19 schools across Alberta, producing a total of 122 entries. In addition to online voting, a panel of judges from the tobacco advocacy and communication fields evaluated each entry based on positive messaging, aesthetic and technical quality, creativity and immediate impact. Representatives from TLA will present the Second Place award to student Kalle Price and St Thomas Aquinas School in 3821 – 39 St. Red Deer on Monday June 13 at 1:00 pm. Kalle will receive a \$150 cash prize and St Thomas Aquinas School will also receive a Youth Action Grant worth \$1500 to be used for health and wellness initiatives. Her entry “Blast Off to a Tobacco Free Future” displayed many facts and statistics regarding tobacco use in a creative and eye-catching design.

The use of Social Media to extend the outreach of tobacco free messaging has proven to be an important tool in tobacco education. The “BLAST Off.... to a Tobacco Free Life!” T-shirt design contest website [www.blastobacco.ca](http://www.blastobacco.ca) received over 3,350 views from 7 countries with 707 votes cast for the most popular designs. The support of Alberta educators and tobacco reduction staff has also helped to make this project successful.

The BLAST program asks youth in Grades 7-9 to think critically about the tobacco industry, its products and the social, global and health effects of tobacco use. BLAST offers many opportunities for teachers and students to become actively involved in tobacco education. From half-day in-school Mini-BLAST workshops and teacher professional development opportunities, to a 2.5 day tobacco awareness conference in November 2011, participants are encouraged to build school and community leadership, project planning and advocacy skills. Keep up to date by following BLAST, on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

The Lung Association is a leader in lung health education, prevention and advocacy throughout Alberta and the Northwest Territories. For more information regarding programs and services provided by The Lung Association, please visit our website [www.ab.lung.ca](http://www.ab.lung.ca) or call 1-888-566-5864.

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