



APPEAL

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California's Priority Populations Launch A New Tobacco Control Initiative and Commemorate World No Tobacco Day 2011

Oakland, CA – The newly launched **ADEPT** (Advocacy and Data dissemination to achieve Equity for Priority populations on Tobacco) Project joins all communities disproportionately affected by the tobacco pandemic in commemorating World No Tobacco Day. The ADEPT project is a collaborative working to ensure that critical tobacco use data on California's most diverse and vulnerable populations is shared and disseminated within those communities. These communities face the greatest disparities related to tobacco use and the impact of tobacco, are the least educated, and have reaped the least benefits from California's historic gains in tobacco control. Helping to increase these communities understanding of the impact of tobacco use on vulnerable populations will lead to increased mobilization of tobacco control program and policy initiatives.

The ADEPT Project is comprised of five partners working with seven vulnerable populations: Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL); the African American Tobacco Control Leadership Council (AATCLC); Coalition of Lavender-Americans on Smoking & Health (CLASH); Health Education Council (HEC); and the University of Southern California (USC). All five partners have extensive experience working on tobacco control in vulnerable populations either nationally or statewide within California.

In 1987, the World Health Organization established May 31st as **World No Tobacco Day** to discourage tobacco use and encourage governments, communities, groups and individuals to become aware of the problems caused by commercial tobacco use and to take appropriate action. Each year's event highlights a different aspect of tobacco use and its effects. The theme for this year is "**The World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.**" The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) is the world's foremost tobacco control instrument. The first treaty ever negotiated under the auspices of the WHO, it represents a significant achievement in the advancement of public health. In force only since 2005, it is already one of the most rapidly and widely embraced treaties in the history of the

United Nations, with more than 170 Parties already signed on. An evidence-based treaty, it reaffirms the right of all people to the highest standard of health and provides new legal dimensions for cooperation in tobacco control.

A critical goal of this treaty was to provide an international mechanism to help protect the populations of developing countries from the predatory activities of multi-national tobacco companies and it is in this spirit that tobacco control experts representing California's most at risk priority populations commemorate this World No Tobacco Day. "Unfortunately many of our communities face the same issues as communities in developing countries," said Rod Lew, Executive Director of APPEAL, "Not enough has been done to make sure all Californians receive correct and up to date information and are then empowered to act on that information."

The ADEPT project is funded through the Tobacco Related Disease Research Program (TRDRP) of California and operates on the premise that: 1) There is a disproportionate impact of cancer and tobacco-related diseases on vulnerable populations; 2) While some critical data have been collected on various vulnerable populations in California, this data has not been widely disseminated; 3) This disparity in data dissemination and in prevalence of tobacco use among vulnerable populations has been exacerbated by the lack of formal and informal community infrastructure, including the defunding of ethnic networks in California and the decreased funding of culturally-tailored tobacco prevention programs for vulnerable populations; 4) Wide dissemination of critical tobacco data for vulnerable populations can expand the knowledge base and lead to increased mobilization of communities on tobacco prevention interventions and policy initiatives.

The world needs the WHO FCTC as much as, if not more than, it did in 1996 when the World Health Assembly adopted a resolution calling for an international framework convention on tobacco control. This year, more than 5 million people will die from a tobacco-related heart attack, stroke, cancer, lung ailment or other disease. That does not include the more than 600,000 people – more than a quarter of them children – who will die from exposure to second-hand smoke. The annual death toll from the global epidemic of tobacco use could rise to 8 million by 2030. Having killed 100 million people during the 20th century, tobacco use could kill 1 billion during the 21st century.