

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**THE BACCHUS NETWORK™ RELEASES CERTIFICATION PROGRAM FOR  
TOBACCO-FREE COLLEGE POLICY**

**Denver, CO, November 18, 2009** – College and university campuses that have instituted comprehensive smoke- or tobacco-free policies may now apply for official certification from The BACCHUS Network™, a leading national non-profit organization focused on health and safety issues concerning college students. Campuses are encouraged to apply for one of three levels of certification: Diamond, Gold, or Silver. The certification levels correspond to 11 standards of tobacco-free policy, ranging from prohibiting tobacco use and sales to divestiture of tobacco company stocks by the college or university. A full description of the certification levels can be found at [www.tobaccofreeU.org](http://www.tobaccofreeU.org).

“Tobacco-free policies provide immediate health benefits and initiate a larger social norm change,” said Drew Hunter, President/CEO of The BACCHUS Network™. “College students today cannot imagine smoking on an airplane, a change that many of us witnessed in our lifetime. The same will soon be said about most public places.”

More than 170 colleges and universities in the United States have adopted tobacco-free policies. Mr. Hunter expects the trend to continue. “Many campuses across the country are saying, ‘Tobacco use does not support the campus vision of health and well-being for all.’ Colleges have a responsibility to create environments that promote health and a lifetime of learning—for both tobacco users and non-users.”

Though tobacco use has decreased nationally, the young adult population (18-24) remains a higher-risk group. Tobacco-free policies increase cessation rates and decrease the likelihood of new users starting. Campuses certified through BACCHUS as tobacco-free or smoke-free will receive a seal to be displayed on campus literature and websites to let future students and parents know that the institution is committed to the health of its students. BACCHUS will also publicize the certified campuses on their websites and in their publications.

“Conventional wisdom says that once a person turns 18, the risk of starting to use tobacco passes,” says Hunter. “This is not true, and no one knows it better than the tobacco industry. College students, especially, are still experimenting and solidifying health behaviors that they will take with them into the real world. We want to provide them with a healthy foundation upon which they will build their professional and personal lives.”

Founded in 1975 by students at the University of Florida, BACCHUS has grown from a small student group focused on alcohol abuse prevention to the largest college student organization in the country. Today, BACCHUS and its nearly 1,000 affiliate groups focus on topics ranging from drug and alcohol issues, to mental health concerns, to fitness and nutrition. For more information, please visit: [www.bacchusnetwork.org](http://www.bacchusnetwork.org).

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