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Helena High School Student Selected to Serve as *reACT* Team Representative

HELENA - Local Helena High School student, Olivia Holter was selected from students across Montana to serve as a ***reACT! Core Team*** representative for the state-sponsored tobacco activism and advocacy group, ***reACT! Against Corporate Tobacco***.

Ms. Holter is a sophomore at Helena High School and has been active in tobacco prevention and advocacy work for the past three years. This is her second year serving on the ***reACT! Core Team***. Holter stated, "Being involved in the ***reACT!*** movement has given me so many opportunities to meet new people, see new places, and to get involved in ways that I know can really make a difference in my life, and the lives of my friends, my family and my classmates. Helping people is my passion and I feel lucky to be a part of something. The ***reACT!*** movement has the potential to help and empower so many!"

reACT! Against Corporate Tobacco is Montana's teen-led movement against the tobacco industry. Funded and staffed by the Montana Tobacco Use Prevention Program, ***reACT!*** joins statewide youth empowerment movements across the country in recognizing the power of young people to effectively take on one of our leading preventable causes of death--tobacco use. ***reACT!*** is media literacy, peer education, and grassroots advocacy all rolled into one!

"Tobacco companies spend billions of dollars marketing to youth, since they need to replace the over 400,000 customers that die annually. And it works--most tobacco users report starting in their teens," said Holter.

The ***reACT! Core Team*** (RCT) leads ***reACT!*** members (***reACTors***) in the fight against corporate tobacco. They encourage teens to take action and educate Montanans about Big Tobacco's deceptive tactics. "Since teens are being targeted, it is the mission of ***reACT!*** to spread the knowledge that it's happening, and encourage teens to take action against it!" Holter explained.

According to Gail Beckner, Tobacco Use Prevention Specialist, Lewis & Clark City-County Health Department, the tobacco industry spends close to \$42 million every year in Montana marketing their tobacco products and every year 1,300 kids under the age of 18 begin smoking as a result of this marketing. "I am thrilled to be working with the ***reAct*** movement and with these dedicated young people as they work to expose the deceptive marketing practices of the tobacco industry. These teens are creating change in the way we all view tobacco use."

For more information about ***reACT! Against Corporate Tobacco*** or about joining our local ***reACT!*** youth coalition please call Gail Beckner at the Lewis & Clark County Tobacco Use Prevention Program, 457-8924. You may also visit the ***reACT! Against Corporate Tobacco*** website at (www.reactmt.com).

The Tobacco Use Prevention Program is a service of the Lewis & Clark City-County Health Department, whose mission is to improve and protect the health of all Lewis & Clark County residents.

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