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**Employee hands it to Price Chopper executive, Mona Golub,
for the corporation's attack on Big Tobacco.**

Albany, N.Y., March 20, 2009-- Eighteen-year-old Talisha Scism is not your typical Price Chopper employee. This community minded, hard working Schenectady high school senior is also an active member of Reality Check, the youth driven, adult supported organization that works to expose the manipulative practices of Big Tobacco.

In addition to receiving her own award, Talisha will have the additional distinction of presenting her boss, Mona Golub, with the first annual Corporate Tobacco-Free Champion Award given to Price Chopper for its commitment to protect youth from "Big Tobacco" advertising tactics. Price Chopper has redesigned their tobacco display cases to keep cigarettes away from the eyes of our youth. "I am proud to work for a company that shares my morals and beliefs," says Scism. The Recognition Event which is sponsored by the Capital District Tobacco-Free Coalition will be held at the Albany Marriott on March 25th, "Kick Butts Day", from 6-8 p.m.

Judy Rightmyer, Director of the Capital District Tobacco-Free Coalition remarks, "The change that Price Chopper has made in their stores and the changes that our other community champions are making show a strong commitment to de-normalize tobacco use. Tonight we are honoring those community members and organizations that have implemented strong policies which are changing the social norm around tobacco."

"Kick Butts Day", a national day of activism that empowers youth to speak up and take action against Big Tobacco was purposely chosen as the date to hold the event. According to results from the 2005 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, each day in the U.S. approximately 4000 young people between the ages of 12 and 17 initiate cigarette smoking and an estimated 1140 young people become daily smokers.

"Tobacco Control Program's Community Partners are making great progress in protecting our youth from the tobacco epidemic." reports Dr Jeff Willett, Director of the Tobacco Control Program, New York State Department of Health. "Since 1997, the rate of smoking

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among New York high school students has dramatically decreased 58%. While the national smoking rate among high school students is leveling off, smoking among New York State high school students has continued to robustly decline to 13.8 % compared to the 20% national figure. Tragically even at these reduced levels of initiation, 389,000 youth now under 18 and alive in New York will ultimately die prematurely from smoking. It is imperative that New York State continues to aggressively work to de-normalize tobacco use."

The Capital District Tobacco-Free Coalition, Reality Check Youth Action and the Tobacco-Free Healthy Schools Program are all grant funded programs from the NYS Bureau of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control. The Capital District Tobacco-Free Coalition is a non-profit partnership of people and organizations from Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady counties working to decrease the social acceptability of tobacco use, eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke, promote cessation and prevent the initiation of tobacco use among youth and young adults. For more information on the Coalition and their programs, go to www.smokefreecapital.org.

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