



Multicultural Tobacco Prevention & Education Program Networks
 c/o Native American Rehabilitation Association of the NW
 1776 SW Madison St.
 Portland OR 97205

February 2, 2007

Dear College Presidents:

This letter is jointly written by the Oregon's Multicultural Tobacco Prevention & Education Program Networks. We are writing in support of the American Lung Association of Oregon's initiative for tobacco free policies at all Oregon Community Colleges. With such a large percentage of the student body at community colleges being minorities, these policies will positively impact a large number of people who are specifically targeted by the tobacco industry by helping current smokers quit and preventing initiation of new smokers.

Although tobacco addiction affects people from all communities, ethnic, racial and sexual minorities face disproportionately higher rates of tobacco use. Check out these tobacco use rates when compared to 21% of white Oregoniansⁱ:

Population	Tobacco use rates
American Indians	44%
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) people	39%
African Americans	27%
Hispanic/Latinos	17% with higher rates for those who are more assimilated to U.S. culture
Asians/Pacific Islanders	14 % with variation between nationalities/ethnic groups, i.e.: 72% for Cambodians ⁱⁱ 71% for Laotians

Looking beyond numbers of who's smoking, we also know that tobacco-related disease and death affects minority populations at higher rates than white populations.

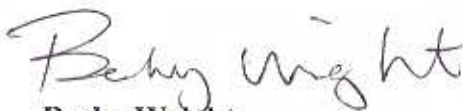
Why are tobacco use rates so high? Tobacco companies target specific populations with their advertising. Some ways they do this include designing advertisements that appeal to non-White audiences, and placing these ads in relevant locations and media outlets. For example, there are 12% more cigarette advertisements in magazines targeting African Americans than magazines aimed at general populationsⁱⁱⁱ. Tobacco companies also take advantage of culture by using names and images of minority communities to sell their products. For instance, Rio and Dorado are products clearly targeting Hispanic/Latinos, and American Spirits with the image of an American Indian smoking a pipe is clearly targeting American Indian smokers. Virginia Slims used a campaign in the late 1990's called "Find Your Voice" that targeted women, including one that

featured images of Geisha's and Chinese characters targeting Asian/Pacific Islander women. Manufacturers of cigarettes like Parliament, Marlboro, Camel and American Spirits have created advertising campaigns specifically for LGBTQ audiences; they print these in newspapers and magazines with large LGBTQ readerships. They have also attempted to gain LGBTQ brand loyalty by funding campaigns with strong relevance to our communities.

Why are tobacco disparities important to think about when considering tobacco policy for Oregon community colleges? As stated on the Oregon Community College Association's website, community colleges educated over 47,500 students from ethnic minority communities in 2002-2003, community colleges are the largest provider of college education to Oregon's ethnic minorities, and community colleges educate about twice as many minority students as do the public universities. In addition, many community colleges host high school completion programs for the most at-risk youth, who face high rates of tobacco use. This creates a wonderful opportunity for community colleges to impact the smoking rates of Oregon's minority populations. **Tobacco free policies are an effective tool in reducing rates of smoking. With such a large percentage of the student body at community colleges being minorities, these policies will positively impact a large number of people who are specifically targeted by the tobacco industry by helping current smokers quit and preventing initiation of new smokers.** This is why we support 100% tobacco free policies for Oregon community colleges, including bans on sponsorship and advertising by tobacco companies, and we hope you will support (and implement) such policies as well.

We would like to know how you plan to address this issue at your college. We look forward to hearing from you, and if we can of any help, especially regarding reducing tobacco-related health disparities, please let us know. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Becky Wright

On behalf of the Multicultural Tobacco Prevention & Education Council

Urban American Indian Tobacco Prevention & Education Network

Native American Rehabilitation Association of the NW, Inc.

Yugen Rashad

African American Tobacco Prevention & Education Network
Lifeworks, N.W.

Miryang Kim

Asian/Pacific Islander Tobacco Prevention & Education Network
Asian Family Center

Diana Ibarra

Latino Tobacco Prevention & Education Network
Oregon Human Development Corporation

R.E. Szego

Breathe Free:
Oregon's LGBTQ Tobacco Prevention & Education Network
Sexual Minorities Youth Recreation Center

¹ Dahlin, M. & Schubert, S. (2006) "Oregon Tobacco Facts." Oregon Department of Human Services.

² Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL). "Fact Sheet: Tobacco Use in Asian American and Pacific Islander Communities." http://www.appealforcommunities.org/pages/Factsheets30.php?project_id=30

³ US Department of Health and Human Services. (1998) "Tobacco use among US racial/ethnic minority groups- African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics: A report of the Surgeon General." Atlanta, Georgia: Centers for Disease Prevention.