

MONTANA METH PROJECT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Montana Meth Project Launches “Paint the State” Contest

*Teens Invited to Take Part in the Fight Against Meth Abuse
and Compete for More Than \$300,000 in Prizes*

HELENA, Mont.—May 15, 2006—The Montana Meth Project’s large-scale Meth prevention campaign takes a whole new twist this summer with the announcement of the Program’s statewide anti-Meth art competition, Paint the State. The contest calls on teens to take action in the fight against Meth abuse by creating highly visible public art that illustrates the dangers of methamphetamine, the state’s leading drug problem.

Paint the State is a first-of-its-kind public art competition and large-scale community action program aimed at broadly communicating the risks of Meth use through public works of art. The contest offers 13- to 18-year olds a way to get involved and compete for \$6,000 cash, awards in each of the 56 counties, and a statewide grand prize of \$10,000. Prizes total more than \$300,000.

The rules of the contest are simple: teens are asked to use either the “Meth: Not Even Once” logo, tagline, or other anti-Meth theme, a little inspiration, and a lot of imagination to create a work of art—any style, any medium—that’s clearly visible by the general public.

There are no constraints on creativity. A mural blanketing the side of a grain silo outside of Three Forks. A hand-painted sheet hanging from the historic smelt stack at Old Works in Anaconda. A colorful chalk drawing on the steps of the county building in Great Falls. These are just a few examples of what teens may create this summer, all with the same message—Meth: Not Even Once.

Teens can enlist the help of friends, family, businesses, and the community to conceive the most compelling works of art and help spread the message of Meth prevention.

“Support for the Montana Meth Project has been overwhelming. Since launching the program in September, teens and communities across the state have been asking for a way to get involved. Paint the State gives the people of Montana a chance to make a difference,” said Tom Siebel, Chairman, Montana Meth Project.

“This is a critically important program,” said Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer. “Paint the State provides a focus for the groundswell of outrage against methamphetamine in Montana. From Miles City to Kalispell, the state will become an extraordinary mosaic of anti-Meth art. This may well be the largest public art program in history.”

Prizes and Judging

Prizes will be given in each of Montana's 56 counties. Every county will award three winners: \$3,000 for first place, \$2,000 for second place, and \$1,000 for third place. The artwork will be judged by each county's commissioners on: the Meth prevention message (40 percent), artistic merit and creativity (40 percent), and public visibility (20 percent).

First place winners from each county will compete for a \$10,000 statewide grand prize, judged by celebrated Montana artist, Russell Chatham.

Winners will be announced at an award ceremony at the Capitol Rotunda in Helena on August 9.

Entry Guidelines

Contestants are first required to register for the contest online at www.paintthestate.org. Registration deadline is midnight MDT, June 15.

On Monday, July 10, contestants must take a photo of their entry and submit it with the final entry form. The primary form of submission is electronically at www.paintthestate.org. Online submissions will be featured on the Paint the State contest website. Entries can also be mailed to: Paint the State Contest, Montana Meth Project, P.O. Box 8944, Missoula, MT 59807. Submissions must be postmarked or posted by midnight MDT, July 10.

Artwork must be on public display from July 10 through July 15, when judges will view the entries, although the Meth Project hopes displays will remain throughout the summer.

Contestants are required to secure permission to use a site for art display from the appropriate person or entity. Teens under 18 entering the contest must also have consent from their parent or legal guardian. Visit www.paintthestate.org for complete contest guidelines.

Sponsors

The Montana Meth Project also announced the first Paint the State corporate sponsors, PPL Montana and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana. PPL Montana is the Platinum Sponsor for Paint the State, contributing \$250,000. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana, a Silver Sponsor, is donating \$100,000. The Montana Meth Project thanks these sponsors for their support and generosity.

About the Montana Meth Project

The Montana Meth Project is a not-for-profit organization headquartered in Missoula, Montana. The Montana Meth Project implements a range of advertising and community action programs to reduce methamphetamine use among Montana teens. The Meth Project is funded by a grant from the Thomas and Stacey Siebel Foundation. For more information, visit www.montanameth.org.

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