



MEDIA ADVISORY

OHIO TRAFFIC SAFETY OFFICE

www.highwaysafety.ohio.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 4, 2009

Contact: Lindsay Komlanc, ODPS Media Relations Director: 614-752-4323
Stacey Hart, SADD: 508-481-3568 or shart@sadd.org

Photo Opportunity

WHO:

SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) Executive Director Penny Wells
SADD National Student of the Year Richard Birt
Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) Assistant Director George Maier
ODPS' Ohio Traffic Safety Office Administrator (OTSO) Tina O'Grady

WHAT:

Photo Opportunity with the group. Today, SADD honored incoming National Student of the Year Richard Birt at a ceremony at Northwestern High School in Springfield. Tuesday, ODPS Assistant Director Maier will recognize Birt for his efforts and leadership.

WHEN:

Tuesday, May 5, 2009. 8:30 a.m.

WHERE:

ODPS Director's Office, 1970 West Broad Street, Columbus 43223

WHY:

It is an honor for Ohio that Birt, a senior at Northwestern High School, will serve as the national youth spokesperson for SADD, which has more than 10,000 chapters and hundreds of thousands of active participants in schools nationwide. He will lead 11 extraordinary youth activists from different states who comprise the SADD National Student Leadership Council. Birt's efforts fall directly in line with ODPS' work to save lives and reduce injuries in Ohio by stopping underage drinking, eliminating impaired driving and educating students and parents about the consequences of bad decisions and destructive behaviors.

###

***SADD** is committed to empowering young people to lead initiatives in their schools and communities to promote positive decisions and healthy lifestyles. Founded in 1981, today SADD highlights the prevention of many destructive behaviors and attitudes that are harmful to young people, including underage drinking, substance abuse, risky and impaired driving, and teen violence and suicide. More information about SADD can be found at sadd.org.*

***ODPS** works to reduce deaths and injuries and improve the quality of life for Ohioans through the coordinated efforts of its Divisions. The Ohio Investigative Unit enforces liquor, tobacco and food stamp laws in liquor and educates the public about underage drinking. The Ohio State Highway Patrol enforces traffic laws. The Ohio Traffic Safety Office (OTSO) funds the efforts of OVI Task Forces and other grants for law enforcement to combat impaired and unsafe driving. OTSO also promotes educational programs, coalition-building efforts and campaigns for highway safety. The Office of Criminal Justice Services is the lead justice planning and assistance agency in the state and coordinates statewide efforts on issues like teen dating violence, crime victims rights and the prevention, intervention and reduction of crime and delinquency throughout Ohio.*