



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 12, 2007

**Contact:** Deborah Burke Henderson  
508-481-3568  
dbhenderson@sadd.org

### **Denham Springs High School Group Receives SADD National Accolade**

*Louisiana Students Against Destructive Decisions Chapter Honored for Promoting Safe and Healthy Decision-Making Among Teens*

**MARLBOROUGH, Mass.** – The Denham Springs High School SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) chapter in Denham Springs, Louisiana, has been chosen to receive the 2007 SADD National Chapter of the Year award. The school formed its first drug awareness club in the late 1980s and officially became “Jackets Against Destructive Decisions” in 1990. It has grown to become the largest club at the school, with nearly 200 members.

“As one of the most active SADD chapters in the country, this group highly deserves this special recognition,” SADD President and Executive Director Penny Wells said. “Year after year, youth from Denham Springs have carried out SADD’s mission, empowering their peers to make safe, healthy decisions.”

JADD has a long list of accomplishments. Just this past year, the students were involved in tobacco compliance checks, Red Ribbon Week, seat belt surveys, an Internet safety seminar, and SADD’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. They also participated in a prevention video for the Louisiana Office of Addictive Disorders/Prevention Services. One of their most rewarding projects was organizing their annual Prom Fashion Parade to spread JADD’s prom safety message and honor a high school student who was killed by an impaired driver in 1999, the first year of the show. This year, the event was also dedicated to families affected by Hurricane Katrina.

“We implement traditional SADD programming and create innovative new programs,” JADD student Angel Lato said. “Students, teachers, parents, and community leaders work together to accomplish our goals. JADD projects are good for the school and community and personally rewarding.”

Denham Springs High School SADD was recently named the 2007-2008 Louisiana SADD Chapter of the Year. Now as the National Chapter of the Year, the group will receive a \$500 cash prize and one youth and adult chaperone will receive a free trip to the SADD National Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, this July, to be formally honored at an awards banquet.

“We are very proud to receive this award,” said SADD Co-Advisor Elise LeBlanc. “It’s an honor to work with such a dedicated group of teenagers.”

Founded as Students Against Driving Drunk in 1981 in Wayland, Massachusetts, SADD has grown to become the nation’s premier peer-to-peer youth education and prevention organization, with more than 10,000 chapters in middle schools, high schools, and colleges. In 1997, in response to requests from SADD students themselves, SADD expanded its mission and now sponsors chapters called Students Against Destructive Decisions. SADD continues to endorse a firm "No Use" message related to use of alcohol and other drugs. SADD now highlights prevention of destructive behaviors and attitudes that are harmful to young people, including SADD’s key issues of underage drinking, other drug use, impaired driving, and teen violence and suicide. More information about SADD is available at [www.sadd.org](http://www.sadd.org).

###