

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
Wednesday, June 12, 2002

For More Information Contact:
Gary Ruskin (503) 235-8012
(503) 313-7919
Brita Butler-Wall (206) 523-4922

Seattle School Board Wins National Ad Slam Contest

Commercial Alert announced today that the Seattle School Board won the National Ad Slam Contest, which awards a \$5,000 prize to a school or school district for the best and most creative effort to expel advertising and commercialism from school during the 2001-2 school year.

The prize honors the work of the Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools, which led the effort against commercialism in the Seattle public schools.

Last November, in response to Citizens' Campaign organizing and advocacy, the Seattle School Board set a new policy on advertising and commercial activities that will remove Channel One, a televised in-school marketing program, from all Seattle public schools by the 2004-5 school year. The new policy also prohibits advertising on school property (with exceptions for school newspapers, yearbooks and library materials) and restricts the display of corporate logos.

"The award goes to the citizen heroes at the Citizens' Campaign for protecting captive audiences of impressionable schoolchildren from the marketing of junk food, violent entertainment, soda pop and video games," said Gary Ruskin, executive director of Commercial Alert. "They are making sure that Seattle schoolchildren are not for sale."

"The Seattle victory shows that a broad-based coalition of parents, youth, teachers, workers, elected officials and community leaders can successfully fight the corporatization of public schools," said Brita Butler-Wall, executive director of the Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools.

"I'm thrilled about the collaboration between the Seattle School District and the Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools that resulted in a policy protecting our students from inappropriate commercial activity," said Nancy Waldman, president of the Seattle School Board.

"This award is really about health," said Gary Goldbaum, MD, MPH, Chronic Disease & Injury Control Officer, Public Health - Seattle & King County. "Through its commitment to providing a healthier environment, Seattle Public Schools is promoting not only a better learning environment, but also a healthier population of young people who will be healthier citizens."

The National Ad Slam Contest is endorsed by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, Adbusters Media Foundation, Bioneers, Center for a New American Dream, Center for Media & Democracy, Center for Media Education, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Citizens' Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools, Citizens for Media Literacy,

Commercialism in Education Research Unit, Consumers Union, Junkbusters, The Motherhood Project of the Institute for American Values, Mothering Magazine, New Mexico Media Literacy Project, Obligation, Organic Consumers Association, Public Citizen, Seeds of Simplicity and the TV-Turnoff Network.

Commercial Alert's mission is to keep the commercial culture within its proper sphere, and to prevent it from exploiting children and subverting the higher values of family, community, environmental integrity and democracy. For more information about advertising, marketing and commercialism in schools, see Commercial Alert's website is at <http://www.commercialalert.org>.

The Citizens Campaign for Commercial-Free Schools is a Seattle-based non-profit organization devoted to protecting Washington children and youth from commercialism in school. Their website is at <http://www.scn.org/cccs/>.