

## Tar Wars poster contest

2005 marked the twelfth year of the Rhode Island Tar Wars program. During that time, more than 25,000 students in the state have heard the Tar Wars message. This important tobacco educational program not only has a positive impact on children's health, but also provides a chance for physicians to spotlight their involvement in the community. The Tar Wars program is funded through the Rhode Island Medical Society Foundation, along with our partners, the Rhode Island Academy of Family Physicians and the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.



*Dr. Arthur Frazzano, Rhode Island Tar Wars Chairman, with state winner Nicole Patton of Barrington. Nicole's poster placed 7th in the national Tar Wars competition held in Arlington, Virginia in July.*

Local physicians gave presentations at Rhode Island schools focusing on the short-term effects of tobacco use, the reasons people use tobacco, and the images tobacco companies use to market their products. Afterward, the students created posters to counter the tobacco company advertisements by emphasizing the positive aspects of not using tobacco. Presenters included physicians, residents, and medical students. Many of the physicians who participated have presented for many years, returning each year to "their" school.

This year's Tar Wars Poster Contest was held on Saturday, May 21, 2005, at the Rhode Island Medical Society. A record number of schools participated this year, 53 in all, reaching more than 2800 students. The celebrity judges were Mario Hilario, Anchor/Reporter, WJAR-TV 10; Margaret Sun, MD, President, Rhode Island Academy of Family Physicians; Christopher F. Koller, Health Insurance Commissioner, State of Rhode Island; and Andrew Snyder, MD, Vice President, Rhode Island Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The 2005 winner was **Nicole Patton**, of Barrington, Rhode Island. She attends St. Philomena School in Portsmouth. Second place went to **Catherine Piper** of Pawtucket, and Third Place went to **Yescenia Murales** of Newport.

As the Rhode Island winner, Nicole and her family attended the national Tar Wars contest in Washington, DC in July. At the national contest, Nicole's poster received Sixth Place nationally, an Honorable Mention. ❖

*In 1987, members of Doctors Ought to Care (DOC) and the Hall of Life Education Health Education Center of the Denver Museum of Natural History developed a program that would allow healthcare providers and community organizations to become involved in youth tobacco education. The program is designed to educate students prior to the age when the decision to smoke or chew tobacco is made. By 1993, sixteen states had implemented the Tar Wars program, and in September of that year Tar Wars had become a national non-profit organization.*

*Tar Wars, a tobacco-free education program for kids from the American Academy of Family Physicians.*