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Escambia County Health Department Tobacco Prevention and Control Program and Tobacco Free Florida Celebrate the 36th Annual Great American Smokeout

PENSACOLA – Today marks the 36th Annual Great American Smokeout, sponsored by the American Cancer Society. The Escambia County Health Department Tobacco Prevention and Control Program, the Florida Department of Health and Tobacco Free Florida celebrate this event by encouraging Floridians to commit to being tobacco-free for 24 hours.

In Escambia County, a Great American Smokeout event takes place at the University of West Florida, hosted by The Tobacco Task Force: STRIKE Club, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. CST at University Commons. The Escambia County Health Department Tobacco Prevention and Control Program will be on-site to raise awareness about the dangers of smoking and the many effective resources available to successfully quit. Attendees who trade in their tobacco products receive a free quit kit and t-shirt.

“The Escambia County Health Department Tobacco Prevention and Control Program, its affiliates, and partners encourage smokers of our county each year to use the Great American Smokeout as their day to make a plan to quit,” said Vanessa L. Phillips, Escambia County Health Department’s Tobacco Prevention Specialist. “Join us at the University of West Florida event so we may help you kick start your journey to a tobacco-free life.”

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of disease and premature death in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Cigarette use alone results in an estimated 28,700 deaths in Florida each year. Despite the known dangers of smoking, more than 2.5 million Floridians, or 17.1 percent of the adult population, are current cigarette smokers.

Tobacco Free Florida, a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida’s tobacco settlement fund, offers a number of free and convenient resources to help smokers quit.

- Phone: Call the Florida Quitline at 1.877.U.CAN.NOW to speak with a Quit Coach who will help you assess your tobacco use and create a personalized quit plan.
- Online: Enroll in the Web Coach®, which will help you create your own web-based quit plan that’s right for you, visit <https://www.quitnow.net/florida>.
- In-person: Visit the Florida Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) Network’s website, <http://ahectobacco.com>, to locate your local AHEC and sign up for Quit Smoking Now group classes.

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