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WESTCHESTER WINS FIRST PRIZE!

At the 16th annual Big Apple Awards luncheon at Tavern on the Green hosted by the New York Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, Westchester County's anti-tobacco campaign "Face Value" walked away with the first-place award in the Marketing to Special Audiences category.

"It's great to be recognized for our anti-tobacco efforts, but the real winners are the teenage girls in Westchester County," stated County Executive Andy Spano. "The Westchester Face Value campaign was launched to combat the tobacco industry's multibillion dollar marketing effort aimed at getting girls to smoke. Teenage girls from Westchester participated in the advertisements and highlighted the negative effects smoking has on teenage girls – the effect on appearance, the more than 4,000 chemicals a smoker inhales and what could be bought with the money they might spend on cigarettes."

"Coincidentally, the award is a golden apple, which is Westchester County's symbol," Spano added.

The advertisements were designed and produced by the communication agency, Fleishman Hillard, who teamed up with the County Executive's Communication Office and the Westchester County Department of Health to reach the county's teenage girls of high-school age. The campaign included TV, radio and outdoor ads (bus shelters, billboards, buses); an interactive website [www. Westchesterfacevalue.com](http://www.Westchesterfacevalue.com); and many anti-tobacco events such as a poetry slam that encouraged teens to express anti-tobacco thoughts through poetry.

"Our research suggested that teenage girls do not respond to information about the long-term health hazards of smoking, such as cancer and lung disease," stated Joshua Lipsman, M.D., M.P.H., Health

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Commissioner. “However, our focus groups told us that teen girls care about being attractive. The Face Value campaign countered the tobacco industry’s message. In other words, we told the truth: Tobacco use ruins your appearance.”

Dr. Lipsman added that women have unique health risks associated with smoking. In addition to cancer, lung and heart disease, tobacco use by women also results in reproductive problems including infertility, complications during pregnancy and more painful menstruation.

The New York Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America established the Big Apple Awards program in 1988 to encourage excellence in public relations. The Big Apple Awards program recognizes communications professionals who have achieved the standards of excellence. The 2003 Big Apple Awards competition was open to all public relations professionals in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut for programs created in 2002 and implemented anywhere in the United States.

For more information on Westchester Face Value, visit the website at www.westchesterfacevalue.com or call the Health Department at 813-5000.