

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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President Clinton, Governor Schwarzenegger, American Heart Association President Visit Students and Staff at Columbia Middle School to Showcase Healthy Schools Program

Leadership of Alliance for a Healthier Generation also Announces Nationwide Governor's Challenge to Showcase California as a model and Increase School Participation in Healthy Schools Program

Los Angeles, CA - Former President Bill Clinton, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and American Heart Association President Dan Jones visited a California school today that has been nationally recognized for creating a healthier school environment for staff and students. The former president and governor along with the American Heart Association president are leaders of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, a joint initiative of the American Heart Association and William J. Clinton Foundation, which was created in 2005 to fight the epidemic of childhood obesity in the United States.

"Thanks to the leadership at this school, and so many others across the country, students are being given the opportunity to take a critical step forward in learning how to live healthier lives," said President Clinton. "We know that reducing or eliminating childhood obesity comes down to a very simple formula: helping children reduce the number of calories they consume and increase the number of calories they burn. Here in California, under the Governor's leadership, you have been committed to making this happen in your schools. When schools like this give students the tools they need to lead a healthier lifestyle, they are helping them make an invaluable investment in their future."

"Initiatives like the Alliance for a Healthier Generation are providing the framework for a healthier America. I am thrilled to join with President Clinton and the American Heart Association because in California we are already doing everything the Alliance supports," said Gov. Schwarzenegger. "The foundation for a healthy lifetime is built in the habits we learn as youth. They give us the strength and the confidence to achieve more, to feel better and to succeed. These healthy habits can help give our children the future they deserve."

"The hard work and dedication of the students, teachers and parents at Columbia Middle School is making a difference," said Daniel W. Jones, M.D., FAHA, president of the American Heart Association. "We are here to celebrate their accomplishments and all of the positive changes they have made. They have demonstrated the powerful impact that teachers, students, staff and

parents can achieve by working as a team and making their school a healthier place to learn and grow.”

With California already leading the way in working to prevent childhood obesity, Governor Schwarzenegger today issued the Governors’ Challenge for a Healthier Generation, to encourage other Governors across the country to enroll the highest percentage of schools of any state across the nation in the Alliance’s Healthy Schools Program. The Governor’s Challenge provides a mechanism for Governors to pledge their commitment to building healthier school environments and draw attention to a free and comprehensive resource available to all schools – public, private, and parochial – that helps them implement programs and policies that promote healthy eating and physical activity among students and staff. Governor Schwarzenegger was named a co-lead of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation in May 2007.

Columbia Middle School is one of 26 schools from across the country to achieve Bronze Level Recognition this past August by the Alliance’s Healthy Schools Program. During its first year in the Healthy Schools Program, Columbia Middle School started a parent advisory group to advise school food service on how to make the school meal offerings appropriate for the cultural and dietary needs of students. As a result, the school has significantly increased their fruit, vegetable and fresh fish offerings in the cafeteria. To date, 92 percent of all California schools participating in the program made measurable progress in changing the health of their school environments.

In addition to Columbia Middle School, Columbia Elementary School and Roosevelt Middle School in the Orsi Unified School District were also awarded Bronze Level recognition in August.

About the Alliance for a Healthier Generation

The William J. Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Association partnered in May of 2005 to create a new generation of healthy Americans by addressing one of the nation’s leading public health threats – childhood obesity. The goal of the Alliance is to stop the nationwide increase in childhood obesity by 2010, and to empower kids nationwide to make healthy lifestyle choices. The Alliance will positively affect the places that can make a difference to a child’s health: homes, schools, restaurants, doctor’s offices and communities. For more information on the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, please visit: www.HealthierGeneration.org