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**CNY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ELECTED TO
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEEN INSTITUTES**

Syracuse, NY—Prevention Network announced today that Caroline Myrdek, a junior at LaFayette High School, was elected to the board of the National Association of Teen Institutes (NATI) at the organization’s annual conference in Southampton, New York, October 15-18, 2008. Caroline will serve as Chair of the Youth Advisory Committee of the Board of Directors of NATI. She achieved this distinction through an application and election process by a committee of adult board members and her peers at the conference. In her new position, she hopes to further her leadership skills and her knowledge and experience with youth prevention efforts. Caroline has served as a member of the Heart of New York Teen Institute Youth Staff for the past two years and attended this year’s NATI conference as a youth representative.

In addition, Prevention Network staff member Elizabeth Toomey, Coordinator of Onondaga County Reality Check, was invited to speak at the NATI conference. Ms. Toomey presented two workshops including, “Take the Lead,” an interactive session where participants explored leadership topics, and “Young People are Targets,” a workshop which examined how the media influences young people and their buying power. Her attendance at the conference was made possible through a grant from the Central New York Community Foundation, Inc. Nicole Smith, Coordinator of Heart of New York Teen Institute at Prevention Network and board member of NATI, joined Elizabeth in presenting the “Take the Lead” session.

NATI is a not-for-profit network of youth leadership programs throughout the United States that utilizes the Teen Institute (TI) model. These programs are dedicated to providing young people the leadership skills to promote alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention and healthy lifestyles. Currently, there are 50 programs operating in 21 states

and directly serving an average of 36,500 youth annually. The mission of the National Association of Teen Institutes is to promote and advocate comprehensive youth leadership training programs in prevention, thereby empowering people to bring about positive change in individuals, families, and communities.

Each year, a different TI hosts the NATI conference in its home state. The NATI conference provides a key opportunity for those who work with youth to come together to network, share ideas, and learn about the latest in best practices, research and programming.

Prevention Network has been making CNY a healthier community since 1949 by providing proven and measurable programs to prevent addictions and address other problem behaviors.

