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FREE SCREENINGS OF *WHY WE SMOKE* FILM DOCUMENTARY AT NICKELODEON USC Student Crew Interviews Smokers, Researchers and Media Experts for Documentary Additional Feature - Release of Music Video By Musicians & Songwriters Guild of SC for "Her Life"

COLUMBIA (JULY 9, 2008) - There will be free screenings of *Why We Smoke* on Thursday, July 10 at the Nickelodeon Theatre on 937 Main Street in Columbia. Film times are at 3PM, 6PM and 8PM. The Musicians & Songwriters Guild of SC is also featuring a music video release for the song "Her Life" during the screenings.

Why We Smoke gives smokers, friends of smokers, social workers, public health representatives and medical experts a new look at America's number one preventable cause of death. The film documents three important components of this topic: 1) smokers, 2) the experts who study them, 3) and the ways in which media and advertising has been, and is still, a major reinforcement of smoking behavior.

Why We Smoke represents a unique experiment in a college media center. Eighteen Undergraduate students at the University of South Carolina traveled to meet smokers in their hometowns and researchers in the labs where they studied tobacco and nicotine. They also interviewed media experts who revealed the tactics of advertising to induce behaviors.

Why We Smoke is funded by the South Carolina Tobacco Collaborative and the University of South Carolina, Department of Art and sponsored by Healthy Carolina and *The Free Times*. The film is part of the Nickelodeon Theatre's monthly "Community Film Forum" and will feature a Q&A and panel forum following the film.

Why We Smoke is director Susan Hogue's third documentary made with an all student crew. Her work often reflects social issues and her teaching style is geared toward teaching the next generation of media artists about documentary filmmaking and its importance in elucidating those things which are often ignored or are invisible to us, even as they surround us every day. Her first movie, *Promises Made* (2005), about rural residents fighting for economic parity was screened at 20 locations in the United States and Canada during 2005 and 2006. Her second movie, *RX* (2007) about healthcare in South Carolina, traveled to Toronto for its Canadian premiere on June 19th.

Consultants on the *Why We Smoke* film project include: Dr. Charles MacTutus (Chair, USC Psychology Department), Dr. Rosemarie Booze (USC Bicentennial Chair Professor in Behavioral Neuroscience), Dr. Steven Harrod (USC Associate Professor and Researcher), Dr. Oscar Lovelace (Family Practitioner), Dr. Phil Michels (Psychologist and Director of Behavioral Science, USC Medical School), and Frank Baker (Media Consultant).

The four-minute music video produced through a grant from the South Carolina Tobacco Collaborative, features "Her Life", an original song by local songwriter, Chip Mosteller. Lucas War Hero recorded and performs the "Her Life" song, and Vega Chastain stars as the waitress in the video which highlights the challenge hospitality workers face with secondhand smoke exposure and earning a living in the industry.

About the South Carolina Tobacco Collaborative

The South Carolina Tobacco Collaborative is a statewide assembly of the leading health organizations, community coalitions, and businesses committed to reducing the toll of tobacco use in South Carolina by providing resources and education on tobacco related issues to advocates, lawmakers, and concerned citizens. For more information, please visit www.smokefreesc.org.

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