



Dear Montana High School Rodeo Association Member,

Thanks to the diligent work of the Montana Tobacco Use Prevention Program (MTUPP) and the Montana High School Rodeo Association (MHSRA), Montana was the 1st state in the nation to have a Tobacco-Free Rodeo! MTUPP and MHSRA partnered in 2008, to prove that they have taken a stand and continue to speak out about “Tobacco having no place in our Montana High School Rodeos!”

The Montana High School Rodeo handbook states: *MHSRA/Jr. High prohibits the use of all tobacco products by all participants and spectators at any MHSRA event. This includes the restrooms, concession areas, seating areas, performance areas, and their entrances. The prohibition of tobacco use at MHSRA/Jr. High events serves to protect the health, safety and welfare of participants, livestock, and fans of the MHSRA. (page 7 of the MHSRA/JR. HIGH GROUND RULES)*

Although every rodeo event is tobacco free, there are 10 Tobacco Free Series Rodeo’s where contestants compete to win a breast collar. There are two Series Rodeo’s in each district, one in the fall and one in the spring. This year the Fall Series’ Rodeo’s will be – Glasgow, Broadus, Browning, Boulder, and Hamilton. Spring Rodeo’s will be announced in March. At each Series event there will be a reACT table where contestants are encouraged to sign the *Tobacco Free Rodeo Pledge* and share the message about reACT Tobacco Free Rodeo with their peers.

Students must sign a new *Tobacco Free Pledge* each year. *Tobacco Free Pledges* will be available at each of the Tobacco Free Series Rodeo’s. Members must sign a pledge before they can begin accumulating points towards rewards. This means you do not begin accumulating points until you have signed a pledge.

Signing the *Tobacco Free Pledge* is also a prerequisite to being able to qualify for MTUPP’s \$5,000 college scholarship. MTUPP has given more than \$121,000.00 in college scholarships since the partnership began in 2008. For the 2016-17 Rodeo year, 6 finalists will be chosen from all of the scholarship applicants. The 6 finalists will each interview during the State Finals to decide who will earn the, 2-\$5,000.00, 2 - \$2,500.00, and 2 \$1,000.00 scholarships.

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION/EXPECTATIONS

1. Must be a Senior in good standing with the MHSRA, and be attending a post-secondary institution in the fall of 2017
2. Fill out, and electronically return, a scholarship application, which can be found on the *reactmt.com* or *MHSRA.com* website. (Will be due in mid-May)
3. Students must have a GPA of 2.0 or higher
4. Students must complete a tobacco prevention project in their community.
5. Have a understanding of tobacco prevention
6. Be willing to be a tobacco free spokesperson, should they receive the scholarship.

Based on the application process, six students will be chosen for an interview with the Scholarship Committee, during the State Finals, to determine which amount of a scholarship they will receive.

The six students who receive an interview will:

1. Create a poster board outlining their project. (So take pictures!) The poster board will count toward

To learn more go to *reactmt.com* or *mhsra.com*.



interview points. The Poster Board will be put on display during the finals.

2. Will have a short 5 or 6 questions interview with the Scholarship Committee.
3. Will do a 5-7 minute presentation during interview (it will be timed- deductions for under or over time) the presentation should be on:

- a. What does reACT/ tobacco prevention mean to you? Why does reACT/ tobacco prevention matter to you?
- b. What did you learn from your experiences while participating in reACT/ or tobacco prevention activities?
- c. How will you carry the tobacco prevention message forward into college?

(Hint: Please do not tell us what reACT stands for or what it is, we already know. We also understand that you are going to lead by example, what we are looking for is: How are you going to continue to promote the tobacco free movement and work for policy change in your community/college?)

Scholarship Winners will be asked to

- a. Wear Tobacco Free Rodeo Patches (reACT will provide) on their shirts to show sponsorship.
- b. Complete at least one tobacco prevention project per semester & report on it during their first year of college

Most counties in Montana have a Tobacco Prevention Specialist. However, if you are not sure who the Tobacco Prevention Specialist, reACT advisor, or community contact person is Julie Russell will be happy to be of assistance. If you do not have a reACT Group in your school or community, please contact Julie and she will assist you with creating your own activity or presentation. Julie can be reached by cell at 406-853-3617 or email at jrussell@rangeweb.net. Please also feel free to contact Julie with any questions, comments, ideas, or suggestions that you may have.

MTUPP and reACT Tobacco Free Rodeo again will be one of the sponsors during the Montana High School Rodeo Finals in Baker. Tobacco is the most preventable cause of death. reACT's goal is to prevent initiation of tobacco use. However, we recognize that for those who are addicted, it can be a very difficult dependence to stop. Although it is hard, it is possible! On Friday we are having a Pledge to Wear Red Challenge! We would like to fill the stands with red shirts to honor those who struggle with fight of tobacco addiction, or have lost their lives to tobacco related disease. So pack a red shirt and join us as we take a stand and show that tobacco will not be a part of our future!

Thank you for making reACT Tobacco Free Rodeo and Tobacco Prevention a priority

Julie Russell & Darlynn Williams

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To learn more go to reactmt.com or mhsra.com.