

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

2021 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20036

(202) 232-9033, (888) 794-7481

Fax: 202-232-9044

<http://www.aafp.org>

NEWS RELEASE

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Contacts: Maureen Maxwell (202) 232-9033 or (888) 794-7481
Karen Siebert (800) 274-2237, Ext. 5221

Winners Named in Tar Wars National Poster Contest

For 15 years, students have been turning what they learn about tobacco use into positive messages

WASHINGTON – Francesca Pengidore, a fifth-grader from Beaver, Pa., was named the 2003 Tar Wars national poster contest winner at a ceremony in Arlington, Va., on July 14.

Tar Wars is a tobacco-free education program that discourages tobacco use among the country's youth. The program, which was established in 1988, is supported by the American Academy of Family Physicians.

Pengidore's winning poster was chosen from 45 entries, all winners of state Tar Wars poster contests. Posters were judged on their artistry, creativity, originality and their ability to communicate a clear and positive message about being tobacco-free. As the national poster contest winner, Pengidore receives a family trip to Disney World worth up to \$3,000.

In addition to Pengidore, three runners-up, six honorable mentions, and the state winners were recognized at the awards ceremony.

Runners-up:

Second place:	Widya Adidharma, Laramie, Wyo.
Third place:	Hannah Smith, Rome, Ga.
Fourth place:	James Wetzel, Ozark, Ala.

Honorable Mentions:

Angie Sabaduquia, Clinton, Ill.

Matthew Maj, Owings Mills, Md.
Richelle Spurlock, Sistersville, W.Va.
Eldon Lopes, Pawtucket, R.I.
Emily Taplin, Murnee, Ohio
Christopher Fox-Meyer, Lawton, Okla.

Thousands of family physicians and healthcare workers across the country present Tar Wars programs to fourth- and fifth-graders in their local schools every year. They discuss not only the long-term effects of smoking on the body, but also focus on the short-term, image-based effects of tobacco use.

Counteracting the messages created in tobacco advertising, healthcare professionals talk with youth not only about long-term issues such as lung cancer, but about how tobacco makes one's breath smell and how smoking can impair one's ability to be active and play sports. The students also learn about practical issues, such as how much it costs to use tobacco for a week, month, a year and over a lifetime.

The follow-up Tar Wars poster contest encourages children to create posters that emphasize the positive aspects of not using tobacco. Several past national poster contest winners now have their posters displayed on racecars as part of the Tar Wars Tobacco-Free Racing initiative.

Tar Wars was developed in 1988 by the Hall of Life at the Denver Museum of Natural History and Doctors Ought to Care. The AAFP has overseen the program since 1997. The program has been implemented in all 50 states and several territories and internationally, and it has reached more than 2.5 million children.

Digital images of the first-place, runner-up and honorable mention posters can be downloaded from www.tarwars.org. Poster artwork is also displayed in schools, and is reproduced on T-shirts, note cards, post cards and wall posters, available at www.tarwars.org.

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If you would like to interview one of the students or one of the family physicians who presents for the Tar Wars program, please call Maureen Maxwell (202) 232-9033 or (888) 794-7481 or Karen Siebert (800) 274-2237, Ext. 5221.

Founded in 1947, the American Academy of Family Physicians represents more than 94,300 physicians and medical students nationwide. It is the only medical specialty society devoted solely to primary care. Please visit www.aafp.org for more information about AAFP.