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CSS WFNY TELLS PEOPLE TO THINK AGAIN

Keynote Speaker was Ed DeJesus aka, Mr. Youth Cultural Competence

(Corning, NY) – Many members of the youth community and regional businesses covering a variety of sectors, gathered at the Corning Museum of Glass today to listen. The message was simple. Chemung-Schuyler-Steuben Workforce NY (CSS WFNY) is simply asking people to “Think Again.” The morning’s event, which unveiled CSS Workforce NY’s yearlong media campaign, featured guest speaker Ed DeJesus.

“Businesses are reporting to me that they cannot fill the open positions that they have at their individual places of employment. It is not because they can’t find skilled workers or qualified candidates,” stated Dan Porter, Executive Director of CSS WFNY. “It is because the people they want to hire do not pass the drug test. This is the harsh reality and we need to join together - starting today - to change that.” Porter went on to say that it is very expensive for businesses to go through interviewing process and not be able to actually hire their top candidate due to a drug related issue.

CSS WFNY’s “Think Again, Quit to Get Hired.” campaign focuses on raising awareness and creating partnerships to address a rising issue facing employers around the three-county area. Up to 50% of area job seekers within our three-county area cannot pass the mandatory drug test at hire. This startling statistic is impacting local employers’ ability to find the skilled workforce that they need to grow and compete in the marketplace. The kick-off event unveiled the campaign materials that targets youth between the ages of 18-21 using peer-to-peer discussions. The media includes television, radio and online tools for the “Think Again” campaign that will officially begin June 7th through June of 2012.

“The creative messages for the media campaign are simple and meant to talk to the young adults on their level in a clear and concise way. They need to quit using drugs to get a job,” continued Porter. “I want to thank the Think Again Coalition for taking the time to work with us on the campaign messages and supporting toolkit materials.”

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In addition to being one of the first to witness the unveiling of such an ambitious campaign, attendees also had the privilege of listening to keynote speaker, Ed DeJesus. A recognized authority on youth engagement, Ed DeJesus has delivered more than 1,000 speeches to audiences as large as 3,000. Often referred to as “Mr. Youth Cultural Competence,” his work is in use by hundreds of youth service organizations across the country. Today, DeJesus moved the crowd with empowering words and message focusing on the future’s most valuable asset ... youth.

“I think this campaign has some serious leverage and am proud to be asked to speak,” stated DeJesus. “I think if we continue to get support and rally together we can keep the momentum going to really *get inside the heads* of these young people – so they understand that for every action there is a consequence. And let them know that they are in charge of their own destiny.”

The website referenced as part of the online toolkit for the campaign can be found at www.quit2gethired.org. TV, Radio and posters can be downloaded from that website. This event was hosted by the Chemung-Schuylers-Steuben Workforce NY for more information visit www.csswfny.com.

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