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Students Against Violence Everywhere Recognizes National Student, Advisor and Chapter of the Year

Raleigh, North Carolina – March 21, 2015 – The National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere, a nationwide nonprofit dedicated to decreasing the potential for violence in schools and communities, is honoring its exceptional participants for making a difference in their communities. As part of the organization's annual awards program, SAVE has selected two Students of the Year, two Chapters of the Year and one Advisor of the Year, each nominated by community members from across the country and recognized for their outstanding efforts in preventing violence in our schools.

SAVE's Student of the Year awards went to:

- Leo Myers from White Oak High School in Jacksonville. Myers co-founded his SAVE chapter and has served as president for two years. He continually demonstrates outstanding commitment to SAVE ideals by mediating his peers' arguments, participating in crime prevention activities and reaching out to local elementary schools. He recently helped raise money for a boy with cancer from a local church by collecting and donating bottle caps. Myers was nominated by last year's SAVE Student of the Year, Zachary Bakke.
- Sydney Gilbert from Mukwonago High School in Mukwonago, Wisconsin. Gilbert has been president of her school's chapter for two years and has initiated numerous activities and campaigns to promote respect, non-violence and mitigate bullying in her community. Most notably, she began the school's first "True Beauty" day to promote self-confidence and positivity throughout the school. She was nominated by the school advisor, Sarah Dianich.

SAVE's Chapter of the Year awards went to:

- Lockhart Elementary School in the U.S. Virgin Islands. This chapter, led by advisor JoAnne Saunders, has taken a unique approach to promoting peace through various forms of performing arts. It stages monthly rallies during which students perform songs, dances and skits conveying anti-bullying messages.
- Cuthbertson High School in Waxhaw. This SAVE chapter is led by advisor Leah Ross and was nominated by Heather Karpinski, the school's media center specialist and a parent of one of the chapter members. This year the chapter made a large impact on the nonprofit Turning Point, a local shelter for victims of domestic violence, by hosting numerous fundraisers and volunteering. Additionally, it has organized canned food drives, equality celebrations, safe driving initiatives and teen dating abuse workshops for students.

The SAVE Advisor of the Year award went to Officer Daisy Watson, the advisor for the Biloxi High School chapter in Mississippi. Officer Watson's students credit her with turning SAVE into one of the biggest clubs at Biloxi High, boasting more than 60 members. She has coordinated countless impactful activities, most notably a DUI reenactment with real police, firemen and an ambulance. Officer Watson's dedication to SAVE has made a tremendous impact on the students and has contributed greatly to the drop in violence and drug use on campus.

“Each of these award winners truly embodies the ideals of Students Against Violence Everywhere,” said Carleen Wray, executive director of SAVE. “Their commitment to their schools and the local communities exemplify honor, dignity and community pride, and their work is helping keep students safe across our country. Thank you to each of them for their dedication and hard work for such an important issue!”

The winners were revealed at the SAVE Summit, which was held March 21 at the McKimmon Center at N.C. State University in Raleigh. More than 300 people attended, including SAVE participants, students, teachers, law enforcement, dropout prevention coordinators, social workers, counselors and parents. Through motivating workshops, peer-to-peer presentations and nationally acclaimed speakers, the Summit showcased successful practices in preventing violence and trained participants in effective ways to make their schools and communities safer. For more information or to help make a difference in our schools, please visit www.nationalsave.org.

About the National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere:

SAVE started at West Charlotte High School in Charlotte, North Carolina in 1989 following the tragic death of a student who was trying to break up a fight at an off-campus party. Students met first to console each other, then as an organization to promote youth safety and to work together to prevent future incidents from occurring. SAVE provides education about the effects and consequences of violence and helps provide safe activities for students, parents and communities. For more information on SAVE or starting a SAVE chapter, visit www.nationalsave.org, or contact SAVE at (866) 343-SAVE to receive free startup materials and guidance.

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