



Phoenix House
Rising Above Addiction

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment in California Threatened: Cuts in Funding Jeopardize Phoenix Academy San Diego

Appeal to Community – Help These Kids Who Need it Most

SAN DIEGO – November 2, 2009 – Since 1988, [Phoenix Academy San Diego](#) has helped thousands of troubled teens reclaim their lives, establishing itself as a vital county resource for at-risk youth and their families. The Academy, a residential high school for youth with substance abuse and co-occurring mental health disorders is now suffering further declines in the state funding it relies upon to operate, it was announced today by Winnie Wechsler, Executive Director for Phoenix Houses of California. As the program – which offers its services regardless of a family’s ability to pay – seeks out new sources of funding, it has become increasingly dependent upon private donations to meet its operational costs and is issuing an appeal to the community for help.

“Phoenix Academy is one of the few places in our community where troubled teens and their families can turn when all other options have failed. It is a place that has offered hope – and led to remarkable recovery – for countless kids,” says John Davies, a San Diego attorney and founding board member of Phoenix Houses of California. “We are asking the community to join us in our commitment to keep our program healthy during these tough economic times.”

Located in the hills of Descanso, just east of San Diego, the Academy has provided thousands of adolescents struggling with substance abuse, along with their families, a comprehensive, holistic array of services that address medical, mental health, education, and other family needs. Since its founding, the program has been a critical link in the continuum of care that is available to at-risk youth in San Diego County, especially those who could otherwise not afford treatment.

“For more than two decades, Phoenix Academy San Diego has been changing lives by helping young people confront and manage their addictions so they can go on to lead happy, healthy, productive lives,” says Elizabeth Urquhart, Director of Adolescent

Services for Phoenix House in San Diego. “Every day youth arrive at the Academy in need of our mental health and treatment services – services that our reach and experience show they need to successfully overcome their problems.”

Says Naveed, a graduate of Phoenix Academy San Diego who is currently studying to become a certified substance abuse counselor, “I have all the tools I’ve learned in the program and I’m using them in the real world.”

To find out how you can help support Phoenix Academy San Diego, please contact Elizabeth Urquhart at 619-445-0405 x4654 or via email at eurquhart@phoenixhouse.org.

For more information, or for any media inquiries about Phoenix House, please contact Karen Sodomick, Director of Marketing and Communications for Phoenix House, at 646-505-2093 or ksodomick@phoenixhouse.org. You may also contact Davia Temin or Allison Bennett of Temin and Company at 212-588-8788 or news@teminandco.com.

About Phoenix House and Phoenix Academy San Diego

Phoenix Academy San Diego is one of several adolescent treatment programs run by Phoenix House nationwide which has been recognized as a model, evidence-based program by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and the U.S. Department of Justice.

Phoenix House has been touching the lives of California residents for 30 years, helping adolescents, adults, and their families overcome the problems associated with substance abuse and empowering them with the skills to lead healthy, productive, and rewarding lives. With 18 programs located throughout Southern and Central California, Phoenix House currently provides treatment to more than 1,200 men, women, and teens each day.

Phoenix House is committed to protecting and supporting individuals, families, and communities affected by substance abuse (www.phoenixhouse.org).

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