**SAMPLE RELEASE ANNOUNCING SEASON LAUNCH**

*LifeSmarts launches 2020-2021 season with new scholarship, community service opportunities for teens*

*Millions of student leaders have gained real-world knowledge through the program*

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Washington, DC–Today marks the official launch of the 2020-2021 season of LifeSmarts, with a new competition going live at LifeSmarts.org. LifeSmarts, a program of the National Consumers League (NCL), is a national scholarship competition and educational program for middle-school and high-school students that tests knowledge of real-life consumer issues and is helping to create a future generation of consumer-savvy adults.

“We are very excited to launch this season of LifeSmarts,” said national Program Director Lisa Hertzberg. “For more than 26 years, LifeSmarts has given students the skills they need to succeed as adults. We’ve seen more than 1.5 million students gain knowledge, confidence, leadership capabilities, and team-building skills. The competition is fun, and the impact of LifeSmarts is life-long.”

LifeSmarts focuses on five main content areas:

* consumer rights and responsibilities
* personal finance
* technology
* health and safety
* and the environment

Students are quizzed on their knowledge of these subject areas during online competition. Top-performing teams then advance to statewide competitions, and state champion teams as well as several wildcard teams advance to the national championship held each year in a different American city. The 2020 and 2021 National LifeSmarts Championship is scheduled to take place in Cincinnati, Ohio, April 17-20, 2021. Winning team members receive scholarships and other prizes.

Last year, students answered more than 3.5 million consumer questions about credit reports, recycling, nutrition, social media, state lemon laws, and everything in between. A double national championship will be held in 2021 that will host 2020 winning teams as well as 2021 winning teams as they vie for two National titles.

In addition to online, state, and national competitions, LifeSmarts recognition and awards occur throughout the program year:

* Teams of students vie for cash prizes in the online TeamSmarts quiz, which focuses on a specific LifeSmarts content area each month from September through February.
* Partnering with FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America), 4-H, HOSA (Future Health Professionals), SkillsUSA, and FCCLA (Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America), LifeSmarts complements these organizations’ projects, judging events, competitive events, and activities. LifeSmarts offers special opportunities for members of these student leadership organizations.
* LifeSmarts is excited bring back the popular LifeSmarts OTC Medicine Safety Mentoring Project sponsored by Johnson & Johnson. You and your students are sure to love this amazing project! Students and teams will work to educate themselves and others about medicine safety, then develop and submit an infographic that showcases their safety knowledge. Individual scholarships and team awards will be awarded to recognize high achievement.
* Thanks to a partnership with AARP, high school LifeSmarts participants have the opportunity to educate others about planning for Retirement.
* Again this year, one LifeSmarts student will win a $2,000 scholarship by writing the winning privacy essay in a contest sponsored by the Identity Theft Resource Center.

LifeSmarts is active in all states and the District of Columbia, where NCL is headquartered. LifeSmarts will also be available in China this competition year.

“We are proud of the impact LifeSmarts has made in its 26+ years of educating teens, and we are excited to continue to grow the LifeSmarts program, to educate students about financial literacy, and to create a new generation of savvy, market-ready consumers and workers,” said NCL Executive Director Sally Greenberg. “Too often traditional high school curriculum fails to teach students vital information that will be crucial once students go to college, get their first job, or move out of their parents’ house.”

In addition to hosting the official LifeSmarts competition, LifeSmarts.org provides resources for educators to supplement existing lesson plans. These include daily quizzes, educational videos, focused study guides, and scholarship opportunities. LifeSmarts lessons closely align with courses taught in family and consumer sciences, business, technology, health, and vocational education. Math and English teachers have also had success with LifeSmarts, as have homeschool and community educators.

Major LifeSmarts contributors include: Johnson & Johnson, Melaleuca, Amazon, CUMA, AARP, Sears Consumer Protection and Education Fund, American Express, Intuit, WSECU, and a number of state and local sponsors.

Visit LifeSmarts.org for more information.

*LifeSmarts: Learn it. Live it.*

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About LifeSmarts

LifeSmarts is a program of the National Consumers League. State coordinators run the programs on a volunteer basis. For more information, visit: LifeSmarts.org, email lifesmarts@nclnet.org, or call the National Consumers League’s communications department at (202) 835-3323.

The National Consumers League, founded in 1899, is America's pioneer consumer organization. Our mission is to protect and promote social and economic justice for consumers and workers in the United States and abroad. For more information, visit [www.nclnet.org](http://www.nclnet.org/undefined/).

SAMPLE RELEASE ANNOUNCING STATE COMPETITION EVENT

Note: Distribute to members of the media before the event in order to encourage attendance and coverage. This sample would need to be tailored to include individual details of your state competition, including the sponsoring coordinator, mention of corporate sponsors, and information about the event.

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(LOGO HERE *optional*)

**Media Advisory**

For Immediate Release

Date

CONTACT INFORMATION

(Headline): **Consumer Savvy Teams Compete to Represent <State> at 2020 and 2021 Double National LifeSmarts Championship in Orlando**

(Subhead): *State Championship Event Hosted by <Coordinator> DATE*

What:            <State> LifeSmarts state competition
LifeSmarts, a program of the National Consumers League, is a consumer education competition that tests teens in grades 9-12 about personal finance, health and safety, the environment, technology, and consumer rights and responsibilities.

The winner of <State> competition to advance to national competition in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Where:         City and Location

When:          Dates

Who:              EX: Iowa high school students, grade 9-12

Why:              EX: Teens are consumers

PROVIDE EXTRA INFORMATION HERE – WHO IS COORDINATING THE PROGRAM FOR YOUR STATE, HOW LONG HAVE THEY BEEN DOING SO, WHO WAS LAST YEAR’S CHAMP, HOW DID THEY DO AT NATIONALS, HOW MANY TEAMS ARE EXPECTED TO VIE FOR THE STATE TITLE, ETC.

*LifeSmarts is a program of the National Consumers League. State coordinators implement the program locally. For more information, visit: www.lifesmarts.org, email lifesmarts@nclnet.org, or call the National Consumers League’s communications department at 202-835-3323. The National Consumers League, founded in 1899, is America’s pioneer consumer organization. NCL’s mission is to protect and promote social and economic justice for consumers and workers in the United States and abroad. For more information about NCL, visit www.nclnet.org or email**media@nclnet.org**.*

*MAY REPLACE WITH ORGANIZATION’S BOILERPLATE*

*###*

Sample Media Release Announcing New State Champion

Distribute to members of the media after the state competition in order to encourage interviews with winning coach and team about success at state and their upcoming travels to national event. This sample would need to be tailored to the individual details of a state competition, including the sponsoring coordinator, mention of corporate sponsors, and information about the event.

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(LOGO HERE *optional*)

**Media Release**

For Immediate Release

Date

CONTACT INFORMATION

 (Headline): **Teens from <High School, Group or Organization> Take <State> State LifeSmarts Title**

(Subhead): *Champs to Travel to Cincinnati to Compete in National Event*

**CITY, ST**—**NAME OF SCHOOL OR GROUP**beat out **XX** teams and captured the **STATE**State LifeSmarts Championship by successfully fielding questions about real-life marketplace issues at **LOCATION** on **DATE OF STATE COMPETITION**.

LifeSmarts, a consumer education competition that challenges teens in grades 9-12 about personal finance, health and safety, the environment, technology, and consumer rights and responsibilities, is a program of the National Consumers League. In **STATE**, **NAME OF COORDINATOR**, of **ORGANZATION/Affiliation** runs the program.

 Teens from across the state first competed online for a chance to go to the in-person state finals held **ADD DATE AND PLACE HERE**. State champions **NAME OF SCHOOL** have qualified for the national LifeSmarts competition to be held in ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

“LifeSmarts participants in **STATE**have gained many of the consumer ‘smarts’ they’ll need to make it in the real world,” said **STATE COORDINATOR NAME AND AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION**. “We’re proud to have **NAME OF SCHOOL OR GROUP**represent us at the National LifeSmarts Championship.”

Other teams participating in the state finals included **ADD NAMES HERE OR JUST LIST TOP FOUR TEAMS.**

“LifeSmarts participants win by learning to avoid common consumer pitfalls, navigate the government, and understand credit card jargon before they have to sign on the dotted line,” said Sally Greenberg, Executive Director of the National Consumers League.

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*MAY REPLACE WITH ORGANIZATION’S BOILERPLATE*