



the campaign to prevent unplanned pregnancy

July 3, 2018

CONTACT: Paloma Zuleta
202-812-4477
pzuleta@powertodecide.org

POWER TO DECIDE ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS OF ITS INNOVATION NEXT AWARDS

(Washington, D.C.) — Power to Decide, the campaign to prevent unplanned pregnancy, recently completed another round of its Innovation Next program. Innovation Next, a program made possible with the support of the HHS Office of Adolescent Health, is a unique accelerator program aimed at redefining adolescent sexual health for the 21st century through a focus on technology-enabled ideas to ensure that young people have the information and access to services necessary to decide if, when, and under what circumstances to get pregnant. The teams chosen to participate in the program received an award of \$80,000 that was used to develop innovative, technology-based sexual health interventions for teens. The teams also participated in workshops led by global design firm IDEO to learn about design thinking and were being encouraged to apply this approach in developing their projects.

“We provide objective, evidence-based information about sexual health and contraceptive options,” said Ginny Ehrlich, CEO, Power to Decide. “Our mission is to ensure all young people have the power to decide if, when, and under what circumstances to get pregnant.”

“We recognize that 90% of young people say they do not intend to get pregnant at this point in their lives and we’re committed to ensuring that they have the power to act on their intentions,” Ehrlich added. “This is why our Innovation Next program is just what it says it is—innovative—and the reason we are using technology is so that we can empower young people to align their intentions with their actions.”

Since peaking in 1991, the teen birth rate has declined 67%, and the related savings to taxpayers have been significant. However, progress isn’t victory, and unplanned pregnancy rates for Latina and African American teens are still more than twice as high as compared to their white counterparts. In addition, more than 19 million women in need of publicly funded contraception live in [contraceptive deserts](#), where they do not have reasonable access in their county to a public clinic that offers the full range of contraceptive methods.

The [following teams](#) were selected to be part of the 2018 Innovation Next cohort: **My Mind Matters**, Dr. Hope L. Crenshaw (Teen Health Mississippi), Mackenzie Stroh-Hines (Mississippi First), Christopher Cox (Teen Health Mississippi); **Dine Youth Network**, Tina Gray (Capacity Builders Inc.), Errin Smith (Capacity Builders Inc.), Eudora Redhouse (Capacity Builders Inc.); **In It Together**, Aaron Plant (Sentient Research), Joann Schladale (Resources for Resolving Violence Inc.), Jenna Gaarde (San Francisco Department of Public Health); **ACCESS: Adolescent Connection to Contraception in Emergency Settings and Scenarios**, Lyndsey Benson (University of Washington, Department of

Obstetrics and Gynecology), Lily Alexander (University of Washington, Department of Global Health), Kyle Witt (University of Washington, Department of Human Centered Design and Engineering); **Smart SexEd**, Anthony Venezia (Speechless Inc.), Serena Saeed Winn (Sutter Health), Michael Lopez (Bravo Foundation).

After applying design thinking to each of their respective challenges for five months, the teams pitched their final ideas to a panel of judges, which included young adults, designers, and public health and technology professionals. The My Mind Matters team won the event with their innovative idea of using compelling characters and social media to deliver vetted, high-quality sexual and mental health resources to the young people of Mississippi.

“We extend our congratulations to the My Mind Matters team for their hard work, innovative idea and commitment to the process,” said Katy Suellentrop, vice president of programs, Power to Decide. “All the teams brought a unique approach to developing innovative, technology-based sexual health interventions for teens and should be proud of their accomplishments.”

Power to Decide is a private, non-partisan, non-profit organization that works to ensure all people—no matter who they are, where they live, or what their economic status might be—have the power to decide if, when, and under what circumstances to get pregnant and have a child. Please visit us at www.PowerToDecide.org or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.