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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### White House Drug Czar Visits Teen Challenge Tucson Men's Center

TUCSON, Arizona (April 27, 2010) - Teen Challenge of Arizona hosted a meeting with Director Gil Kerlikowske of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) today at their Tucson Men's Center. The nation's sixth "Drug Czar" expressed his interest in learning more about Teen Challenge's faith-based prevention and recovery programs. This was his first visit to a Teen Challenge center.

"We are very honored to host Director Kerlikowske and to be able to share with the Drug Czar the tremendous results that Teen Challenge is seeing in lives being changed not only here, but nationally as well," stated Rev. Snow Peabody, Executive Director of Teen Challenge of Arizona and the Teen Challenge National Representative to Washington, D.C.

"The Director is very impressed with the Teen Challenge programs in Arizona", said Patrick Schmidt, ONDCP Liaison to the Domestic Policy Council, who joined the Drug Czar on his visit.

Teen Challenge provides youth, adults and families with an effective and comprehensive Christian faith-based solution to life-controlling drug and alcohol problems in order to become productive members of society.

Director Kerlikowske indicated that drug prevention is a high priority on his agenda. He stated that, "prevention can work if it comes from peer groups, parents, faith-based groups, neighborhoods, communities and schools." At the meeting, he had the opportunity to learn more about Teen Challenge's drug prevention program, Stay Sharp. Stay Sharp is a hard-hitting, high-energy prevention message to junior high and high school students regarding abuse and its consequences. The presenters of the program are peers who have overcome addictions and are willing to tell their personal stories from poor choices to recovery and health.

Dispelling the "myth of meth", which says that people who use meth can never recover, is another priority according to the Drug Czar. Teen Challenge was pleased to present testimonies from former meth users who are now living drug-free, productive lives after completing the Teen Challenge program.

After hearing from current and former Teen Challenge students, Director Kerlikowske stated that, "I now get to go back and repeat the stories I have heard...to members of Congress and people in the Administration."

Teen Challenge of Arizona began in 1965, and today has six residential recovery centers with a 250-bedspace capacity. The centers consist of: an adolescent girls' center, an adolescent boys' center, a center for women and women with children, and three men's centers. Nationally, Teen Challenge has 245 centers with approximately 7,400 bed spaces available.

To learn more about Teen Challenge of Arizona or for information on the recovery centers, please visit [www.tcaz.org](http://www.tcaz.org).

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