Patrick Reynolds helps Adams Thermal go "Smoke-Free"

Patrick Reynolds demonstrates a breathing technique to Adams Thermal Systems employees during his program at the main plant. Reynolds said the breathing technique can be used to reduce stress and relax the urges to smoke when smokers or tobacco users are faced with difficult moments. Reynolds gave many examples of how to quit smoking and chewing tobacco and offered many resources.

Patrick Reynolds, the grandson of cigarette company founder R.J. Reynolds and a noted tobacco-free advocate, visited Adams Thermal Systems on Wednesday, April 17, to speak to employees about the dangers of smoking. Adams Thermal will become a smoke-free environment starting on July 1. Mr. Reynolds offered motivation to smoking employees to quit as well as discussing the dangers of secondhand smoke.

Patrick Reynolds' advocacy work and motivational talks to youth and adults have made him a well-known and respected champion of a smoke-free society. Mr. Reynolds watched his father, RJ Reynolds, Jr., his oldest brother RJ Reynolds III, and other members of his family die from cigarette-induced emphysema and lung cancer. Concerned about the mounting health evidence, he made the decision to speak out against the industry his family helped build.

According to Brian Denny, Manager of Safety, Training, Development and Compliance, "Adams Thermal Systems informed employees in March that the company would become a smoke-free campus. A smoke-free campus is defined as no smoking in all indoor and outdoor areas. Smokers must leave company property to smoke. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicates that only 100% smoke-free policies like this one fully protect workers' health and offer the greatest support to smokers trying to quit."

Mike Adams, CEO of Adams Thermal Systems, says that the decision to go smoke-free was an easy one. "When you think of all the evidence and all the benefits to the workforce, smoke-free is the only responsible choice. The hard part is effectively helping employees who want to quit smoking. Our goal is not just policies but helping people abide by this change."

In addition to offering smoking cessation classes and resources, Adams Thermal Systems wanted to do more to support employees, said Denny. "Patrick Reynolds is one of the most credible and influential voices on the subject of smoke-free society. Obviously we're thrilled that he's agreed to come and we expect a great response from employees," added Denny.

Adams Thermal Systems made arrangements for Patrick Reynolds to share his smoking prevention presentation with students at Canton High School as well. During his presentations, Mr. Reynolds compared South Dakota to other states in these areas: its tobacco tax, its smoking ban, its Statewide smoking ban, its State spending on tobacco cessation, its adult and teen smoking rates, and tobacco advertising in South Dakota.

Mr. Reynolds serves as Executive Director of the Foundation for a Smokefree America, a nonprofit group he founded in 1989. Its mission is to motivate youth to stay tobacco-free, and to empower smokers to quit successfully.

Additional resources for journalists can be found at http://www.tobaccofree.org/bio.htm.

Adams Thermal Systems is a world-class company headquartered in Canton, which designs and manufactures cooling systems for vehicles and equipment across a diverse range of applications such as agriculture, construction, mining, military, truck, automotive and power generation. The 1,100 employees of Adams Thermal Systems serve and support customers globally through locations in Canton, SD, Cedar Falls, IA, Hangzhou, China and Meersburg, Germany.

Patrick Reynolds speaks to students at Canton High School prior to his speaking engagement at Adams Thermal. Reynolds said he felt the students were very engaged and noted there were significantly more students that knew someone who used chewing tobacco versus cigarettes, a growing trend in the younger generations.