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Philips Lighting, JWT Support Teen's Environmental Effort

by Nina M. Lentini

PHILIPS LIGHTING IS SUPPORTING A plan developed by a New York City high school freshman to supply low-income families with compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs that they can swap for their incandescent bulbs to save energy.

The company, which is the largest manufacturer of light bulbs, is also part of a coalition announced recently that will press for efficiency standards at the local, state and federal levels. The standards would phase out the ordinary screw-in bulb and replace it with compact fluorescents, light-emitting diodes, halogen devices and other future technologies.

But at the city level, Philips is backing Avery Hairston, a freshman at the private Collegiate High School, and founder of **RelightNY**.

"We are working with RelightNY to supply product at an affordable price, so they can provide more lamps to their cause," says Gary Harvey, product manager for Philips. "We felt that this program ... shows the enthusiasm of the younger generation and their commitment to help save the environment."

JWT, N.Y., is also supporting the effort, developing a short video that features Hairston and his teen advisory board members, a scientist from the Natural Resources Defense Council, HELP USA's Maria Cuomo Cole and the teens' instructor/advisor at Collegiate.

The video will be posted at RelightNY.com after a Friday launch at the ad agency's New York office. It also will be used to encourage companies to donate to the cause. The goal is to raise \$250,000 in the first year and \$1 million in four years, when the students graduate from high school. Other sponsors include Virgin Mobile, Rodale and Live Earth as well as three non-profit organizations.

The event follows an online survey commissioned by JWT that shows that more than 80% of American teens are bothered by the fact that the U.S. represents one of the world's leading sources of pollution. Sixty-one percent say their generation will be more environmentally responsible than older generations and more than three quarters believe there is still time to repair the damage.

"The environment is clearly one of the biggest issues of the day," says Bob Jeffrey, chairman and CEO of JWT Worldwide, in a statement. "So when 15-year-old Avery Hairston asked me for help getting the word out about RelightNY, he inspired us to take a look at how other American teens think about the environment."

JWT, the largest advertising agency brand in the U.S., signed on as a sponsor of RelightNY in 2006. It plans to replace all 1,000 desk lamps in its New York office with CFLs.