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CONTACT: Lindsay Mize
(202) 777-3540
lmize@clsdc.com

University of Michigan “Monitoring the Future” Study Finds Alcohol Consumption Among Teens at Historic Low

Washington, D.C. (December 19, 2011) – The Beer Institute and its membership hailed a [recently released study](#) by the University of Michigan, which found that alcohol consumption “continued a long-term gradual decline among teens, reaching historically low levels in 2011.” The annual “Monitoring the Future” study, which surveyed 47,000 eighth, tenth and twelfth grade students across the country, found that all grades showed a further drop in all measures of alcohol consumption—lifetime, annual, 30-day, daily, and 5+ drinks on one or more occasions during the prior two weeks. For the three grades combined, the one-year declines in 2011 were statistically significant on all of these measures. All of these statistics are at their historic lows over the life of the study.

“The beer industry goes to great lengths to ensure our products are only enjoyed by those of legal drinking age, and this study once again shows those efforts are having a positive impact,” said Joe McClain, President of the Beer Institute. “Brewers and beer importers will continue to work with lawmakers, law enforcement, community groups and others to support alcohol awareness programs and help parents talk to their kids about drinking. While these record low levels are encouraging, there is always more work to be done in our efforts to curb underage drinking.”

The study stated that a contributing factor to the across-the-board decline is the lowered availability of alcohol beverages. The proportion of eighth and tenth graders who say they could get alcohol “fairly easily” or “very easily” has declined since 1996 and continued to drop in all three grades in 2011.

Brewers and beer importers have independently developed valuable programs, including:

- MillerCoors, together with Brandeis University and the National Responsible Retailing Forum, developed the Respect 21 Program, which trains and helps retailers to improve the prevention of alcohol sales to minors. Retailers that choose to participate in the program receive tools and assistance through point-of-sale materials, confidential legal-age mystery shopper inspections and training materials.
- Anheuser-Busch’s *Family Talk About Drinking* program, which provides direct, actionable guidance to help parents talk with their children about underage drinking (visit www.facebook.com/ABFamilyTalk).
- Heineken USA is a founding member of the Health Alliance on Alcohol, offering free resources to parents and mentors to encourage discussions with teens about various alcohol issues such as

prom, graduation, teen driving and access to alcohol. Materials are available in English and Spanish and can be viewed, downloaded or ordered from www.HealthAllianceonAlcohol.com.

- Crown is an active and engaged partner with the FTC and alcohol beverage industry for the "We Don't Serve Teens" Initiative and supports this program on a year-round basis with its distributor network.

These initiatives are the product of hundreds of millions of dollars invested by the Beer Institute and its members over the past three decades in community-based programs to help prevent underage drinking.

In September 2011, the Department of Health and Human Services released its own [National Survey on Drug Use and Health](#), which also found record-low levels of underage drinking. That study found record-low levels of alcohol consumption among youths aged 12-17.

More information on the University of Michigan's "Monitoring the Future" study can be found at http://monitoringthefuture.org/pressreleases/11drugpr_complete.pdf.

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The Beer Institute, established in 1986, is the national trade association for the brewing industry, representing both large and small brewers, as well as importers and industry suppliers. The Institute is committed to the development of sound public policy and to the values of civic duty and personal responsibility: www.BeerInstitute.org.