



NEWS The United States Conference of Mayors

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SIX CITIES SHARE \$445,000 IN GRANTS TO SUPPORT CHILDHOOD OBESITY PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Partnership Invests in Promising Programs to Encourage Kids' Healthy Weight & Lifestyle

WASHINGTON, DC. — Today The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) announced the winners of the 2017 Childhood Obesity Prevention Awards during the organization's 85th Winter Meeting in Washington, DC. The awards went to cities with outstanding programs that encourage healthy weight through balanced diet choices and regular physical activity.

"America's beverage companies understand they have a role to play in improving the health of our nation, which is why the American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America is proud to partner with the U.S. Conference of Mayors to support the great work of mayors across the country who are proactively tackling obesity in their communities," said Susan Neely, president of the American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America (ABFHA) Board of Directors and president and CEO of the American Beverage Association. "The winning programs showcase the creativity and innovation of America's mayors as well as their dedication to the health and wellness of their cities. This partnership exemplifies that by working together, government and industry can bring about real and lasting change to communities across the nation."

Six U.S. cities were recognized for their mayoral-based initiatives:

- Columbia, SC
- Gresham, OR
- Huntington, WV
- Las Vegas, NV
- Phoenix, AZ
- Waterloo, IA

The grant program is the result of a partnership between USCM and ABHFA, which was created and funded by America's non-alcoholic beverage industry and reflects the industry's long-standing tradition of giving back to communities. This grant program is an example of another public-private partnership to support nutrition education for children, strengthen communities and empower consumers.

"The health and welfare of our young people is always our Mayors' top priority," said Tom Cochran, USCM CEO and executive director. "From improving walkability in neighborhoods to bringing nutrition and cooking curricula into schools, Mayors across the country are designing innovative strategies to make sure our kids understand how to eat healthy and stay active and fit. And our partnership with the American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America, over the past five years, has made a substantial investment in this effort, and been an incubator for the best of those strategies."

The first Childhood Obesity Prevention Awards were made in 2012. Including this year's awards, USCM and ABHFA to date have jointly awarded a total of \$2.25 million in funds to 28 cities across the country.

The grant awards are divided into small, medium and large city categories, with first place and second place awards given in each category. An independent panel of judges evaluated each application based on innovation, creativity, replicability and potential impact.

A brief description of each winning program appears below.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are more than 1,300 such cities in the country today, and each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor. Find us at usmayors.org, on facebook.com/usmayors, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/usmayors.

The American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America (ABHFA) seeks to make a significant contribution to the health of local communities, by providing grants to support charitable programs at community organizations that work to advance both the physical health of their local citizens and the environmental health of their communities. For more information on ABHFA, please visit the foundation's website at www.beveragefoundation.org.

Large City

1st Place (\$150,000): City of Las Vegas, NV – Mayor Carolyn Goodman

The **Healthy School, Healthy Life** program aims to reduce the number of Clark County School District (CCSD) students who are overweight/obese, through establishing garden clubs which help kids develop a positive, hands-on relationship with food; bringing local restaurant chefs into schools to work with students to create tasty and healthy recipes using produce from the learning gardens; exercise and fitness programs based on First Lady Michelle Obama's popular 'Let's Move' initiative; and a Pop-Up Produce program which provides students and their families with a five-pound bag of fruits and vegetables and a recipe describing how to cook what's inside.

2nd Place (\$25,000): City of Phoenix, AZ – Mayor Greg Stanton

The **Cook-off and Fitness Challenge** is a new program that will unite the city of Phoenix with nonprofit and foundation partners to implement a district-wide nutrition integrated food education and fitness program. The program will introduce all schools in the Phoenix Union High School District (PUHSD), one of the largest and most diverse in the country – with 27,000 high school students, 94% of them minority – to a proven successful five-part series of health-related skills to increase fruit and vegetable consumption and promote physical activity. The program will conclude with a district-wide cook off, FitPHX designed fitness-obstacle course competition, and community celebration.

Medium City

1st Place (\$120,000): Columbia, SC – Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

Project GNF (Gardening, Nutrition & Fitness) is an expansion of the Mayor's Youth Sports Initiative and aims to make gardening, nutrition and fitness fun components of the existing program. The GNF Club will be introduced in recreation centers located in the 29203 and 29204 zip codes of Columbia where significant health and economic disparities have been identified. The city's existing educational garden program will be redesigned to increase the size of each garden plot and to increase the level of youth and community involvement. A local university partner will develop a curriculum to teach youth the science and math of growing fruits and vegetables.

2nd Place (\$25,000): City of Gresham, OR – Mayor Shane Bemis

The **Gresham Youth Challenge** program aims to pair low-income, at-risk Gresham youth with trained, volunteer adult mentors from the community. Modeled after Baltimore's successful "Challenge!" mentoring program that matched inner-city youth with one-on-one mentorship, the "Gresham Youth Challenge" program is designed to show youth how to live in a healthy way. While not prescriptive in nature – mentors who try to "fix" their youth often do more harm than good – mentoring sessions are very active and educational for the

mentees. Mentors in this program will not simply talk with their mentees; they will engage in fun and healthy activities such as hiking, biking, skating, rock climbing – anything to demonstrate the importance of being physically active. Additionally, each mentoring session will involve making healthy food choices. Through this approach, youth in the program will learn habits and skills that can be used even when their mentors are not around.

Small City

1st Place (\$100,000): City of Waterloo, IA – Mayor Quentin Hart)

Healthy H2O Loo is a multifaceted initiative encompassing several established programs, and incorporating a few new ones, to create a unified and strategic approach to addressing childhood obesity and community wellness. The initiative aims to create efforts within area Head Start programs to increase not only physical activity, but also access to and consumption of fruits and vegetables, as well as knowledge and attitudes about to overall well-being. Funding would be used to create a curriculum (using farm to school methodologies), and to develop school gardens at each of the sites. This initiative aims also to establish policies to encourage healthy eating and physical fitness among young people, and will also create & implement a universal messaging campaign to support this effort.

2nd Place (\$25,000): City of Huntington, WV – Mayor Steve Williams

Huntington High School (HHS) in partnership with the City of Huntington, launched **The Wellness Academy** at HHS, to provide increased opportunities in health and wellness activities to the community while instituting career courses to meet the rising demand in jobs related to the health and wellness field. The Wellness Academy has been in existence for two years. The goal of the program is to educate the younger generation and their parents on how to promote total wellness in a person's life. It teaches the wellness wheel components, which include physical, nutritional, spiritual, emotional, financial, environmental and intellectual health. The vision is to use the students of today to educate the community of tomorrow, starting in the elementary schools that feed into HHS. Academy students will be ambassadors and mentors for small children, teaching fun physical activities that they could do at home with parents or family members, as well as lessons on good nutrition and how that can lead to better overall health and lifestyle.