



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, D.C. — Today The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) announced the winners of the 2016 Childhood Obesity Prevention Awards during the organization's 84th Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C. The awards went to cities with outstanding programs that encourage healthy weight through balanced diet choices and regular physical activity.

"The American Beverage Foundation for a Healthy America is proud to partner with the U.S. Conference of Mayors to support efforts to reduce and prevent childhood obesity nationwide," 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 communities. This partnership exemplifies how working together can help drive meaningful results, while having a real impact in America's hometowns."

"Mayors are at the forefront of addressing the most significant issues in our communities – and no issue is more important than the health and welfare of our children," said Tom Cochran, USCM CEO and executive director. "From a public health, economic and community viability perspective, we've got to do everything we can to make sure our kids understand how to eat healthy and stay active."

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

- Baltimore, MD
- Columbia, SC
- Everett, MA
- Fontana, CA
- New Orleans, LA
- Plainfield, NJ

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 is a reflection of 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 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 1,200 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): New Orleans, La., Mayor Mitchell J. Landrieu

Fit NOLA, the mayor's initiative to reduce obesity and promote healthy lifestyles, is a partnership of more than 200 businesses, nonprofit organizations, schools and community members, with the goal of making New Orleans one of America's top ten fittest cities by 2018, the city's 300th anniversary. The award will specifically support the Fit NOLA Schools component, which aims to improve physical activity and access to healthy foods for children and youth who attend the city's public schools. Specifically, the Fit NOLA Schools "grading" program will offer schools four benchmarked fitness designation levels – Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze. The award also will support micro-grants to Fit NOLA-designated schools and will serve as an additional incentive for schools to participate in the program to help them achieve higher fitness designation levels.

2nd Place (\$25,000): Baltimore, Md., Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake

Baltimore's initiative, **Learning Journeys: Enhanced Farm and Nutrition Education**, aims to more fully incorporate the school district-owned and -run Great Kids Farm into curricula, and thereby enhance schools' capacity to address childhood obesity through farm and cooking education while increasing vegetable consumption among the student population. Key components of the project include expanding the "Learning Journey" farm visit program to all seventh grade students and further developing the relationships between Great Kids Farm and high school students enrolled in the district's culinary program for vegetable growing, harvesting and processing for school cafeterias.

Medium City

1st Place (\$120,000): Fontana, Calif., Mayor Acquanetta Warren

Healthy Kids for a Healthy Fontana aims to directly benefit the 4,100 elementary and middle school children currently attending the city's after-school programs by increasing the likelihood that families will purchase and eat fresh fruits and vegetables and also providing more opportunities for physical activity. Key program elements include "Healthy Iron Chef Fontana" competitions where students will compete in healthy cooking competitions preparing food from local farmers' markets, reaching an estimated 3,000 families; "Healthy Fontana on Wheels," a branded cargo van that will give children an opportunity to use unique and one-of-a-kind fitness equipment while exposing them to the concept that physical activity can be exciting; and "Mayor Warren Walks the Talk" where Mayor Acquanetta Warren will expand her current "Walk with the Mayor" program by making bi-monthly visits to after-school program sites, participating in walk-and-talk sessions with children and encouraging them and their families to increase their exercise regimen and eat more healthy fruits and vegetables.

2nd Place (\$25,000): Columbia, S.C., 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.

Small City

1st Place (\$100,000): Everett, Mass., Mayor Carlo DeMaria Jr.

Heathy Me is a multi-pronged initiative targeting Everett children and teenagers aged 8-14, though the effects/impacts are expected to reach entire families. A key element of this initiative includes partnering with the Malden YMCA's Youth Enrichment Center, which currently offers after-school activities for kids ages 10-19, to increase healthy programming for a target population. The city and Malden YMCA will plan, execute and evaluate a comprehensive program for Everett students in second through ninth grades. These activities will directly reach more than 500 students and will indirectly impact thousands of their peers, siblings and parents. Grant funding will support program operating costs.

2nd Place (\$25,000): Plainfield, N.J., Mayor Adrian O. Mapp

Color Me Healthy is an evidence-based physical activity and nutrition program developed to reach limited resource children aged 4-5. The program teaches children that healthy food and physical activity are fun by using color, music and exploration of the senses. Color Me Healthy has been extensively evaluated. An intervention study conducted in 2012 demonstrated that children who received the Color Me Healthy curriculum significantly increased their consumption of fruit snacks (by approximately 20.8 percent) and vegetable snacks (by approximately 33.1 percent) between baseline assessment and completion of the three-month program. The proposed program will serve approximately 2,300 students and families enrolled in preschool and kindergarten programs.

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