

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS
State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Charles Griggs
(904) 253-1004

Celebrating Healthy Kids and Active Communities In Duval County
Healthy Jacksonville Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (HJCOPC) Recognizes Local Health Heroes for Their Work to Prevent and Reduce Childhood Obesity

Jacksonville, FL – September 12, 2014 – On Friday, September 12, 2014, nearly 250 attendees gathered to celebrate healthy kids and active communities in Duval County. The third annual awards breakfast, hosted by the Healthy Jacksonville Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (HJCOPC), commemorated National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month and provided a forum to honor 19 local organizations and individuals for their commitment to helping children grow up healthy throughout Duval County.

Childhood obesity has reached epidemic proportions in communities all across the country. Jacksonville is not immune to the threats posed by the rising rates of overweight children and adults. 29.2% of high school students in Duval County consider themselves to be overweight or obese, according to the 2013 Youth Risk Behavioral Survey for Duval County.

In addition to the awards ceremony, Dr. Kelli Wells, Director, Florida Department of Health in Duval County, and keynote speaker Representative Mia L. Jones, Special Assistant to Mayor Alvin Brown, City of Jacksonville, spoke about the importance of good health in supporting our community's children to reach their full potential.

"Childhood obesity is a public health issue that impacts long-term risks of health outcomes," said Dr. Kelli Wells, Director, Florida Department of Health in Duval County. "Local collaboration, like partnerships developed within the Healthy Jacksonville Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (HJCOPC), are key to intervening across a broad age spectrum to combat rising childhood obesity rates through best practices for healthy eating and active living. This community event allows us to communicate and celebrate those events, programs and other initiatives that touch the lives of families to make a positive impact in Duval County."

To combat this threat, local organizations across Northeast Florida have been collaborating for more than 13 years in efforts to reverse the tide of obesity by increasing access to healthy foods and safe places to play, teaching families how to grow and cook their own healthy meals, and offering opportunities for routine physical activity every day. Since 2012, the HJCOPC engaged more than 85,600 youth and parents in direct services, as well as health professionals and community organizations. Their voices have been heard on many issues affecting our city's built environment and food policies.

The Healthy Jacksonville Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (HJCOPC) is a public-private partnership devoted to reducing and preventing childhood obesity in Duval County. Citizens, business leaders and community organizations work to create healthy environments for children and families through advocacy, education, policy development and cultural changes. www.HJCOPC.org

Healthy Jacksonville is a program of the Florida Department of Health in Duval County and is the parent organization of Healthy Jacksonville Community Coalitions. The purpose of Healthy Jacksonville is to engage citizens and health professionals to improve the health of Duval County residents. Using the framework of Healthy People 2020 and via community coalitions, Healthy Jacksonville utilizes the tools of advocacy, expert knowledge, community outreach, policy development and environmental change to make a lasting positive impact on the health of our citizens.

2014 HJCOPC “Heart of the Community” Award Honorees:

Community Leadership:

Chartwells–Thompson School Dining Services

The All Stars Series & Food Art Fridays

Community First Credit Union

Community First Saturdays

Downtown Vision, Inc.

First Wednesday Art Walk

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Northeast Florida District

Janitorial Environmental Training Program for White Harvest Farm, Clara White Mission

Florida Department of Health in Duval County, Hispanic Health Council of Jacksonville & Norsan media

Hispanic Health Radio Show

Greater Jacksonville Pop Warner

Youth Programs for Football, Cheerleading, Dance and Scholastics

Marathon High, Inc.

Youth Running Program

University of Florida Youth Advisory Board

Todd Harris, Youth Liaison

Organizational Leadership:

Baptist Health and The Bridge of Northeast Florida

Tipping the Scale Youth Mentoring Program (TTS)

Bi-Lo Holdings Foundation, Inc.

Youth Nutrition Education Programs: *I Can Eat a Rainbow* and *Mission Nutrition*

Easy Peasy Kids Fitness Foundation

Creative Fitness Events for Kids

First Coast YMCA

Community Impact

GCA Services Group

Community Involvement

SUBWAY Restaurants of Jacksonville

A Suite of Community Initiatives

Women Infants and Children (WIC)

Breastfeeding Peer Counseling

Youth Leadership

I'm A STAR Foundation, Inc.

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) Social Media Campaign

Youth-Led Initiatives

Frank H. Peterson Academies

Culinary Program

I'm A STAR Foundation, Inc.

Let's Move Jacksonville

Sally's Soaps

Ariah Peters, Owner and Founder

**Event photos of honorees are attached.*

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More info – website blog: <http://hjcopc.org/september-national-childhood-obesity-awareness-month/>

@HJCOPC

#DuvalHealthHeroes

The Issue:

- Approximately 17 percent (or 12.7 million) of children and adolescents ages 2 to 19 in the United States are considered obese.¹
- 29.2 percent of high school students in Jacksonville consider themselves overweight or obese.²
- Nationally, childhood obesity alone is responsible for \$14.1 billion in direct health care costs.³
- The Florida Department of Health reports state that currently only 35 percent of all residents are at a healthy weight, while 25 percent are obese, and the rest are overweight.⁴
- During the next 20 years in Florida, obesity is expected to contribute to millions of cases of preventable chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease and cancer, costing an estimated \$34 billion.⁵

1 <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/childhood.html>

2 <http://www.dchd.net/health-data-resources/health-reports/category/87-youth-risk-behavior-survey-yrebs-2013>

3 <http://fasinfat.org/facts-economic-costs-of-obesity/>

4 <http://www.floridahealth.gov/diseases-and-conditions/disease-reporting-and-management/florida-epidemic-intelligence-service/documents/Healthiest-Weight-Journal.pdf>

5 <http://www.healthiestweightflorida.com/>