

The 10th Annual Southern Obesity Summit took place November 13-15, 2016 in Houston, Texas presented by Texas Health Institute and The Live Smart Texas Steering Committee. Public health advocates from across the south came together to share effective programs and policies and strategize next steps to implement initiatives across all 16 states. Our goal being to promote cross-sector collaboration and partnerships to prevent obesity, provide opportunities for practitioners to share successful policy and community-based intervention strategies and to further define a Southern Strategy to encourage effective inter-state initiatives and collaboration.

The Summit is more than a typical conference, it is a working event where you leave prepared to take action. Whether it is working on a new policy around food access or helping a school district write a wellness policy; you find resources, connections and models to guide obesity prevention efforts, focusing on seven key focus areas of early childcare, workplace wellness, schools, physical activity, food access, nutrition policy and healthcare.

The Sunday Town featured State Health Leadership from across the South that shared their insights and experiences with obesity prevention efforts over the past 10 years including **John Hellerstedt, MD**, Commissioner, Texas Department of State Health Services; **Melissa Martin, RD**, Director of Louisiana Department of Health's Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; **Emily Anne Vall, PhD**, Georgia Shape Project Manager, Georgia Department of Public Health; **Jen Wright, MPH**, Working Well Program Director, South Carolina Hospital Association, and **Namvar Zohoori, MD, MPH, PhD**, Deputy Chief Science Officer, Arkansas Department of Health. **David Lakey, MD**, Chief Medical Officer, Associate Vice Chancellor for Population Health, The University of Texas System moderated the session.

A keynote panel with **Kenneth Cooper, MD**, Founder and Chairman, The Cooper Institute; **Dr. Jayne Greenberg** District Director of Physical Education and Health Literacy for Miami-Dade County Public Schools, and **Lieutenant General Steven A. Hummer**, U.S. Marine Corps (Retired), Mission Readiness reviewed issues and innovations around physical education and physical activity.

The Summit also included more than 60 breakout sessions, poster presentations, pillar workgroup meetings, state team meetings and an exhibit hall. Thank you to our Exhibitors: CATCH, CDC School Health Branch, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA), HealthCode, HealthyByte, Jason's Deli, Journeyworks, Publishing, Learning ZoneXpress, Novo Nordisk, Obesity Research Center, Texas Tech University, The OrganWise Guys, Inc., Public Health Institute Center for Wellness and Nutrition, Robard Corporation, Mike Sasser, SPARK, Stand2Learn and Voices for Healthy Kids. This year we added a raffle drawing which included prizes donated by many of our exhibitors, as well as an Apple iWatch donated by the JW Marriott Galleria Hotel which hosted our event.

Pre and post Summit sessions offered attendees specific insight into using social media to promote public health, developing effective school wellness policies, implementing Learn,

Grow, Eat, Go curriculum as well as a special session from our own Camille Miller, President and CEO of Texas Health Institute on Big P Little p Policy.

We also covered important topics of interest during a special lunch session including Farm to School, Mobilizing Communities, Using Policy approaches to get kids moving, Making Cents of Healthcare Costs and a review of Trust for America's Health's 2016 report on the State of Obesity. During our special Tuesday morning session we focused on Taking Out Sugar, Linking healthy food access within Medicaid programs, Collective Action approaches to community health, Effective communication on complex issues like obesity and employee wellness.

This year we also hosted another Funder Panel: **Effective Partnerships Between Funders and Grantees and Emerging Funder Approaches to Supporting Obesity Prevention in the** *Overview of Policies & Initiatives that National Funders are Supporting and Evolving Approaches to Supporting this Obesity Prevention Work with Grantees* **Laura Kettel-Khan, PhD, Moderator**, Senior Scientist and Advisor, Obesity Prevention and Control Branch, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity & Obesity, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; **Elizabeth Love**, Senior Program Officer, Houston Endowment; **Lisa Medellin**, Senior Program Officer, Healthcare Georgia Foundation, and **Catherine Oliveros**, Director, Community Affairs, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas.

We owe a special thank you to our sponsors: Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas, DEFINE body & mind, PhRMA, Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, St. David's Foundation and UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Texas.

Save the date for the 11th Annual Southern Obesity Summit taking place in Atlanta, Georgia in the fall of 2017!