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THE CAPITAL REGION CELEBRATES 2017 HEALTHY WEIGHT COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS



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Tallahassee, Fla.—Today, the Florida Department of Health recognized 98 communities as the 2017 Healthy Weight Community Champions. Florida’s county and municipal governments play an important role in decreasing the prevalence of unhealthy weight in their jurisdictions. Local governments can implement a variety of policies that have been shown to increase physical activity and improve nutrition. These best practice policies are reflected in the Healthy Weight Community Champion submission criteria. Between August and December 2016, local governments were invited to submit best practice policies they have implemented in their jurisdictions.

The Community Champions program is part of the department’s Healthiest Weight Florida initiative. Healthiest Weight Florida is a public-private collaboration bringing together state agencies, local governments, not-for-profit organizations, businesses, schools, faith-based organizations and entire communities to help Florida’s children and adults make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living.

Local Community Champions and their program highlights are below.

City of Madison

With safety in mind, the city of Madison’s City Commission has approved policies that require public input before the installation of one-way, two-way, three-way and four-way stop signs and speed bumps. In the past two to three years, the city has installed two sets of speed bumps requested by local neighborhoods. Additionally, the city has installed a four-way stop sign to slow traffic on a busy street that leads to the county hospital, two colleges, a private school, a bank and a residential area.

City of Tallahassee

Through the Parks and Recreation Department, the city of Tallahassee Senior Center is continuing to work on their AARP Age Friendly Community membership. The city will develop an action plan in 2017 with suggested improvements toward being more age

friendly. The top three domains citizens said were important to them (housing, transportation and streets and health and wellness) are being reviewed. An educational program day is scheduled for each domain with a second day scheduled to develop suggested actions to be taken. The timeframe is to complete the action plan by June 2017.

Gadsden County

Gadsden County has a health council that is comprised of more than 60 partners representing organizations that tackle health issues in the county. This group has met monthly for more than ten years. Gadsden County was selected this year to receive a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation “Health Coach” that meets twice monthly with a working group and is developing a Health in All Policies Strategy.

Jefferson County

Jefferson County is looking to develop their Families in the Park Program. This community-driven family event would be held each quarter and would include county sponsored movie nights, movement activity nights or other enrichment activities. Families can come together with neighbors from across the county to view a theatrical program and enjoy the outdoors with local flavor or participate in a movement competition or a low-intensity activity.

Leon County

Leon County has been recognized with multiple health and wellness designations. Tallahassee and Leon County were designated as the first Dementia Caring Community, a pilot program of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs’ Dementia Care and Cure Initiative. The American Planning Association’s awarded the Great Places of Florida award to Leon County for Cascades Park. Tallahassee was designated a runner friendly community by the Road Runners Club of America. Lake Jackson was designated as the first Leon County Blueway Paddling Trail. The Parks and Recreation Department was awarded the Florida Sports Foundation Venue of the Year for Apalachee Regional Park/mid-sized market.

Madison County

Madison County has built a 12-mile Rails to Trails paved trail and has added a playground to a section of the trail. The county has a Recreation Department and several different types of parks, ball fields and playgrounds.

About Healthiest Weight Florida

To learn more about Healthiest Weight Florida, please visit www.HealthiestWeightFL.com. A list of the 2017 Champion Communities and best practices can be found online at: www.HealthiestWeightFL.com/Recognition.html.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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