

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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FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES ANNOUNCE COMPLETION OF *FLORIDA WALKS* PILOT PROGRAM

TALLAHASSEE – The Florida Department of Health in partnership with the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) announced the completion of the *Florida Walks* pilot program. Awards were given to the counties with the most steps and the most consistent trackers. *Florida Walks* is an interactive challenge designed for leaders and staff in Florida’s counties to model personal physical activity in their communities.

More than 600 participants competed to finish a virtual 2,000 mile trek throughout Florida - from Pensacola to Key West, walking a combined 803,185,974 steps during the challenge. Individual participants tracked their actual physical progress as they virtually walked through each county in the state - from Escambia to Monroe - and received motivational tips, sites of interest, challenges and reminders along the way.

“Florida’s county governments play an important role in increasing the prevalence of healthy weight in their communities,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “I am delighted to see our county leaders setting a wonderful example for healthier lifestyles.”

“FAC was proud to lead the way with this wonderful initiative,” said FAC Executive Director Chris Holley. “With the leadership of the Surgeon General and commissioners across the state, our teams led by example showing the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.”

Highlands County was recognized as the *Florida Walks* county winner. This team was not only the first to get to Monroe County but also took more steps than any other county in Florida, completing more than 350,000 steps! Other teams finishing in the top five with the most steps included, in order of finish, Marion County, Nassau County, Florida Department of Health Headquarters Team, and Martin County.

The following individuals were recognized as the most consistent step trackers:

- June Fisher & Gloria Rybinski from Highlands County
- Jan Foselli from Martin County
- Tate Taylor & Matt Osterhoudt from Sarasota County
- Patricia Simes from Broward County
- State Surgeon General, Dr. John Armstrong
- Joan Schairer from Jackson County
- Paula Mazan from Walton County

Florida Department of Health

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Florida Walks represents a component of the Healthiest Weight Florida initiative, a public-private collaboration bringing together state agencies, local governments, businesses, schools, not for profit organizations, and entire communities to help Floridians make consistent, informed choices about healthy eating and active living. To learn more about Healthiest Weight Florida, please visit www.HealthiestWeightFL.com.

The Florida Association of Counties represents Florida's 67 counties to preserve and protect home rule through education, advocacy and collaboration. For more than 85 years, FAC has represented counties in Tallahassee and across the state.

The Florida Department of Health works to protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county, & community efforts.

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