

WINTER.2005

APPLY NOW!

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITIES
INVITED TO HOST WALKABLE
COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

TWO ANNE SEELEY AWARDS
BESTOWED ON WALK ADVOCATES

EIGHT COUNTIES SELECTED
TO RECEIVE TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE ON PUBLIC HEALTH
& THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

DO MORE, WATCH LESS TOOLKIT
AVAILABLE ONLINE

HEALTHY CITIES AND SMART
GROWTH CONFERENCE

NATIONAL CHILDHOOD OBESITY
CONFERENCE

THE CALIFORNIA ENDOWMENT'S
HEALTHY EATING, ACTIVE
COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE AIMS
TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD OBESITY

WALKSACRAMENTO ON THE GO!

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITIES INVITED TO HOST WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

The California Center for Physical Activity invites communities throughout the state to apply to host a Walkable Community Workshop led by its team of walkability experts. Online applications are available at www.caphysicalactivity.org.

California is the first state in the nation to offer workshops led by trained, in-state experts. The four-hour workshops are presented by one of seven active living professionals who are recognized by the California Center for Physical Activity and the California Department of Transportation as California walkability experts. Based on best practices from the National Center for Bicycling and Walking, the workshops combine practical presentations on community design with fieldwork that lets participants identify, and then pursue, concrete steps to make their communities more walkable.

Walkable Community Workshops bring together community stakeholders — from residents to elected officials and public agency representatives — to learn about key principles of a walkable community. Many communities that have hosted such a workshop have created successful traffic calming projects, designed pedestrian-friendly intersections, and launched safe routes to school campaigns. More importantly, more people in these communities have easier access to walking, bicycling and riding public transit!

Last year, the Center sponsored the training of the walkable community workshop experts through a partnership with national walkability expert Charles Gandy, President of Livable Communities, Inc., and Odyssey, a nonprofit organization that promotes transportation choices.

Already, the California walkability experts have conducted workshops in Alameda, Berkeley, Central Los Angeles, East Los Angeles, Eureka, Pasadena,

Riverside, Sacramento, San Diego, San Jose, and Santa Monica, where they focused on safe routes to school, safe routes to transit and safe routes for seniors. Based on the success of these workshops, the Center is pleased to offer these workshops on a permanent basis.

Communities throughout California are taking steps to make their neighborhoods more walk- and bike-friendly, and now they have the tools to do so with Walkable Community Workshops.



TWO ANNE SEELEY AWARDS BESTOWED ON WALK ADVOCATES

The California Center for Physical Activity awarded Anne Geraghty, Executive Director of *WalkSacramento*, with the Anne Seeley Award for Excellence in Public Health and Community Walkability at its November 2004 conference, *Creating Opportunities for Everyday Physical Activity*. (Visit www.caphysicalactivity.org for a conference overview.)

The award is in memory of Anne Seeley who worked for seven years at the Center. Anne Seeley's former boss, Steven Hooker, Ph.D., now Director of the Prevention Research Center at the University of South Carolina's Arnold School of Public Health, said, "Anne (Seeley) was relentless in her efforts to increase public health's involvement in national and state transportation, land use, trail building, and park and recreation priorities. Under her vision and leadership, California Walks, the Healthy Transportation Network, California Safe Routes to School, and California Walk to School Headquarters were established and continue to flourish today."

Before she passed away, Anne Seeley had the opportunity to select the first recipient of the Anne Seeley Award for Excellence in Public Health and Community Walkability. Without hesitation, she named Anne Geraghty as the first recipient of this biennial award.

Anne Geraghty took an early retirement from the Air Resources Board to start *WalkSacramento*, a pedestrian advocacy group, where she worked tirelessly as a volunteer to improve pedestrian access. Her efforts were recognized when she was selected to be the first Executive Director of *WalkSacramento*. She also was instrumental in creating California Walks, the umbrella organization that oversees all the local pedestrian advocacy groups throughout the state.

Recently, California Walks named the recipients of its 2004 Anne Seeley Achieving Walkability Awards. They are: Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger for signing the Safe Routes to School law; Senator Nell Soto for sponsoring the Safe Routes to School law (SB 1087); and the City of Pasadena for its efforts in achieving walkability.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!

APPLY NOW! continued from front page

The cost of a workshop is \$1,200 plus travel expenses for a California walkability expert. The workshop fee goes directly to the expert and covers training, direct support, and technical assistance. Selected community hosts are expected to provide logistical support for the workshop.

Applications from local coordinators representing organizations such as city government, business associations, planning firms, public health departments, school districts, nonprofits, and community-based organizations are welcomed. For more information, email cacenterforpa@dhs.ca.gov.

Eight Counties Selected to Receive Technical Assistance on Public Health & the Built Environment

The California Center for Physical Activity and State and Local Injury Control Section of the California Department of Health Services are providing mini-grants and ongoing technical assistance to eight county public health departments to expand on their existing community design work. The goal is to prepare local public health agencies for engagement on planning and land use decisions that can affect a community's access to physical activity options. The project kicks-off this year in Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Francisco, Shasta and Solano counties. Additionally, two regional trainings on public health and the built environment will be held this Spring in Northern and Southern California. The trainings will be open to all county public health agencies, space permitting. For additional details on this effort, contact Jeffery Rosenhall at jrosenha@dhs.ca.gov.

Do More, Watch Less Toolkit Available Online

The *Do More, Watch Less* toolkit is a cutting edge effort to help “tweens” (youth ages 10-14) incorporate more screen-free activities into their lives while reducing the time they spend in front of the tube watching TV, surfing the internet, and playing video games. Youth today spend more time in front of the TV, video and computer than they spend on anything else besides sleeping.

Developed by the California Obesity Prevention Initiative, a program of the California Department of Health Services, the toolkit was field-tested with, and designed for, tweens and after school program staff. The toolkit includes step-by-step instructions and handouts that guide tweens through hands-on activities, including:

- tracking the time they typically spend in front of a screen;
- embarking on a challenge to go screen-free for up to a week;
- setting a goal to engage in no more than 2 hours of screen-based activities per day;
- celebrating their efforts to reduce their screen-time with a party.

To download this toolkit, visit the California Obesity Prevention Initiative’s website at www.dhs.ca.gov/obesityprevention.



Healthy Cities and Smart Growth Conference Set for April in Berkeley

The “Healthy Cities and Smart Growth: Planning for Healthier Communities” conference, sponsored by the Center for Civic Partnerships, will be held April 21-22 at the Doubletree Berkeley Marina. Conference themes include:

- the built environment and health;
- community growth and change;
- community livability and social equity; and
- resource development.

Keynote speakers will be Richard Jackson, MD, MPH, State Public Health Officer of the California Department of Health Services, and Robert Garcia, Executive Director of the Center for Law in the Public Interest. Dr. Jackson is a recognized leader in public health and is co-author of *Urban Sprawl and Public Health: Designing, Planning and Building for Healthy Communities*. Mr. Garcia is an attorney with extensive experience in public policy, legal advocacy and litigation and is working at the intersection of social justice, sustainable regional planning and smart growth.

Registration is \$230 by March 21, 2005 and \$250 thereafter. To review the conference brochure, visit www.civicpartnerships.org/default.asp?id=315.

National Childhood Obesity Conference

The Cooper Institute will host a Childhood Obesity Conference for researchers, practitioners and health professionals October 27-29 in Dallas, Texas. The aim of the conference is to bring together scientists and practitioners from diverse fields such as medicine, public health, social science, and biological science to promote further dialogue and collaboration on approaches to combat the childhood obesity epidemic.

Drs. Steven Blair of The Cooper Institute and Bill Dietz of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will serve as conference co-chairs. Topical areas to be addressed at the conference will include energy balance, nutrition, physical activity, comprehensive review of existing programs, policy issues, and school, community, family, and clinical interventions. The Cooper Institute has established an annual conference series with the goal of stimulating scientific research related to all aspects of physical activity and public health. Past conferences have resulted in landmark publications that have been widely distributed and cited, including three supplemental issues of the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*.

For more details on the conference, visit www.cooperinst.org. In California, Peggy Agron, pagron@dhs.gov, California Project LEAN Chief, is serving on the scientific program committee for the conference.

THE CALIFORNIA ENDOWMENT'S HEALTHY EATING, ACTIVE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE AIMS TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD OBESITY

In an effort to address the prevalence of obesity and diabetes, The California Endowment (TCE) recently launched the *Healthy Eating, Active Communities Initiative*, which aims to increase opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating for children and families, particularly in low-income and rural communities, and develop state and national policy changes that will reduce the risk factors for diabetes and obesity. Later this month, TCE will announce its grantees.

The \$26 million, four-year initiative is designed to demonstrate that a collaborative approach involving multiple sectors, both public and private, can change environmental risk factors affecting California's communities. The initiative also aims to create momentum to change social norms toward healthy eating and physical activity, much in the way that social norms have changed about smoking. The initiative includes local and statewide components as detailed below.

Local Activities: Collaboratives, composed of community-based organizations, school districts and local public health departments, will work on a number of fronts, including:

- improving food choices at schools and after school programs;
- attracting grocery stores and farmers' markets;
- developing policies and programs that provide safe parks and outdoor activities;
- eliminating neighborhood-level marketing of unhealthy foods to children;
- training youth advocates to educate students about the importance of adopting healthy food choices and participating in physical activities.

A technical assistance network will provide tools, training, and information-sharing opportunities, and reach-out to involve similar community-based efforts that may be supported by other private and government funders.

Statewide Activities: Through statewide policy, advocacy and communications activities, efforts will be directed at developing and promoting strategies and policy solutions for reducing the environmental risk factors for diabetes and obesity. Such efforts may include the establishment of guidelines for marketing and advertising to children and expanding health coverage to include obesity and diabetes prevention services.

For more information on this initiative, visit www.calendow.org.

WALKSACRAMENTO ON THE GO!

WalkSacramento, a nonprofit pedestrian advocacy group, is coordinating Walking Neighborhoods projects for all ages in Oak Park and Del Paso Heights as a way to improve walker health and train participants to be advocates for neighborhood improvements that make their areas more walkable.

WalkSacramento also is coordinating the Partnership for Active Communities, a collaborative of over 30 community organizations and residents that supports integrating physical activity into the daily routines of all Sacramento area residents. The Partnership aims to:

- Improve community wellness through active living
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Encourage walkable destinations
- Assure safe routes to school
- Improve safe routes to transit
- Build community connectivity
- Raise community awareness
- Produce walking & biking route maps

For more information, or to join *WalkSacramento*, call (916) 446-WALK (9255) or visit www.walksacramento.org.



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