



# OBESITY PREVENTION PROJECT

"IF CURRENT TRENDS CONTINUE UNCHECKED, THE ENTIRE U.S. POPULATION WILL BE OVERWEIGHT BY THE YEAR 2040..."



## Obesity Prevention News

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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Champion of the Month 1

Hot Opportunities 2

Harvest of the Month 3

CMAF Project Announcements 3

Do You cAARD? 4

## Champion of the Month



Eric Ramos, M.D., F.A.A.P., is a family practice physician and the Medical Director of the Del Puerto Health Center in Patterson, CA. Dr. Ramos' involvement in obesity prevention began when he learned of the alarming obesity & overweight rates in his community—40% of Patterson's school age children are overweight. Dr. Ramos wanted to do his part to change the lives of young kids at Patterson High School.

In partnership with Health Net, Patterson High School, Patterson Parks & Recreation and Del Puerto Health Center, Dr. Ramos created Project FITNESS. Project FITNESS, Fostering Individual Improvement Through Nutrition Exercise Student Specialists, is to inspire and motivate overweight teens to live healthier lifestyles by exercising and eating healthier. Project FITNESS is a 20 week program consisting of students and their families demonstrating their commitment to the program by changing their diet, exercising and attending project meetings which included cooking demonstrations, nutrition education, and self image classes.

At the beginning of the school year, every entering freshmen's BMI was measured. 18% had a BMI of 30 or higher, and the highest BMI was calculated at 50.1%. Of the total freshmen class 44 were invited to participate in the program and 22 agreed to take on the challenge. FITNESS students improved their fitness levels by using exercise balls, walking, learning to use equipment at the gym and eating more nutritious meals. Students set personal goals and their progress was monitored along the way. In collaboration with the California Medical Association Foundation Dr. Ramos was able to analyze all data collected during the 20 weeks and not only saw a change in BMI, but was also able to extract other health-related data from the students to help measure their ongoing progress.

At the end of the 20 weeks a total of 16 students had successfully finished the program. The students' accomplishments were celebrated with their families at a graduation ceremony. Each student took away a new sense of motivation, ideas, and healthier lifestyles, but without their commitment, the support of their families, and the community it would not have been possible. Dr. Ramos says that as the project grows, he looks forward to its continued success and watching the students at Patterson High School develop healthier lives.

"Looking at the situation in Patterson and across the country, we see that in medicine we can go one of two ways: We can either continue to do what we're doing and watch rates of obesity and co morbidities continue to grow; or we can do something to help prevent it. I believe that we really have to start focusing on prevention rather than treatment down the road."-Eric Ramos, MD

Dr. Ramos also participates as a Regional Physician Advocate for the Obesity Prevention Project at the CMA Foundation. As an advocate, he will mentor other physician advocates in his community and address policy issues related to obesity prevention. We thank Dr. Ramos for all his hard work and dedication to obesity prevention.

## Hot Opportunities



*In this section you will find events, trainings, and programs on healthy eating and physical activity available for Physician Champions to get involved in. If you have an event you would like shared in this newsletter or for any questions regarding the information in this section, please contact Alisa Matthews at 916-779-6632 or [amatthews@thecmafoundation.org](mailto:amatthews@thecmafoundation.org).*

**Sojourner Truth Museum Exhibition!** 1-5pm, Saturday August 1, 2009. 2251 Florin Rd. Ste. 126, Sacramento. Community event exhibits art work from inner city youth. Event will also interactively educate low-income families about the benefits of engaging in daily physical activities and consuming the recommended daily amount of fruits and vegetables as a means to reduce preventable chronic disease. Contact Shonna 916-320-9673 or [nasara@hotmail.com](mailto:nasara@hotmail.com).

**Live Life, Live Health, Live it Your Way** Nutrition & Physical Activity Forum, Thursday August 6th, 8am-1pm at Children's Hospital Central California. Learn about physical activity resources, how to conduct physical activity trainings, and how to make referrals to physical activity programs in the community. Forum is free. 9300 Valley Children's Place, Madera, CA. Register at <http://cvhnc.org/events/event7a.asp> or contact Starr Cloyd at 559-255-4300.

**National Health Center Week:** August 12th from 8am-2pm, Health Fair at Tulare Community Health Clinic, 1101 North Cherry St., Tulare, CA. Free health screenings for adults, health educators, an eligibility worker, low cost insurance info, activities and more.

**“Breastfeeding: The Right Answer in Tough Times”, 3rd Annual Awareness Walk,** August 13th, 2009. Salinas WIC Clinic, 632 E. Alisal St. Monterey County WIC Nutrition Program. Contact Lupe Covarrubias-Martinez at 831-796-2873.

**National Farmworker Health Day:** August 14th from 5pm-7pm, Tulare Community Health Clinic will be hosting this health fair on at Woodville Migrant Camp/Day Care Center at 16153 Road 192, Woodville, CA. Contact Norma Vail at 559-255-4300 or [www.cvhncclinics.org](http://www.cvhncclinics.org).

**Plant a Garden at your Preschool center this school year!** Friday, August 21st, 2009, 1pm-4pm. 925 Del Paso Blvd., Ste. 200—Sequoia Room, Sacramento. Free: training for teachers, gardening supplies for a wheelbarrel or raised garden, ongoing technical assistance and support. Lunch provided. To register contact Teresita Saechao 916-263-4362 or [tsaechao@headstart.seta.net](mailto:tsaechao@headstart.seta.net).

**In the Grow—Community Farm Stand EBT Card Accepted!!** 7 farmstands throughout Sacramento County accept EBT Cards: Phoenix Park, Kennedy Estates, Hopkins Park, Grant Skills, Freedom Park, Mather, Center of Praise. Contact Julie Dang at 916-556-3344 or [jdang@healthdcouncil.org](mailto:jdang@healthdcouncil.org).

**Cooking for your Health and Family. E.A.T. from the Garden Presents: Free hands on garden based nutrition education classes—THE C.H.E.F. Series** (Cultivate, Harvest, Educate, Feed). 10am-1pm, 3rd Saturday of Every Month (April—Sept) Grant High School GEO Garden, 1221 South Ave. Room w-42, Sacramento. Classes will highlight seasonal vegetables growing at Grant's Environmental Organization located at Grant High School. Contact Genine Morris 916-256-6100 or Fatima Malik 916-256-6593.

### California Medical Association Foundation

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## Harvest of the Month peppers

A ½ cup of sweet peppers (green, yellow, and red varieties) has lots of vitamin C. Eating sweet red peppers is also a good way to get vitamin B6. Vitamin B6 helps the body break down or metabolize protein, aids in the formation of red blood cells, and helps maintain normal brain function. It also plays a role in synthesizing antibodies in the immune system.

### Healthy Serving Ideas

Slice raw sweet peppers and serve with lowfat dip for a snack. Top homemade pizza with sliced bell peppers—red, green, and yellow. Or, use chili peppers for a spicy kick!

Use chopped hot peppers to make spicy salsa. (Hint: For less spice, remove seeds and inner membranes.) Add chopped sweet peppers to salads or stir into soups and pasta sauces.

### Produce Tips

Look for firm peppers that have thick, shiny, smooth skin and green stems.

Choose sweet peppers with a solid color—green, yellow-orange, or red. Choose hot (or “chili”) peppers with a solid color—red, yellow, orange, green, purple, or brown. Store whole peppers in a sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to one week. Wrap cut peppers in plastic and store in refrigerator for up to three days.

**Helpful Hint:** Use rubber gloves when handling hot peppers. Be careful to never touch or rub your eyes.



## CMAF Project Announcements

### NEPO

The California Medical Association Foundation and the Network of Ethnic Physician Organizations presents

## Ethnic Physician Leadership Summit September 26th & 27th, 2009

Hilton Santa Clara Hotel, Santa Clara CA. Free for physicians, medical Students, and members of a community based organization. Other attendees \$150/per person.

**Space is limited! – Register Online at [www.ethnicphysicians.org](http://www.ethnicphysicians.org)**

For information contact Anna Gutierrez, NEPO Project Assistant, [agutierrez@thecmafoundation.org](mailto:agutierrez@thecmafoundation.org) or 916-779-6627.

## Do You cAARd?

### Smoking Cessation and Diabetes Education Program

In an effort to increase awareness and referrals for smoking cessation among people with diabetes who smoke, the Diabetes Educator **Do you cAARd?** Taskforce, the California Diabetes Program, the Smoking Cessation Leadership Center, and the California Smoker's Helpline have developed an educational web-based program for health care providers nationally. This online self-study program provides free continuing education units (CEU) for registered nurses, registered dietitians, and pharmacists.



- **Ask** every patient, every visit: *"Do you smoke or use tobacco?"*
- **Advise** them to quit. *"Make it a priority to quit; it's important for your health."*
- **Refer** them to the California Smokers' Helpline with the "Take Charge" Gold Card.

Find this program online at [www.caldiabetes.org](http://www.caldiabetes.org)