

## **Using CDBG to Combat Childhood Obesity: Practices From The Field**

The National Community Development Association (NCDA), with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), developed this publication to spotlight local government efforts to combat childhood obesity using the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, in tandem with other resources. The publication is intended as an educational and programmatic tool for communities in designing programs to combat childhood obesity. NCDA would like to thank the RWJF for its support. NCDA would like to thank the communities profiled within this publication for their responsiveness and willingness to showcase their programs.

**National Community Development Association**

522 21<sup>st</sup> Street, NW, Suite 120

Washington, DC 20006

(202) 293-7587

[www.ncdaonline.org](http://www.ncdaonline.org)

## Table of Contents

Overview .....	1
National Community Development Association .....	1
Community Development Block Grant Program .....	1
Core Working Group .....	3
Educational Component .....	4
Using CDBG to Combat Childhood Obesity: Practices from the Field	
Orlando, FL .....	8
Augusta, GA .....	10
Valdosta, GA .....	14
Shreveport, LA .....	16
Murfreesboro, TN .....	18
Policy Recommendations .....	22

## **OVERVIEW**

In May 2010, the National Community Development Association received a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to combat childhood obesity locally. The grant focused on two areas: (1) educating NCDA's members on childhood obesity, and (2) developing a set of national best practices and policy recommendations to assist local governments in further utilizing their CDBG funds to thwart childhood obesity. This publication provides an overview of NCDA's work in these two areas.

This publication examines the efforts of five cities, all located within states with high rates of childhood obesity, to use the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program to fund programs and services to prevent and combat childhood obesity. While some of the cities have targeted CDBG funds towards the issue of childhood obesity over the past few years, at least one city, Murfreesboro, TN did so because of NCDA's work with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

NCDA worked closely with Carol Garner at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to gather speakers from RWJF-affiliated organizations to participate in its conferences; speaking to the conference participants on the issue of childhood obesity, the Foundation's plan for combating it nationally, and how local governments can have an impact on childhood obesity through policy changes and/or changes in the built environment. This publication highlights their remarks and recommendations.

## **NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION**

The National Community Development Association is a national non-profit organization comprised of nearly 500 local governments that administer federally-supported community development, affordable housing, and economic development programs. NCDA is an association of people committed to assist local governments achieve high quality, locally-responsive programs for making communities better places in which to live, particularly for low- and moderate-income people.

NCDA's members have the ability to impact childhood obesity through their primary funding source – the Community Development Block Grant Program. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development allocates CDBG grants to communities to carry-out a wide arrange of community development activities directed at improving the lives of low- and moderate-income persons, including those communities hardest by childhood obesity (African/American, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, and other low-income populations). NCDA's members are in a position to effect change to impact childhood obesity through the use of their CDBG funds to impact the built environment around the following activities: the development of streets and sidewalks, walking and biking trails, park improvements, athletic leagues and programs, recreation centers (gym equipment, exercise classes, basketball courts, swimming pools), and after school programs for youth (nutrition counseling, physical activities, summer camps, etc.), to name a few.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program was enacted in 1974 as the cornerstone of federal investment in our nation's communities. Now in its 36<sup>th</sup> year, CDBG is arguably one of the Federal government's most successful domestic programs. A recent study by HIS Global Insights of ten (10) large city and urban counties found that the \$3.9 billion in FY 2010 CDBG funding generated 120,000 jobs and contributed \$10.7 billion in Gross Domestic Product.<sup>1</sup> CDBG also provides crucial funding to small and rural communities for basic infrastructure and facilities. Congress provides an annual allocation for the CDBG program with 70% of the funds directly allocated by formula to cities and counties and the remaining 30% allocated by formula to States. CDBG funds are targeted primarily to low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.

### *CDBG Funding for the Past Three Years*

- FY09 CDBG formula funding level: \$3.6 billion
- FY10 CDBG formula funding level: \$3.99 billion
- FY11 CDBG formula funding level: \$3.3 billion

The success of the program stems from its utility; providing cities, counties, and States with the flexibility to address their unique community development needs. It helps fund a wide-range of activities, including housing-related assistance, public improvements, public services, and economic development projects.

The CDBG program can be used to change the built environment to combat childhood obesity through two major program components: public services and public facilities and improvements. HUD defines public facilities and improvements as "facilities and improvements that are publicly owned or that are owned by a non-profit and open to the general public."<sup>2</sup> The acquisition, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or installation of public facilities and improvements are eligible under CDBG. Eligible types of public facilities and improvements include:

- infrastructure improvements (construction or installation) including, but not limited to streets, curbs, and water and sewer lines
- neighborhood facilities including, but not limited to public schools, libraries, recreational facilities, parks, playgrounds; and

Public service expenditures include health services, education programs, and recreational

---

<sup>1</sup>Community Development Block Grants: Impact on Metro Economies, IHS Global Insight, Lexington, MA, March 15, 2011.

<sup>2</sup>Basically CDBG, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Block Grant Assistance, November 2007, p. 6-1.

activities. CDBG funds may be used to pay for labor, supplies, and materials associated with the service as well as maintain the portion of a facility in which the service is located including the facility lease and purchase of equipment. A community that receives CDBG funds can use up to 15% of its allocation on public service activities. There is a movement in Congress to increase this limit to 25%. NCDA and other national groups support this increase.

Grantees distribute CDBG funds through a large network of local organizations that provide direct assistance to low- and moderate-income beneficiaries. This network includes our nation's most seasoned and relied upon organizations, such as Feeding America, Salvation Army, Meals on Wheels, Goodwill, Habitat for Humanity, Alzheimer's Association, Hospice Foundation of America, Visiting Nurses Association, National Council on Aging, the Red Cross, Girl Scouts of America, Boys and Girls Clubs, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, the YWCA, and the YMCA, to name a few.

## **CORE WORKING GROUP**

In July 2010, NCDA selected a core group of members to facilitate activities undertaken through the grant. Working group members were located within states with high obesity rates. The working group members are also board members of NCDA and area also the director of the community development department within their community, which mean they are in a position to work directly with the mayor, city manager, and city council to recommend policy changes to community development programs.

The core working group met via conference call and participated in regional conferences during the grant period to profile local best practices, educate NCDA members on the use of CDBG to prevent and combat childhood obesity, and worked with NCDA staff to develop a set of final recommendations on changes to existing policy and/or the built environment to impact childhood obesity. The working group included the following members.

### **Working Group Members**

Lelia Allen, Director of Housing & Community Development, City of Orlando, FL, Chairperson  
John Callow, Director of Community Development, City of Murfreesboro, TN  
Willie Day, Director of Community Development, City of Anderson, SC  
Piedad Martinez, Director of Community Development, City of McAllen, TX  
Bonnie Moore, Director of Community Development, City of Shreveport, LA  
Mara Register, Assistant to the City Manager, City of Valdosta, GA  
Ann Werth, Director of Community Development, City of Wausau, WI  
Chester Wheeler, Director of Housing & Community Development, City of Augusta, GA

## **EDUCATION COMPONENT OF THE GRANT**

NCDA held educational sessions during its 2010 and 2011 annual conferences and during the 2010 Region VI and 2010 Region IV conferences. The conferences serve as important forums to discuss, originate, and learn new community development practices.

### **2010 NCDA Annual Conference**

June 23-25, 2010

Seattle, WA

#### **Speakers**

Cardell Cooper, Executive Director, NCDA

Robert Ping, Director, State Network Project, Safe Routes to School, Oakland, CA

NCDA held a plenary session to introduce the partnership to its membership and to outline how their work can have an impact on childhood obesity through policy changes and/or changes in the built environment. Cardell Cooper, NCDA Executive Director, provided an overview of the RWJF project and encouraged conference participants to use CDBG to fund projects to combat the childhood obesity epidemic. Robert Ping provided a brief overview of the RWJF's national agenda to end childhood obesity, as follows:

- RWJF Center to Prevent Childhood Obesity established in 2008
- Goal of the center is to reduce obesity among children in the U.S.
- Advance a comprehensive policy agenda at the federal, state, and local levels
- Decrease disparities in communities of color, impoverished areas, and disproportionately affected regions

He also spoke about how local governments can have an impact on childhood obesity through policy changes and changes in the built environment by undertaking the following activities.

- create incentives for retail grocery stores to locate in underserved areas
- start and support local farmers' markets
- improve food offerings in corner and convenience stores
- promote healthy foods in government buildings and community property
- promote the use of healthy foods and beverages for local government-sponsored events
- require the integration of sidewalks, bike lanes and safe crossings in all major transportation crossings
- support safe and crime-free parks, playgrounds, trails, greenways and recreation facilities, especially in underserved areas
- ensure planning and capital improvements prioritize physical activity

**NCDA Region VI Conference**  
Corpus Christi, TX  
September 2010

NCDA's Region VI encompasses the states of Texas, New Mexico, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.

**Speakers**

Robert S. Ogilvie, Ph.D., Program Director, Public Health Law and Policy, Berkeley, CA  
Bonnie Moore, Director, Community Development Department, City of Shreveport, LA

NCDA held a plenary session on using CDBG to combat childhood obesity. Robert Ogilvie focused his remarks on the correlation between community development and obesity and changing the built environment so that healthy choices become the easy choices. Robert provided examples of how local governments can change the built environment to combat childhood obesity as follows:

- comprehensive plans: work with your planning and zoning departments to integrate land use, transportation, housing, and parks into the overall comprehensive plan to focus on public health
- provide incentives to attract grocery stores to low-income neighborhoods
- establishing land use protection for community gardens
- create attractive, contiguous pedestrian environments
- reuse and reclaim decayed urban places

Bonnie Moore spoke about the obesity challenges facing the state of Louisiana and discussed how her agency has focused on alleviating childhood obesity in Shreveport using CDBG funds. This project is discussed in the best practices section of this guidebook. The following provides some highlights of her presentation.

- The State of Louisiana has the 8<sup>th</sup> highest rate of adult obesity in the nation and is in the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile for childhood obesity.
- Louisiana took physical education out of all of its curriculums statewide which will make the childhood obesity rate even worse.
- Approximately five years ago, the City of Shreveport structured its CDBG Public Service RFP to address the growing trend in childhood obesity. Public services activities funded with CDBG funds must contain a component that addresses healthy lifestyles. For example, if the city funds an after school program, the program should include activities that increase physical education and education.
- In the 2011 CDBG Public Services RFP, at least one project will be funded that encompasses First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move Initiative to bring parents, schools

and businesses together to combat the growing childhood obesity epidemic. The “Let’s Move Initiative” goal is to end childhood obesity within a generation.

- The City of Shreveport also included wellness education in its professional development workshops and in workshops provided to their clients. The Department of Community Development is responsible for providing life skills training to Aid-for-Dependent Children and food stamp recipients. In each class, a nutritionist is invited to discuss healthy eating and physical activities.
- The city is so committed to promoting healthy eating and physical activity that they have started the 20-Pound Challenge Initiative for all employees. This is a volunteer initiative, but is strongly encouraged.

### **NCDA Region IV Conference**

Knoxville, TN  
November 2010

NCDA Region IV encompasses the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

### **Speakers**

Lelia Allen, Director, Housing and Community Development Department, City of Orlando, FL  
Mary Beth Powell, Deputy Director of Active Living by Design, North Carolina Institute of Public Health, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Stephanie Welch, Director of Community Development, Knox County Health Department

NCDA held a plenary session on using CDBG to combat childhood obesity. Core group members from Region IV presented their progress in making policy changes and/or changes in the built environment to impact childhood obesity.

Lelia Allen, NCDA President and working group member, provided an overview of her city’s use of CDBG funds to combat childhood obesity. The City of Orlando used CDBG funding to rehabilitate a facility, the Hebni Nutrition Resource Center, in the Parramore section of the city, a low-income, minority neighborhood. The Center works with low-income households to provide nutrition counseling and classes for adults and children. The Center’s nutritionist was one of 30 chefs invited to the White House to speak on the issue of childhood nutrition. The Hebni Nutrition project is intertwined with other city programs aimed at reducing childhood obesity, including the Nap Ford Community School, a health and wellness charter school, the Paramore Kidz Zone, and the Orlando Minority Youth Golf Association. This project is discussed further in the best practices section of this guidebook.

- Problem: inner city neighborhoods lack grocery stores; convenience stores do not carry fresh fruits and vegetables and other healthy food options and the food prices are much higher.

- Children need to learn healthy food options and portion sizes.
- The Hebni Nutrition Resource Center integrates children into the nutrition process by conducting workshops and interactive cooking classes.

Mary Beth Powell provided an overview of national obesity statistics and of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's childhood obesity agenda, as follows:

- Obesity rates have increased in the United States over the past 30 years, and today, nearly one-third of children and adolescents are overweight or obese.
- Obesity rates are highest among children and adolescents of color.
- Obesity increases the risk for type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, and certain kinds of cancer.
- Childhood obesity is estimated to cost \$14 billion annually.
- Residents of communities with high levels of poverty have less access to places where they can be physically active, such as parks and green spaces. They also lack access to healthy foods. Low-income areas have access to half as many supermarkets as wealthy areas.

Stephanie Welch discussed how local government agencies can interact with their local health departments to forge common partnerships to combat childhood obesity.

- Stephanie is the Director of Community Development for the Knox County (TN) Health Department.
- Community development agencies should reach out to the Health Department director or inquire if there is a director of community development on staff.
- Health departments can provide local data and statistics on health related issues within the community. This information can assist local community development agencies in their planning and strategic efforts around childhood obesity.
- Health departments can also form partnerships with local community development agencies to provide health-related services and workshops to CDBG-funded projects and communities.

## **2011 NCDA Annual Conference**

June 22-25, 2011

Cincinnati, OH

NCDA held a plenary session on using CDBG to combat childhood obesity. The session provided a final report to the membership on the campaign to combat childhood obesity. Core group members presented best practices.

### **PRACTICES FROM THE FIELD**

NCDA worked through the working group to develop a set of best practices and policy recommendations. The following best practices were culled from the working group members.

#### **ORLANDO, FL**

##### **HEBNI NUTRITION RESOURCE CENTER**

###### **Project Description**

The City of Orlando partnered with Hebni Nutrition Consultants to develop a hands-on education center in the impoverished Parramore neighborhood. Parramore, like many inner city neighborhoods has no brand name grocery or restaurants that serve a variety of fresh vegetables, fruits or other healthy foods. Hebni Consultants consists of three local licensed dietitians. For years, the Consultants sponsored an annual event called “Sisters Take Charge of Your Health.” The idea of creating a dedicated nutrition center grew out of requests from the neighborhood for food and diet education.

The Hebni Consultants decided that the Parramore neighborhood provided an ideal location for a nutrition resource center. The center also fit into Mayor Buddy Dyer’s Pathways for Parramore Project to provide education, business development, and a quality of life to the Parramore neighborhood. The Mayor’s initiative ultimately resulted in the development of the Nap Ford Charter School, the only public school in the Parramore neighborhood. The school has developed a partnership with the center to provide nutrition education.

The Consultants purchased a building in the neighborhood for approximately \$300,000. The Consultants leveraged the CDBG grant with approximately \$20,000 in construction funds from a local construction firm; approximately \$20,000 in appliances from a local appliance retailer and approximately \$50,000 in commercial appliances from the Darden Foundation. Initial operating funds were provided by the Florida Hospital’s Community Impact Council and the Blue Foundation of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida.

**Use of CDBG Funds:** The city provided a \$231,000 CDBG grant for the renovation of the building from a former bookstore to a state-of-the-art facility.

The Hebni Nutrition Resource Center has a mission to help African-Americans and other minorities improve their lives through better food choices and exercise. The center has developed programs targeted at kids, adults, seniors, community wellness, diabetes management,

lifestyle management, and chronic disease management. The Hebni Consultants began to assist the Nap Ford Charter School with the development of programs for children. The center offers cooking classes, nutritional counseling, and summer camps for children. The center holds nutrition classes for youth, ages 5 - 13, to educate the students on the importance of healthy eating and offers hands-on demonstrations of healthy snacks and foods the students can make at home.

### **Successes**

Since its inception, the Hebni Nutrition Resource Center has experienced many successes on the local, state and national level based on its work to address the issue of nutrition.

- In 2010, the Hebni Nutrition Center was the recipient of a \$25,000 grant from the U.S. Tennis Association to conduct an eight-week program to address childhood obesity. The program was implemented in coordination with the City of Orlando After School All-Stars, the Parramore Kidz Zone, and the Nap Ford Charter School. The program provided nutrition and cooking education to 500 elementary and middle school students.
- In 2010, Hebni was awarded a \$30,000 grant from the Orlando Magic Youth Foundation for its work with children from the Nap Ford Charter School.
- In 2011, Hebni was awarded \$75,000, along with the prestigious Sapphire Award, from the Blue Foundation of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida and Florida Hospital's Community Impact Council for its demonstrated impact in improving the health-related outcomes of Florida's at-risk populations and communities.

The provision of CDBG funds by the City to assist with the rehabilitation of the Hebni Nutrition Resource Center was a huge success with respect to benefitting low- and moderate-income households. The City's investment received significant additional public and private leverage in other donations and funding.

### **Sustainability**

The Hebni Nutrition Resource Center continues its outreach and partnering in the local community and beyond to sustain its operations and service to the community.

#### **Contact Person for CDBG**

Lelia Allen

Housing and Community Development Director

City of Orlando, FL

Phone: (407) 246-2292

[lelia.allen@cityoforlando.net](mailto:lelia.allen@cityoforlando.net)

#### **Contact Person for the Program**

Roniece Weaver, MS, RD, LD

Founding Partner and Executive Director

Hebni Nutrition Resource Center

[roniece@aol.com](mailto:roniece@aol.com)

## AUGUSTA, GA

### **BUILDING EXTRAORDINARY STUDENTS TODAY (BEST)**

#### **Project Description**

Neighborhood Improvement Project, Inc. (NIP) is a non-profit agency established in May 1998. The mission of the organization is to improve the physical, mental, social, educational, spiritual, environmental and economic health of people living in the 30906 zip code of Augusta, GA, a low-income community. The agency also maintains and supports the Belle Terrace Health and Wellness Center.

NIP's Building Extraordinary Students Today (BEST) program began in April 2000 and provides after-school tutoring to elementary and middle school students at-risk for academic failure. The targeted population includes elementary and middle school students. The program combines academic assistance with health and fitness instruction. The program includes tutoring in areas of academic weakness, homework help, physical activity and education in nutrition, goal-setting, self-esteem, decision making, and prevention of the use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco. Students are measured at the beginning of the program and at 18-week intervals. Progress is evaluated through the collection of specific health data (weight, body mass index, blood pressure and with parental permission, blood glucose).

**Use of CDBG Funds:** CDBG funds are used to support the salary of the tutors and program supplies. The tutors are students from local area colleges.

#### **Need for the Project**

Childhood obesity is a problem in Augusta/Richmond County, with about one in three children being overweight, according to Dr. William Kanto at the Medical College of Georgia Pediatrics Division (located in Augusta, GA). In 2010, Dr. Catherine L. Davis, a Medical College of Georgia researcher, found overweight Augusta children ages 8 to 11 already had stiffer central arteries than normal weight children.

The failure rate for public schools within the service area continues to be problematic; drop-out rates for the two high schools in the service area historically exceeds 50%. Students that participate in after-school programs such as BEST have improved academic performance and fewer behavior problems. Recent studies have also shown that physical fitness and health programming combined with academic assistance contributes to more academic success of students than just academic assistance alone.

Due to the alarming increase of childhood obesity, it is critical that this program teach students the importance of proper diet and exercise to avoid a lifetime of poor health and chronic disease such as hypertension and diabetes, now epidemic in Richmond County. The cost to the community in lost productivity, reduced life expectancy and increased health care needs is readily evident. Including the parents and guardians of the students in special programs increases at-home compliance and reinforcement of healthy living and good academic habits.

### **Project Partners and Their Roles**

- Richmond County Board of Education provides the at-risk students for the program.
- The Belle Terrace Health and Wellness Center provides primary health care and case management.

### **Other Resources Besides CDBG Funds Provided to the Project**

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Health Resources and Services Administration Grant
- The City of Augusta Department of Recreation provides the facility for the program

### **Short and Long-Term Goals**

Short-term: Educate and increase participant knowledge of exercise guidelines and making healthy food choices.

Long-term: Improve academic performance; improve health status by reducing body mass index and reduce abnormal blood glucose levels.

### **Successes**

For the program year 2010, of the 66 students that participated in the program, 87% lowered their body mass index. Blood glucose levels for all students were in the normal range.

### **Contact Person for CDBG**

Chester A. Wheeler III  
Housing and Community Development Director  
City of Augusta/Richmond County  
Augusta, GA  
Phone: (706) 821-1797  
[cwheeler@augustaga.gov](mailto:cwheeler@augustaga.gov)

### **Contact Person for the Program**

Janice Sherman, Interim Director  
2467 Golden Camp Road  
Augusta, GA 30906  
(706) 790-4440 ext. 105

## **AUGUSTA, GA**

### **MACH ACADEMY, INC. – YES I CAN PROJECT**

#### **Project Description**

MACH Academy, Inc. is a non-profit agency that was established in April 1992. It operates and manages the Fleming Tennis Center. Their mission is to provide hands-on life skills development through mentoring, academics, computer literacy and health recreation activities for at-risk youth. Youth are referred from the Board of Education and Juvenile Court.

The “Yes I Can” project is designed to provide the ounce of prevention so desperately needed to help youth in our community combat conditions such as eating disorders that plague children and youth who exhibit low self-esteem and negative body images. The project’s goal is to involve low- and moderate-income participants and their families in nurturing relationships that will encourage them to say “yes” to positive social skills, “yes” to healthy eating and physical fitness, “yes” to life and “no” to poor diets and negative influences. Through this project, recreation and tennis/fitness activities are provided weekly to include healthy eating and nutrition sessions.

#### **Need for the Project**

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions in Georgia and the Augusta-Richmond County area. During 2010, Georgia ranked second in the nation in childhood obesity. For Georgia, obesity in children and youth is a significant public health problem which puts children at an increased risk for other medical conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, asthma, sleep apnea and low self-esteem. Only 5 in 9 (55%) middle school students and 4 in 9 (44%) high school students in Georgia meet the CDC requirements for recommended physical activity. Only 1 in 5 (19%) high school students in Georgia consume 5 or more servings of vegetables daily.<sup>3</sup> As this data indicates, the need for intervention is great and MACH Academy, Inc. is committed to implementing a fitness tool that will help in decreasing this disturbing trend and help reduce the obesity rate for Augusta-Richmond County children/youth.

**Use of CDBG Funds:** The City provides CDBG funds to pay for the operation costs of the program.

#### **Project Partners**

- Augusta Recreation and Parks Department provides the facility and maintenance for the project activities
- University of Georgia Extension Service School Nutrition Program provides hands on healthy eating and nutrition information for the students
- U.S. Tennis Association provides tennis training and equipment for the students
- Richmond County Health Department provides training and program materials on healthy eating

---

<sup>3</sup>2009 Georgia Data Summary: Obesity in Children and Youth

- Augusta State University, the Medical College of Georgia, Paine College and the Augusta Technical College provide volunteers to support the academic and life skills component of the program
- Augusta Housing Authority provides access to low-income participants living in public housing

### **Short and Long Term Goals**

#### Short-term:

- Provide the “Yes I Can” project activities to all low/moderate income youth throughout Richmond County
- Provide hands on tennis, fitness and nutrition activities five days per week
- Encourage healthy eating habits through nutrition education

#### Long-term:

- Use the project to encourage participants to stay in school, decrease the drop-out rate and develop habits to ensure healthy lifestyles

### **Successes**

- MACH Academy, Inc. has provided nutrition, fitness and tennis programs for children and adults for more than nineteen years.
- MACH Academy, Inc. was selected as the 2009 USTA National NJTL Chapter of the Year for its outstanding academic, technology and tennis/fitness program.
- MACH Academy, Inc. was selected in 2010 as a USTA NJTL First Serve Chapter.
- MACH Academy, Inc. was selected by the Richmond County Board of Education to provide after school tennis and fitness hands-on sessions during their 21<sup>st</sup> Century Project for the past two years.

### **Contact Person for CDBG**

Chester A. Wheeler III  
 Housing and Community Development Director  
 City of Augusta/Richmond County  
 Augusta, GA  
 Phone: (706) 821-1797  
[cwheeler@augustaga.gov](mailto:cwheeler@augustaga.gov)

### **Contact Person for the Program**

Betty Jones, Executive Director  
 1850 Chester Avenue  
 Augusta, GA 30906  
 Phone: (706) 796-5046  
 E-mail: [mparks37@comcast.net](mailto:mparks37@comcast.net)

## **VALDOSTA, GA**

### **AMERICA'S SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK OF SOUTH GEORGIA**

#### **Project Description**

In 2005, the City of Valdosta provided CDBG funding under the public services category to the local food bank, America's Second Harvest Food Bank of South Georgia. The funds were matched with \$50,000 from the Food Bank to purchase and install an emergency generator needed to support their refrigerator units. This organization not only provides reduced food and commodities to local non-profit agencies, it also provides meals for youth living in and around public housing developments through the Kids' cafes. These cafes are located in the larger public housing developments and insure that youth and children in these areas receive a balanced and nutritious evening meal for five days per week. The generator helps to insure that the food supplies remain safe for preparation in the approved catering kitchen located at the headquarters of the Food Bank. This, in turn, insures that these meals are available for our youth and children that live in these areas of our community. Childhood obesity is a concern in our community to the extent that the city began organizing in May 2011 a local Farmers' Market to promote local growers and healthy eating. The event is held in conjunction with the South Health District to promote healthy eating options and is held in the downtown area, which is the heart of the city's designated revitalization area.

**Use of CDBG Funds:** The City provided \$10,000 to the program to assist in purchasing and installing an emergency back-up generator to preserve the food stores for the organization.

#### **Successes**

Support of this program insures that for five days per week during the school year, the children and youth in these areas have access to nutritious food for dinner.

#### **Lessons Learned**

This was a great example of a local entitlement grantee working with an established non-profit agency in partnering different funding sources to meet an important need in the community. The City has a very strict application process for CDBG funds under the public service category to insure that all sub-recipients have the capacity and understanding to utilize these funds correctly. This model has the ability to be replicated in other communities throughout the country.

#### **Sustainability**

The Food Bank will insure the sustainability of the project by insuring that all future maintenance and upkeep of the generator is their responsibility. The Kids' Cafes continue to be an integral program administered by the Food Bank and they currently have 36 sites in eight different counties in south central Georgia.

#### **Other**

The City has recently began to work with another non-profit organization that has developed no less than twenty community gardens in a two-county area. The Neighborhood Development staff

is working with this organization to make presentations in the City's CDBG targeted neighborhoods to introduce the concept of community gardens and healthy eating to low- and moderate-income persons in an effort to support healthy food and eating education, and to provide direct purchasing opportunities for healthy eating, especially with our children. The market will be located in downtown Valdosta, which is in the heart of the City's designated revitalization area (DRA). This is the official area that meets the criteria for expenditure of CDBG funds.

**Contact Person for CDBG**

Mara Register  
Assistant to the City Manager  
City of Valdosta, GA  
Phone: (229) 259-3571  
[register@valdostacity.com](mailto:register@valdostacity.com)

**Contact Person for the Program**

Frank Richards  
America's Second Harvest Food Bank of South Georgia  
Phone: (229) 244-2678  
[frichards@feedingsga.org](mailto:frichards@feedingsga.org)

## **SHREVEPORT, LA**

The State of Louisiana faces many challenges in adequately responding to the issues surrounding obesity. Louisiana has the 8<sup>th</sup> highest rate of adult obesity in the country, and Louisiana is in the 20% percentile for childhood obesity. Only a third of high school students get the recommended level of physical activity. To compound matters, the state took physical education out of all of its curriculums state-wide.

In an effort to increase opportunities for kids to be physically active, both in and out of school, the city explored ways to best use its CDBG funds to address this issue. Approximately five years ago, the City structured its CDBG Public Service RFP to address the growing trend in childhood obesity. For example, if the City funds an after school tutorial program, the program must include activities that increase physical education and wellness. In addition, the 2011 CDBG Public Service RFP, at least one project was funded that encompass First Lay Michelle Obama's "Let's Move Initiative," to bring parents, schools and businesses together to combat the growing childhood obesity epidemic. Consequently, the city of Shreveport, through its CDBG program, funded public service projects with healthy life style components. Listed below are some of those projects:

**Use of CDBG Funds:** All CDBG public services projects must contain a component that addresses healthy lifestyles. Some projects that have been funded include:

### **NORTHWEST LOUISIANA FOOD BANK – BACKPACK PROGRAM**

Students ages 6 to 18 from an inner city school program, are served nutritional food on weekends and on holidays. The program is a nationally recognized project for providing chronically hungry children with a weekly backpack of food to take home for the weekend and holidays. The backpack includes such items as granola bars, fruit and fruit juices. The Food Bank of Northwest Louisiana is the sponsor of this local project with CDBG funding from the City of Shreveport.

### **THEATRE OF THE PERFORMING ARTS – YAZZY PROGRAM**

Yazzy is one of Shreveport's most collaborative and professionally oriented creative arts programs involving youth. Yazzy showcases talented students in concert with internationally recognized artists who primarily represent the field of jazz. Through 12 workshops each year, the program encourages talented young people to explore educational and vocational avenues to productive and profitable creative careers. Children are encouraged to exercise on a regular basis by exercising before each rehearsal. They are also encouraged to eat healthy and eat more fruits and vegetables and drink more water. Recently, the guest artist for their 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Yazzy Youth Celebration Jazz Concert, Stephanie Jordan, jazz vocalist from New Orleans, introduced the Yazzy students to jazz pilates, a technique she developed five years ago and teaches in her private studio. Jazz pilates combines ballet, African and modern dance, with mat pilates and yoga movements. The youth and teachers participated in the jazz pilates for up to 20 minutes each day to warm up before rehearsals the week of the show. These techniques have been added to the Yazzy program.

## **TURNING POINT SERVICES, INC. (TPS) – CHOICE (CHOOSING HEALTHY OPTIONS INSTEAD OF CRIMINAL ENGAGEMENTS)**

TPS offers structured activities during operational hours. Their goals are to reinforce learning through offering fun activities to include recreational and culturally appropriate activities that serve as an extension of the Integrated Reading Curriculum. Those activities include but are not limited to Tae Kwon Do, zumba dance, field trips, and sports. Their desire is to create supportive, nurturing, literature-rich environments for children ages 8 to 17 years of age, by focusing on literacy, cultural heritage, parental involvement, and social action.

TPS utilizes college interns from Louisiana State University and Northwestern University to coordinate the five simple steps to success for community leaders from the “Let’s Move Initiative.” These steps are:

1. Help parents make healthy choices
2. Advocate for healthier schools
3. Help children obtain physical activity
4. Promote affordable, accessible food
5. Start a community garden

## **MARTIN LUTHER KING HEALTH CENTER – WELLNESS PROGRAM**

The Martin Luther King Health Center works with each patient individually to give them the tools and self efficacy to make smart choices for wellness. At clinic visits, patients set goals on proper diet and exercise. The center provides education on healthy eating and exercise modification (for obese and elderly patients). Goals are written in their charts and are reviewed at each appointment. Being overweight and/or obese substantially increases the risk of hypertension, high cholesterol, Type II diabetes, heart disease and stroke. The maintenance of an ideal body weight depends on lifestyle choices; therefore, this is an area with considerable opportunity for worthwhile impact. In addition to their health coaching during visits, the center also holds regular workshops that engage people in healthy choices. Some of the workshops include: eating for wellness, coping with chronic illness, gluten free foods, and smoking cessation.

### **Contact Person for CDBG**

Bonnie Moore  
Community Development Director  
Shreveport, LA  
Phone: (318) 673-5936  
[bonnie.moore@shreveportla.gov](mailto:bonnie.moore@shreveportla.gov)

**MURFREESBORO, TN**

**GET FIT KIDS BAM! (BODY AND MIND) OBESITY PREVENTION PROJECT – MURFREESBORO CITY SCHOOLS**

**Project Description**

During the 2009-10 school year, the Murfreesboro City Schools collected Body Mass Index measurements from 3,450 students. The data revealed 21% of the students measured were obese. However, in high-poverty inner-city schools, the percentages were greater:

School	% Students – Free/Reduced Lunch	% Overweight Students
Bradley	86%	53%
Mitchell-Nelson	72%	53%
Hobgood	89%	45%

During the 2010-11 school year, the Murfreesboro City Schools partnered with other community organizations to pilot the Get Fit Kids BAM! (Body and Mind) Program. However, many at-risk students and their families were unable to participate because of a lack of available funding. A CDBG Public Service Grant for the 2011-12 school year will allow the project to expand and reach a minimum of 45 children and their families.

**Use of CDBG Funds:** The City of Murfreesboro provided a CDBG public services grant to Murfreesboro City Schools to expand the BAM! project.

BAM! follows four specific steps to achieve its goal:

1. Improve eating habits and increase physical activity;
2. Determine specific nutritional and exercise goals;
3. Develop an action plan for accomplishing goals;
4. Track progress

**Student Component**

Students meet after school for two hours one day a week for 20 weeks for interactive lessons aimed at increasing health/nutrition education and promoting healthy lifestyle choices as measured by weekly attendance sheets, journal exercises and surveys. Students participate in outdoor exercises as part of their weekly program. Pedometers are issued to track level of physical activity throughout the week and data is collected. The family participates every fourth week.

**Family Component**

A minimum of 45 students and their families participate. Each family is partnered with four

other families to form a support group and each support group is assigned a coach to motivate, monitor and encourage families with their wellness plan. Every fourth week the students and families meet together for two hours to work on activities specified in the curriculum. Between each monthly meeting, coaches contact their families at least weekly to monitor progress and encourage their families to maintain a log of their activities and foods in order to meet their exercise and healthy eating goals.

### **Successes**

The pilot project involved partnerships between Murfreesboro City Schools, Middle Tennessee State University, Rutherford County Health Department, UT-TSU Extension Service and various members of the Rutherford County Wellness Council. Measurable results in reaching the program's four goals were encouraging enough to expand the program to three schools.

### **Lessons Learned**

Pilot program successes to date are directly attributable to forging the partnerships listed above. The Director of Schools was directly involved in bringing the various partners to the table.

### **Sustainability**

The City expects to award a \$7,500 CDBG public service grant to the City Schools for 2011-12 to assist with the cost of the project. Subject to CDBG funding availability, the City typically commits to CDBG funding to new projects for minimum of three years. The district has a wealth of community partners, including MTSU, who provide educational resources within their own structures.

### **Contact person for CDBG**

John Callow  
Community Development Director  
Murfreesboro, TN  
Phone: (615) 890-4660  
[johncallow@murfreesborotn.gov](mailto:johncallow@murfreesborotn.gov)

### **Contact person for the Program**

Linda Gilbert, Director of Schools  
Murfreesboro City Schools  
2552 South Church Street  
Murfreesboro, TN 37127  
Phone: (615) 893-2313  
Fax: (615) 893-2352  
[linda.gilbert@cityschools.net](mailto:linda.gilbert@cityschools.net)

## **MURFREESBORO, TN**

### **TRIPLE PLAY – BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF RUTHERFORD COUNTY**

Keeping kids moving is a growing concern for schools across Tennessee. In 2009, the state had a childhood obesity rate in excess of 30% and ranked 48<sup>th</sup> in the general health of its children. Murfreesboro is in the forefront of this epidemic with a rate 8% higher than the state.

#### **Project Description**

The Triple Play program starts with the premise that molding healthy behaviors is easier when the process starts when people are young. Through the program, Boys & Girls Club members learn that eating right, keeping fit and forming positive relationships add up to a healthy lifestyle. Club staff is crucial to the program's success.

Triple Play is part of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America's Sports, Fitness and Recreation core program area, which consists of an array of effective programs for equipping Club members with crucial skills needed to become healthy, fit and successful adults. The program is a comprehensive approach to promoting health and wellness for Boys & Girls Club members ages 6-18, emphasizing the mind, body and soul.

- Mind – Healthy Habits provides a wide-ranging approach to addressing nutrition, education and fitness.
- Body – These elements promote fun with a purpose and physical fitness year-round in a non-competitive but challenging environment.
- Soul – Social Recreation utilizes the club game room to teach and reinforce social and ethical skills young people need to be successful.

The program consciously incorporates elements of belonging, competence, usefulness and influence. For example, sessions are designed to provide a mechanism for older members to assist younger members, providing older youth a sense of usefulness and influence while helping them reinforce the positive behaviors that are the goal of the program.

Outcomes are measured in several different ways. Attendance is taken each day in Triple Play so that participation in each program component can be tracked. Members are tested when they begin participating in Triple Play and then periodically so that the Triple Play coordinator can identify specific areas of concentration needed for each participant.

**Use of CDBG Funds:** The City of Murfreesboro provided a CDBG public services grant to support the program.

#### **Successes**

After participating in Triple Play, members of all ages are better able to evaluate their health on their own. They can take pride in the accomplishments in learning about physical fitness and eating healthy.

**Lessons Learned**

Staff members must be trained and reinforced with the Triple Play mindset through local in-service and national training. The Healthy Habits component and integration into the daily routine of participants is integral to individual success.

**Sustainability**

The City expects to award a \$7,500 CDBG Public Service Grant to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Rutherford County fo 2011-12 to assist with the cost of the project. Subject to CDBG funding availability, the City typically commits to funding new projects for a minimum of three years.

Because Triple Play is a Boys & Girls Clubs of America initiative, with proper financial resources, it can be run successfully over time. Program components are developed for all age groups, so as members age within the program, the program provides age-adjusted components. The local organization will continue to establish lasting partnerships through grants and individual and corporate giving.

**Contact person for CDBG**

John Callow  
Community Development Director  
Murfreesboro, TN  
Phone: (615) 890-4660  
[johncallow@murfreesborotn.gov](mailto:johncallow@murfreesborotn.gov)

**Contact Person for the Program**

Beth Jennings, Resource Development Director  
Boys & Girls Clubs of Rutherford County  
P.O. Box 3343, 820 Jones Blvd.  
Murfreesboro, TN 37133  
Phone: (615) 890-2582  
Fax: (615) 893-3698  
[beth.jennings@bgcrc.net](mailto:beth.jennings@bgcrc.net)

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Support an increase in the CDBG public services cap to allow grantees greater flexibility in funding more projects.
- Encourage more CDBG grantees to focus their public service dollars on childhood obesity.
- Share information and build partnerships. Encourage CDBG grantees to establish partnerships with local organizations involved in childhood obesity projects, such as local health departments, hospitals, schools, and non-profit organizations. Encourage CDBG grantees to work with other local government departments (transportation, parks and recreation) to develop projects aimed at providing physical exercise.
- Incorporate public health as a priority in the consolidated plan. Map access to grocery stores, parks and recreation, and walking and biking routes. Ask public and environmental health agencies to contribute relevant public health data.
- Comprehensive plans should support goals and objectives in support of public health.
- Health care, recreation and education programs need to be highlighted as useful activities within CDBG.
- Assess built environment conditions that impact public health.