

# AMERICA WALKS

Making America a Great Place to Walk



## Monthly Newsletter - May 2015

### Promoting Local Action to Build National Change

America Walks is well aware that it is often times the state and local organizations working tirelessly in communities that make the biggest moves towards walkable communities. That is why we are committed to providing state and local advocates with assistance and resources to expand their work.

One of the biggest ways we are doing this is with our inaugural **Walking College** program. America Walks is proud to announce the **25 recipients of the Walking College Fellowships**. These 25 advocates for walking and walkable communities hail from 22 different states and Palau. We would like to thank all 75 Walking College applicants who invested enormous energy, enthusiasm, and hard work into the application process.

If you're not part of the Walking College program, that doesn't mean you can't help move your community in the right direction! America Walks has a variety of ways that local advocates and organizers can get involved in the walking movement:

- **Mobilize your State Department of Transportation**. America Walks is teaming up with PreventObesity.net to push State Departments of Transportation to fully fund Safe Routes to School programs

- Learn how to talk the walking talk with the [Every Body Walk! Messaging Toolkits](#), developed from surveys of existing communications and research into what messages can best be used in promoting walking.
- Take advantage of the warm weather and perform a walking audit. Use [AARP's Sidewalks and Street Survey](#) as a tool in the field.
- Learn how to be an effective advocate. Join leaders and other advocates at the [2nd National Walking Summit](#) in Washington, DC October 28-30. [Register Today!](#)

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## America Walks Program Updates

America Walks is putting its best foot forward in 2015 with several new programs, webinars and publications to help you make America a great place to walk.

- [June 18 Webinar "Why Walking?"](#) Why do we care about walking, and why do we put so much effort into campaigning for walkable communities? In our first Walking College Webinar, we take an introspective look at the walking movement with the help of two of its most accomplished practitioners. Jonathon Stalls, Founder and Lead Itinerant with Walk2Connect, and Jim Stone, Executive Director of Circulate San Diego will present. [Register Now!](#)
- [Executive Director Published in European Magazine](#) Executive Director Scott Bricker published an article, "[Putting Pedestrians First](#)," as part of a new Walking in America section of the European Magazine. The article discusses the rising demand for walkable neighborhoods in America and what needs to be done to provide them.
- [Every Body Walk! Video Challenge](#) The walking movement is growing across America and the Every Body Walk! Collaborative wants to highlight this growing strength by putting a face on the movement with a video competition. Grab your cameras and join us on Instagram and YouTube!

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## Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

America Walks and the Every Body Walk! Collaborative is pleased to announce that the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has provided a grant to sponsor of the [2<sup>nd</sup> National Walking Summit](#), to be held in Washington, DC in October 2015.

## National Walking Summit Sponsor Profile

[The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#) is striving to build a Culture of Health that surrounds kids and families with opportunities to make healthy choices every day. The Foundation's support of the Walking Summit is a demonstration of this commitment to creating

and maintaining healthy environments and communities.

For more information on the National Walking Summit, please visit [our website](#). [Registration is now open](#) and [scholarships towards registration costs are available](#).

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## Inspiring & Innovative-Local and State Highlights

Nationwide, we are seeing inspiring acts of advocacy and progress toward the creation of safe and accessible walking conditions for all.

- *Columbia, MO*: State & Local Program Director Ian Thomas is putting his best foot forward in his hometown. As an elected member of his city council, [Ian has been named co-chair of a task force to address pedestrian safety concerns](#). Stay tuned to [America Walks website](#) for continued updates as we profile this project.
- *Buffalo, NY*: Buffalo is taking steps toward a walkable future with its new [Downtown Infrastructure Master Plan](#). The plan provides for [investment into the city's streets, districts and public squares](#) with a goal of making it more cohesive and pedestrian-friendly.
- *Chattanooga, TN*: As part of efforts to revitalize the historic Glass Street neighborhood, the [Glass House Collective kicked off a workshop](#) to explore options to create a vibrant, safe and accessible area for residents and businesses alike. [Residents will have an opportunity this summer](#) to help select the projects implemented, making it truly a community effort.

Does your community or advocacy group have a success story you would like to share? Email [Heidi Simon](#) to be featured in future newsletters.

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## Recent News

America Walks is encouraged by the recent attention walking and walkability is receiving.

- [MAP-21 Extension Expected](#) Continuing the fight for transportation funding, [Congress passed legislation that would create a two-month extension for MAP-21](#) which provides funding for surface transportation. The legislation is expected to be signed by President Obama ahead of the May 31 deadline.
- [US Department of Transportation Launches Safety Assessments](#) As part of its "Safer People, Safer Streets" Campaign, the US Department of Transportation will conduct 52 surveys to improve conditions for pedestrians and

bicyclists. The efforts will also work to improve relationships with local communities to continue the work towards safer streets.

- **Safer Streets Legislation Announced** The **2015 Safe Streets Act** was announced earlier this month. The legislation would ensure that streets and intersections are designed with adequate pedestrian safeguards in mind. **Tell Congress you support this important legislation!**



## Other Events and Resources

<b>What Caught Our Eye in April</b>	<b>Resources and Events Available</b>	<b>We Need Your Stories</b>
<p>As a new section for the America Walks Newsletters, we want to share with our network some of the interesting things that cross our desk. This series will highlight books, films and other media that adds color to the walking movement and could be interesting to readers.</p> <p>Ever stumble upon the perfect coffee shop, park or other attraction on your walks, only to never be able to find it again? <a href="#">Fun new mapping apps</a> help you track your walks and make the most of</p>	<p><a href="#">America Walks Webinar Series</a></p> <p><a href="#">National Walking Summit Guide for Creating Safer Communities</a></p> <p><a href="#">Advocacy Advance Rapid Response Grants</a></p> <p><a href="#">NHTSA 2013 Pedestrian Fact Sheet</a></p> <p><a href="#">Smart Growth Community Workshops</a></p> <p><a href="#">New Resources for Walkable Rural Communities</a></p>	<p>America Walks wants to hear from our great network to find stories, testimonials and pictures that show examples of the great work you have done.</p> <p>We want to highlight the hard work and successful changes communities and local advocates have accomplished on our website and can't do it without your contributions.</p> <p>Those interested in contributing should contact <a href="#">Susan Lyon</a> or visit the <a href="#">Share Your Stories</a> page on our new website.</p>

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## Thank You Sponsors

America Walks would like to thank our sponsors for their generous support of this publication and all of the work being done by America Walks to promote the Walkable movement. Thanks for helping to make America a great place to Walk!

8-80 Cities, AARP, Accessible Design for the Blind, Active Living By Design, Active Transportation Alliance, Alliance for Biking & Walking, American College of Sports Medicine, APBP, APHA, BungyPump, California Walks, Carmanah, CDC, Chaffin Luhana, LLP, Circulate San Diego, Daniel Rose Law, Eco-Counter, Estey & Bomberger, LLP, Every Body Walk!, Federal Highway Administration, Feet First, Health by Design, Hoosier Rails to Trails Council, Idaho Bike Walk Alliance, Jurewitz Law Group, Kaiser Permanente, Kellogg Foundation, Landman Family Charitable Trust, Law Offices of Jay S. Knispel, Lyft, MIG, Inc., Muscle Powered: Citizens for a Bikable and Walkable Carson City, National Association of Realtors, National Physical Activity Society, Nelson Nygaard, Nemours, Orthotic Shop, Partners for Health, PedNet Coalition, PEDS, PhillyWalks, Posternak, Blankenstein & Lund, LLP, Rails to Trails Conservancy, re:Streets, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, S&G Endeavors, Safe Routes to School National Partnership, Sally Flocks Charitable Fund, Sam Schwartz Engineering, Shaping New Jersey, ShoreWalkers, Inc., Swanson, Thomas, Coon and Newton, Synergy, LLC, Tennessee Department of Transportation, The Reeves Law Group, TVA Architects, Vermont Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition, W-Trans, Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, Walk Boston, WalkSacramento, The Walking Company, Wallace Consulting & Training, Inc., Weissman-Landman Family Trust

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