

# AMERICA WALKS

America Walks Newsletter

November 2015

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## "You Are More Powerful Than You Could Ever Imagine" - Ron Sims, 2015 National Walking Summit Keynote

With over 500 participants from 46 states, the 2015 National Walking Summit brought together organizations, advocates, businesses and leaders from local, state and federal levels of government to discuss and advance a variety of topics related to the walking movement.

We wanted to share some of the excitement and inspiration from the event with highlights on the programs, special events and keynote speakers so decided to turn our November Newsletter into a Walking Summit Newsletter! Want more?

- [Visit the Walking Summit website.](#) We are actively updating it with photos, links to media coverage and downloadable copies of the presentations.
- [Share your Summit stories.](#) We want to hear from you! Share what your favorite part of the Summit and let us know what you would like to see in 2017. Send them to us [online](#) or use #WalkingSummit on social media.
- Stay engaged! We are gearing up for 2016 with webinars, new toolkits and reports and exciting work with the [US Surgeon General's Call to Action on Walking and Walkable Communities](#)
- [Donate to America Walks.](#) Support our efforts to make sure every American has access to safe and convenient walking conditions.



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**2015 National Walking Summit Program Paves the Way to a**

## Walkable America

Panelists and moderators engaged and inspired participants and each other with current best practices, strategies for overcoming challenges and motivating stories of success. Participants had the opportunity to:

- Attend sessions on Vision Zero, Equity and Equal Access for All, Initiatives to increase Walking and Advocacy
- Get hands-on experience at intensive trainings such as the Every Body Walk! Communications Training
- Walk the talk as Summiteers took to the streets of DC.



## Walk the Hill Day Keeps Capitol Hill on the Walking Path

[America Walks Walk the Hill Day](#) helped kick off the first day of the 2015 National Walking Summit with over 150 advocates taking the walking message to Capitol Hill. Representing 33 states and attending over 140 meetings, advocates received training on messaging and lobbying, met with members of the House and Senate and advocated for strong funding for walking and walkable communities with Congressional staff.



Walk the Hill Day Participants Meet with Congressman John Lewis (D-GA5)

Constituents urged members and their staff to support walking and walkable communities in the pending transportation reauthorization bill, focusing primarily on funding the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). TAP is the top federal source of funding to help communities create safe and accessible walking conditions through sidewalks, crosswalks and multi-use trails and to revitalize walkable downtowns. The bill is currently being discussed in conference - stay tuned for updates from America Walks on the impact our advocates had!

TBDZ and 11 others follow



**Senator John Thune** @SenJohnThune · Oct 28

Great meeting with South Dakota members of @americawalks today in D.C. #walkingsummit



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## Dynamic Keynote Speakers Urge Summiters to Step It Up!

Over 500 participants were energized, informed and inspired by the 2015 National Walking Summit keynotes. It was one of the only times that federal leadership from the health and transportation worlds came together on a single stage to discuss and engage on an issue, reminding everyone the important role that walking can play in our country's health, safety, economic development and equitable communities.



*Walking is empowering. Folks didn't jog or bike for freedom, they walked and marched.*

*- Dr. Robert Bullard*

**Dr. Robert Bullard** opened the conference with a passionate presentation titled "Is Walking a Right?" hitting a core theme of social justice that carried throughout the two and a half day conference. The room was speechless as he showed how the legacy of segregation and current poverty issues greatly impact levels of walking and other physical activity today.

*This is about health equity and ensuring that everyone has a walkable community.*

*- Surgeon General Vivek Murthy*

At lunchtime speakers **U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy** and **Dr. Mark Rosekind, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**, demonstrated the commitment of the key federal government agencies to stay in step with leaders, advocates and on the ground local organizations working tirelessly to create safe and accessible walking conditions.



*Walkable communities are safe communities and are predeterminants of successful children and healthy seniors.*

*- Ron Simms*

The Summit concluded with an inspiring speech by **Mr. Ron Sims**, a public servant and leader, who motivated and empowered attendees to turn this information into action and continue their hard work back home not only as individuals but as part of a movement to alter what America is. As Mr. Sims reminded us, the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago, but the second best time is now. The walking movement's opportunity to plant seeds that will grow to make America a great place to walk is right now.



## 2015 National Walking Summit Sponsors



## America Walks 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!

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America Walks | (503) 610-6619 | [info@americawalks.org](mailto:info@americawalks.org) | [www.americawalks.org](http://www.americawalks.org)

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