

Monthly Newsletter - January 2015

From Our Executive Director

For a long time, one important goal for the work of America Walks has been to get Americans active and healthy. New science, like this [12-year study](#) shows that inactivity kills more than obesity. Twenty minutes of walking will achieve fitness results. This, combined with walkable communities, is definitely a prescription for better health.

In 2015, America Walks will focus on providing tools and resources to local advocates to create these walkable communities. This includes rolling out our new Walking College program, linking emerging advocates with expert mentors. We will also work with the [Every Body Walk! Collaborative](#) to convene leaders from around the country at our [2nd National Walking Summit](#) and provide resources including new communications messages and practice briefs.

As we walk into 2015, I also want to thank everyone who contributed to America Walks, as we surpassed our \$15,000 end of year fundraising goal! Join us, cruising along at the steady pace of 3 mph, towards Making America a Great Place to Walk and [donate to America Walks!](#)

2nd National Walking Summit- Call For Proposals

We are excited to co-host the [2nd National Walking Summit](#) with the [Every Body Walk! Collaborative](#) and bring together the leading actors of the walkability movement to find ways to make lasting change. We recently launched the [2015 Walking Summit website](#) and issued a [Call for Proposals](#).

You are encouraged to find a way to get involved with this exciting event and share your knowledge. We would like to hear what you have to say at the Summit. Submit your proposals today.

New Program-

America Walks is excited to launch the Walking College, a new program to be rolled out this summer. The Walking College targets new advocates, small local organizations, and coalitions that want to launch or expand their work to include

campaigns to increase walking and make America a great place to walk. America Walks staff and ten national advocacy leaders – Mentors – will provide educational content and coaching sessions to expand their skill sets and support implementation. This new program will consist of:

- A curriculum of guided independent study
- Video-interactive Mentoring Sessions with experienced advocates;
- Assistance with a locally-led research, planning, or promotional project;
- Participation in the 2015 National Walking Summit.

Scholarships will be available but space will be limited. We'll be sending more information in March about applications for this exciting opportunity.

Inspiring & Innovative- Local and State Highlights

America Walks is always excited to see local advocates, organizations and elected officials involved with the issues surrounding the creation of safe and accessible walking conditions for everyone. Nationwide we are seeing inspiring acts of advocacy and progress towards this goal.

- San Francisco, CA: [San Francisco](#) took a previously dangerous street and committed to the Safer Market Street plan. The idea is to reduce automobile traffic on a street where 84 percent of the people arrive by foot, bicycle or transit.
- Jacksonville, NC: [Jacksonville](#) unveils new crosswalks, sidewalks and traffic signals in an effort to improve pedestrian mobility and safety while finding ways to do so without large costs to the city.
- Philadelphia, PA: [Philadelphia](#) has always been known as a hub for food, art, entertainment and education. It's also been named one of the most walkable cities, showing the success that can come from making attractive, walkable communities.
- Washington, DC: [Washington](#) is bringing young people back into city limits, offering attractions and amenities that appeal to millennials and help rebound the District's population.

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

Recent News

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

- Criminalizing Walking to School: A [Maryland family](#) is being investigated for allowing their two children to walk to school. This criminalization of walking is a sign of the work that still needs to be done to make walking a part of every lifestyle.
 - Walkable Communities Proven to Work: A [new report](#) from Texas A&M found that walkable communities improve physical well-being and the social interactiveness of citizens.
 - Inactivity vs. Obesity: [University of Cambridge](#) has found that inactivity and sedentary lifestyles contributes to more deaths than obesity at almost double the rate.
 - New Surgeon General Confirmed: The US Senate has confirmed President Obama's nominee for [Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy](#). This is the first time in seventeen months the United States has had a confirmed Surgeon General.
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Other Events and Resources

What Caught Our Eye in January	Resources and Events Available	We Need Your Stories
<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>This 99% Invisible Podcast, the Modern Moloch explores the historic and, often times contentious, relationship that exists with automobiles, streets and people. We encourage people to take a listen and consider the lessons from the advent of automobiles.</p>	<p>America Walks Webinar Series</p> <p>NACDD and CDC Walkability Institute Applications</p> <p>Walk21 Call for Abstracts</p> <p>Active Living Research Annual Conference</p> <p>National Civic League All-America City Competition</p> <p>National Physical Activity Plan Congress</p> <p>Annual New Partners for Smart Growth Conference</p>	<p>America Walks is looking to hear from our great network to find stories, testimonials and pictures that show examples of the great work we have done.</p> <p>We want to highlight the hard work and successful changes communities and local advocates have on our website and can't do it without your contributions.</p> <p>Those interested in contributing should contact Susan Lyon or visit the Share Your Stories page on our new website.</p>

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!

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