

AMERICA WALKS

Making America a Great Place to Walk

Monthly Newsletter - February 2015

From Our Executive Director

We want to hear your story!

Increasing walking and creating walkable communities requires a strong ground game built from the sidewalk up, crosswalk by crosswalk, step by step. America Walks is dedicated to cultivating and supporting this groundswell by improving local walking action and advocacy. We aim to be in step with you and your local communities. A critical activity is for you to share your stories - the successes, challenges and even the occasional heartbreak.



America Walks has many opportunities for you to become engaged and active, many of which can be found in this newsletter, including:

- Submit your idea, story or project to present at the [2nd National Walking Summit](#) in Washington DC in October. We are looking for a variety of presentations so [submit a proposal by March 2nd](#) to share your expertise with the over 400 expected attendees.
- Apply to be in the inaugural class of our [Walking College](#) program. The Walking College will arm you with the tools, skills and mentorship needed to improve your community and increase walking.
- [Share your story](#), or a story that caught your eye, to be highlighted in our newsletter and on our website. Be sure to check out our [website](#) to see what fellow walking advocates are doing.
- Join us for our next webinar. Presenter Mark Fenton will be discussing Lessons from the Experts on how you can make your community more walkable. [Learn more and register here.](#)

We urge you to be part of the growing walking movement and be the change in your community. Take a walking meeting, advocate at your neighborhood association, write a letter to your mayor and then tell us all about it!

Thanks for Making America A Great Place to Walk!



New Program- Walking College

America Walks is pleased to announce the mentors for our new [Walking College](#) program. This nationally-recognized team is assisting America Walks staff to provide a unique educational experience that combines the hard skills with the soft skills of effective communication and engagement with decision-makers.

The following experienced professionals have agreed to help design the curriculum and serve as Mentors to Walking College participants through video-interactive coaching sessions:

- Jeanne Anthony, Livable Communities Project Advisor, AARP
- Anamarie Garces, Executive Director, Urban Health Partnerships
- Kim Irwin, Executive Director, Alliance for Health Promotion
- Robert Johnson, Director of Consulting, PedNet Coalition
- Wendy Landman, Executive Director, WalkBoston and Board Member, America Walks
- Kelly Morphy, Executive Director, WALC Institute
- Molly O'Reilly, Board Member, America Walks, and Board Member, Idaho Walk Bike Alliance
- Robert Ping, Technical Assistance Program Manager, WALC Institute
- Lisa Quinn, Executive Director, Feet First
- Jonathan Stalls, Founder/Lead Itinerant, Walk2Connect
- Jim Stone, Executive Director, Circulate San Diego

Scholarships will be available but space will be limited. We'll be sending more information in March about applications for this exciting opportunity. Contact [Ian Thomas](#) with any questions.

Event Spotlight- National Physical Activity Plan Congress

Leaders and advocates of the physical activity movement came together this month in Washington, DC to have engaging discussions and take steps in shaping the future of the National Physical Activity Plan. The National Physical Activity Plan vision is that, one day, all Americans will be physically active and will live, work and play in environments that facilitate regular physical activity. To learn more about this event and the exciting work that was done, visit the [National Physical Activity Plan website](#).

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.

- Winter Walking: With falling temperatures and growing snow drifts, America Walks is inspired by ways people are finding to keep active. Winter walks like those organized by this [New Jersey school group](#), communities coming together to [keep sidewalks shoveled and safe](#) and the growing trend of [sneekdowns](#) are warming our hearts this winter.
- Louisiana: The [Tulane Prevention Research Center](#) released a new study on the impact Safe Routes to Schools can have on activity levels in children and childhood obesity. The report includes a new assessment of walking and

biking availability for children in the state.

- Anchorage, AK: [State Representative Andy Josephson](#) stepped into the new Alaska State Legislative session with a commitment to safety, proposing a vulnerable roadway user law. If passed it would be the first of its kind in Alaska.

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.

- Department of Transportation Calls on Mayors: In his continued commitment to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx launched the “[Mayor’s Challenge for Safer People and Safer Street](#)” which will host mayors and other local elected officials summit and then be followed up with the challenge to improve safety locally.
- Vision Zero Gains Momentum: Vision Zero is growing as [Seattle's Mayor Ed Murray](#) commits to increasing safety. The initiative has already seen success in New York City and San Francisco.
- Complete Streets 2014 Announced: [Smart Growth America](#) announced the 2014 Best Complete Streets Policies, naming eleven agencies that led the nation in creating comprehensive Complete Streets policies in 2014



Other Events and Resources

<h3>What Caught Our Eye in February</h3>	<h3>Resources and Events Available</h3>	<h3>We Need Your Stories</h3>
As a new section for the America	America Walks Webinar Series	America Walks wants to hear from our great network to find stories,

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.

This [website by Knight Foundation and 8-80 Cities](#) has interesting resources and multimedia to be used in the walking movement. Its goal? Urging for the Law of the Pedestrians First. Be sure you check out the video on the idea!

[Guide for Creating Safer Communities](#)

[Advocacy Advance Rapid Response Grants](#)

[SCALE Initiative Applications](#)

[Smart Growth Community Workshops](#)

testimonials and pictures that show examples of the great work you have done.

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.

Those interested in contributing should contact [Susan Lyon](#) or visit the [Share Your Stories](#) page on our new website.

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, APBP, APHA, BluePoint Planning, Boulder Valley School District, BungyPump, Carmanah, CDC, CHEKPEDS, 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, Landman Family Charitable Trust, Law Offices of Jay S. Knispel, MIG, Inc., Muscle Powered: Citizens for a Bikable and Walkable Carson City, National Physical Activity Society, Nelson Nygaard, Orthotic Shop, Partners for Health, PedNet Coalition, PEDS, PhillyWalks, Rails to Trails Conservancy, re:Streets, 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 Franklin Law Firm, The Reeves Law Group, TVA Architects, Vermont Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition, W-Trans, Walk Boston, WalkSacramento, Wallace Consulting & Training, Inc., Weissman-Landman Family Trust

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