

FORWARD Newsletter

Working to Fight Obesity and Support DuPage Residents in Reaching A Healthy Lifestyle

August 2012

In This Issue

[Note from Director](#)

[FORWARD Coalition Meeting:
Save the Date](#)

[ProActive Kids Fall Program
Sites](#)

[FORWARD Releases Funding](#)

[FORWARD Announces 2011-
2012 BMI Surveillance of 27,914
Students](#)

[William Mueller](#)

[Additional Funding for Schools](#)

[Congratulations Paul Zientarski](#)

[Recent Research](#)

[West Chicago Community
Center](#)

Contact Us

[Ann Marchetti,](#)

Director

[Tamera Keller,](#)

Coordinator

[Krystal Kleinschmidt,](#)

Coordinator

Note from the Director

With the dog days of summer in the rear view mirror, even if you do not have children, we turn to a new flurry of activities centered on the beginning of a new school year, crisper days and cooler nights. Fondly I remember those days... when some new clothes and school supplies, along with the anticipation of a new experience with friends meant everything. I had one such experience earlier this summer. I had the privilege of taking a French County Cooking class through the College of DuPage (COD) with our own Nutrition Task Force Co-chair, Chef, and Class Instructor, Chris Thielman. There were 15 of us in the weeklong class. I met some terrific students from COD and others from across Illinois and the US. Oh, did I mention the class was in Roxanne, France? I am still reeling from the experience.

I went to France to experience a culture, to understand food - their food, what is available and how it is prepared, to better understand the health issues especially in the field I am most passionate about-obesity and the impact that food, exercise habits, and lifestyle have had on health in France. With obesity rates nearly half that of the United States, higher life expectancy rates, very little fast food, a lifestyle that promotes walking, community gathering, purchasing food for that day with simple preparation methods, I knew what I was going to see. What I didn't expect was that I would develop not only an understanding but a hunger for this simplicity in my life. I learned that preservatives and artificial ingredients are not used or needed because most everything is prepared daily, cooked daily and consumed daily. As passionate as I am about health and wellness, what I learned in France, among other things, is that wellbeing is more than healthy eating and active living. It is a balance of the senses, a communal experience with others, a reconnecting with the soul. It is something that is missing in my life, and I expect throughout most of America. I have pledged to embrace this, to practice it, to savor it, and to remember its roots. So as fall begins and life begins to run full speed again, I hope that you will join me in creating a culture of wellness - one that is not only based in the foundation of healthy eating and active living, but also a culture that is "tuned in" to its soul, one that embraces its spirit, and values people everywhere.

- Ann Marchetti

Director of FORWARD

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For more on how to engage in one of the many COD's classes, go to: [College of DuPage](#).

Fall Coalition Meeting - Save the Date

SAVE THE DATE: The next FORWARD Coalition Meeting will be on Thursday, November 8, 2012 at the Danada House in Wheaton, IL from 7:30am to 9:30 am. Watch for details on our website: forwarddupage.org.

ProActive Kids Fall Sessions Begin Soon

Do you know a child (age 8-14) that struggles with unhealthy weight? The free ProActive Kids program may be for them!

ProActive Kids is much more than a simple diet or exercise program. It is a comprehensive, all inclusive program to treat the whole child, physically, nutritionally and emotionally, built around the stability and commitment of family. The program educates children and their families on fun and sustainable ways to improve their health through weekly physical exercises, lessons, assignments, and discussions. This innovative and life-changing experience is offered FREE to children ages 8-14 who are considered obese or at risk defined by being in the 85th percentile and above in BMI.

The next session starts September 17. There are 3 locations to choose from:

- * West Chicago - Wayne & Helen Fox Community Center - Funded by Blue Cross/ Blue Shield of Illinois
- * Wheaton at Wheaton Community Center - Funded by Cadence Health
- * Woodridge at Edward Health & Fitness Center - Funded by Edward Hospital

ProActive Kids also offers Take Action Days, single sessions for prospective and former attendees to get a sample of the ProActive Kids program and to have some fun as a family. The next Take Action Day is September 8, 9:00-11:45a.m., at the Northern Illinois Food Bank, 273 Dearborn Court, Geneva, IL 60134.

For more information, or to register for any program go to: ProActiveKids.org, send an email to info@proactivekids.org, or call (630) 681-1558.

Please spread the word about this wonderful program.

FORWARD Releases 2012 *Get in the Action* Mobilization Grants

Funding for the 2012 mini grants has been made available through a partnership with Action for Healthy Kids, Cadence Health, the DuPage County Health Department, Edward Hospital and Health Services, and the J.R. Albert Foundation. The goal of these grants is to assist local schools and community organizations to make the healthy choice the easy choice by implementing strategies to create healthier communities and reverse the obesity trend in DuPage County.

Awards in the amount of \$250 to \$5,000 will be made to organizations with the capacity to achieve change across one or more populations/communities in DuPage and to projects that propose significant systems, policy and/or environmental change in one or more communities. We anticipate between 25-30 awards at an average rate of \$2,000. The total number of projects funded will depend on the number of eligible projects and the amount of funds that the FORWARD Fund has available to award.

To download an application, please visit forwarddupage.org. The application will be available beginning August 29, 2012. Conference calls will be hosted to give applicants a chance to ask questions; the times and dates will be announced on the website. The deadline for receipt of applications is September 30, 2012.

FORWARD Announces BMI Surveillance Report of 27,914 Students

In order to understand the prevalence of obesity in DuPage County, FORWARD invited all public schools in DuPage County with a Kindergarten, Sixth, or Ninth grade to confidentially share data from the students' school physical forms, a requirement for school attendance for Kindergarten, Sixth, and Ninth Graders. FORWARD collected student Body Mass Index (BMI) and BMI percentile data from 91.5% of public schools, exceeding our goal of 90%. For the 2011-2012 academic year, our rates indicate that nearly one in three Kindergarteners, Sixth Graders, or Ninth Graders in DuPage County were overweight or obese. Of the 27,914 children sampled, 31% were overweight or obese and 15% were obese. This same prevalence rate for both obese or overweight and obese was observed among the 2010-2011 group of K, 6th and 9th Graders sampled in DuPage County last year. To review our data please go the FORWARD website: forwarddupage.org

A Tribute to William "Bill" Mueller

FORWARD remembers William J. "Bill" Mueller of Lombard with gratitude. Bill, who had been battling multiple myeloma, died Saturday, August 18,

2012 from complications of West Nile virus. He was 76. Bill was the co-founder of Healthy Lombard, a FORWARD coalition member and played an active role on our Active Transportation Task Force and the Lombard YMCA Core Leadership Team. Bill made advocating for children and promoting healthy lifestyles a personal priority during his leadership as Village President of Lombard. Bill's leadership in advocating for healthier living will be missed. Please join us in mourning the loss of a great leader.

Funding Opportunities for Schools

FORWARD has learned of two new funding opportunities for DuPage Schools for the 2012-2013 school year.

Fuel Up to Play 60 - Up to \$4,000 per year is available to any qualifying K-12 school enrolled in Fuel Up to Play 60. The competitive, nationwide funding program can help your school jumpstart and sustain healthy nutrition and physical activity efforts. For more information, go to [Fuel Up to Play 60](#). The deadline is October 1, 2012.

Let's Move to School Salad Bar - Grants are available to set up a salad bar in qualifying schools. The application to apply for a Let's Move to School Salad Bar grant is September 9, 2012. Go to: [Salads2Schools](#).

Congratulations Paul!

Paul Zientarski, FORWARD Advisory Board Member, has been invited by the Midwest Dairy Council to participate in the Nutrition + Physical Activity Learning Connection Summit being held in Arlington, VA on September 18-19, 2012. The Learning Connection Summit is hosted by GENYOUth Foundation in partnership with the National Dairy Council and the American College of Sports Medicine. The Summit will bring together a diverse group of leaders and top thinkers in education, health, government, nutrition, fitness, research, and industry to advance solutions and support for students and schools. Paul was selected for this honor because of his leadership in and concern for child health and his work in promoting the impact of physical activity on learning and readiness to learn. He will return armed to join forces with FORWARD, the Regional Office of Education and the Midwest Dairy Council to advance the agenda for healthy, high-achieving students and schools. Paul is the Learning Readiness PE (LRPE) Coordinator for District #203 in Naperville, IL. FORWARD is pleased that Paul has been selected for this event and we look forward to his continued leadership with the Coalition.

Strong State Laws on School Snacks, Drinks May Help to Prevent Weight Gain, New Study Finds

Children and teens in states with strong laws restricting the sale of unhealthy snack foods and beverages in school gained less weight over a three-year period than those living in states with no such policies, according to a study published online today in the journal *Pediatrics*. Additionally, students who were overweight or obese in 5th grade were less likely to remain so by the time they reached 8th grade if they lived in a state with a strong law than if they lived in a state with no such law.

Studies like this are why FORWARD's Nutrition Task Force has made it our goal to work on these priority areas through three workgroups: Nutrition in Schools, Nutrition Education, and Nutrition Policy. Recently, under the Nutrition Policy Workgroup, FORWARD organized a meeting with the health and hospital systems serving DuPage County. Cadence, Edward, Adventist, Elmhurst and Advocate came together with the American Heart Association and the Illinois Alliance to Prevent Obesity to discuss the impact and health benefits of reducing or eliminating sugar sweetened beverages from local health care facilities. They will be meeting again in the fall to explore possible options. If you would like more information or to get involved, please visit the FORWARD [website](#).

A New Community Recreation Center

West Chicago Park District understands the importance of safe healthy places for children and families to recreate. A referendum to build a new community recreation center will be decided by voters on November 6, 2012. The new facility would include a walking/jogging track, area for seniors, multipurpose gymnasiums, fitness area, dance studio, and other core fitness amenities. The new facility is proposed to be in Reed-Keppler Park which offers access to bike trails and is home to sports fields and a variety of recreational opportunities. FORWARD applauds West Chicago's bold idea for change to improve the health of its residents! If you live in West Chicago and would like to know more, please visit the [FORWARD website](#).