



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: City of Duluth Recognized for Achievements in Preventing Childhood Obesity through Let's Move! Cities, Towns and Counties
BY: Daniel Fanning, Communications & Policy Director - Mayor's Office (218) 730-5307

City of Duluth Recognized for Achievements in Preventing Childhood Obesity through Let's Move! Cities, Towns and Counties

[Duluth, MN] – The National League of Cities (NLC) recognized Mayor Don Ness and the City of Duluth for recent completion of key health and wellness goals for *Let's Move! Cities, Towns and Counties* (LMCTC). LMCTC is a major component of First Lady Michelle Obama's comprehensive *Let's Move!* initiative to ensure that kids can grow up healthy. LMCTC works closely with local elected officials nationwide to adopt policies that improve access to healthy affordable food and opportunities for physical activity for their constituents across five goal areas.

"We congratulate Duluth for your dedication to building a healthier community for children and families," said NLC President Ralph Becker, mayor, Salt Lake City, Utah. "Through the tireless leadership and action of local elected officials in cities, towns and counties across the country, we hope to see continued progress in reversing America's epidemic of childhood obesity."

Five medals, including a gold for Goal V, were awarded to Duluth, MN for action taken to improve access to healthy affordable food and increase opportunities for physical activity. These medals were awarded because of Duluth's achievements in promoting policies, programs and initiatives to increase youth access to physical activities, parks and trails, and youth serving agencies. In addition, Duluth was commended for helping promote children's access to programs that offer healthy food before, during, and after the school day and throughout the summer months.

"Our community is committed to ensuring youth have access to activities that promote an active lifestyle and healthy food choices," said Mayor Don Ness. "We've made progress by working collaboratively with the school district, a number of community partners and youth serving agencies, and the City's Parks and Recreation division. We want to continue to expand options, access, and build on this positive momentum."

All LMCTC sites have the opportunity to earn up to five gold medals, one for each actionable goal to which they commit to as part of the initiative. Medals are awarded to local elected officials based on their achievements in each of the following five goal areas:

- *Goal I: Start Early, Start Smart:* Promoting best practices for nutrition, physical activity, and screen time in early care and education settings.
- *Goal II: My Plate, Your Place:* Prominently displaying MyPlate in all municipal or county venues where food is served.
- *Goal III: Smart Servings for Students:* Expanding access to meal programs before, during and after the school day, and/or over summer months.
- *Goal IV: Model Food Service:* Implementing healthy and sustainable food service guidelines that are aligned with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- *Goal V: Active Kids at Play:* Increasing opportunities for physical activity.

NLC is working in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and with the support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Association of Counties and other nonprofit organizations, to assist

local elected officials who join LMCTC as they implement policy and environmental changes to prevent childhood obesity. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has awarded NLC a grant to provide technical assistance to local elected officials working to create healthier communities and prevent childhood obesity, including those participating in LMCTC.

More than 480 cities, towns and counties are participating in LMCTC, and more than 70 million Americans are now living in LMCTC communities that are dedicated to helping young people eat healthy foods and be physically active. Each month, NLC recognizes local elected officials who achieve key benchmarks for the five LMCTC goals. Since July 2012, NLC has awarded 2,477 bronze, silver, and gold medals to recognize local elected officials across the country for their LMCTC progress.

For information about LMCTC and Duluth's accomplishments, visit: www.HealthyCommunitiesHealthyFuture.org.

For more information, please contact Angel Hohenstein, City of Duluth Wellness Coordinator, at (218) 730-5201, ahohenstein@duluthmn.gov or Daniel Fanning, City of Duluth Communications & Policy Director, at (218) 730-5307, dfanning@duluthmn.gov.

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The National League of Cities is dedicated to helping city leaders build better communities. NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 cities, towns and villages, representing more than 218 million Americans.