

UNH Joins Partnership for a Healthier America to Offer Healthier Choices for Students, Employees

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The University of New Hampshire became one of the first schools to sign on to the Partnership for a Healthier America's (PHA) Healthier Campus Initiative, in a three-year commitment to make its campus healthier by adopting guidelines around food and nutrition, and physical activity and programming. This initiative will impact more than 15,000 students and more than 3,000 faculty and staff.

"UNH has been committed to improving the health of its community for many years," said Dick Cannon, vice president of finance and administration and founder of the campus' Healthy UNH initiative. "We want to empower every member of our community to make healthy choices and we strive to be the healthiest campus in the country by 2020. Joining PHA's Healthier Campus Initiative is a great next step in our work toward that goal."

The announcement was made Nov. 16 at the American Public Health Association (APHA)'s 2014 Annual Meeting & Exposition. UNH is one of the first schools to sign on to PHA's Healthier Campus Initiative, which includes 19 other colleges and universities, collectively impacting more than 500,000 students and 126,000 faculty and staff. PHA works with the private sector and PHA honorary chair First Lady Michelle Obama to make healthier choices easier.

UNH has agreed to implement or maintain the following guidelines over the next three years: offer a minimum of one wellness meal at each meal; offer a minimum of five fruits, five vegetables and two 100 percent whole grains at lunch and dinner; make free water available in all dining and educational/physical activity facilities; limit fried food; offer at least three desserts that are less than 150 calories; label food and beverage items with calories per serving; offer a plant-based food option at every place serving meat; increase the use of local and sustainable foods; offer a healthier catering menu; make registered dietitian nutritionists available; provide on bicycle parking space on campus for every 15 individuals; offer a bicycle share/rental program available; provide designated bike lanes and/or off-street bike paths; encourage the use of public or campus transportation; provide 16 hours of access per day to the rec center; offer at least 20 recreation, physical activity or competitive sports opportunities each year; offer a monthly "how to" class; provide one running/walking track; offer an equipment rental program; make certified personal trainers available to students; implement an annual wellness program; offer an incentive for participating in a wellness program; and implement a mandatory health and wellness module for all first-year and transfer students.

UNH already meets more than half of the 23 guidelines and is confident the others will be in place by spring 2017.

"Colleges and universities are in a unique position to help shape tomorrow's leaders, whether they are teachers, coaches, policymakers, CEOs, moms or dads," said PHA CEO Lawrence A. Soler. "We know that going to college is a time of change for many students—we also know that means it's a time when new habits are formed. By creating healthier food and physical activity environments today, campuses and universities are encouraging healthier habits that will carry over into tomorrow."

For more information on PHA's Healthier Campus Initiative, visit www.ahealthieramerica.org/campuses. For more information on UNH's Health UNH initiative visit <http://www.unh.edu/healthyunh/>.

The Partnership for a Healthier America (PHA) is devoted to working with the private sector to ensure the health of our nation's youth by solving the childhood obesity crisis. In 2010, PHA was created in conjunction with – but independent from – First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! effort. PHA is a nonpartisan nonprofit organization that is led by some of the nation's most respected health and childhood obesity experts. PHA brings together public, private and nonprofit leaders to broker meaningful commitments and develop strategies to end childhood obesity. Most important, PHA ensures that commitments made are commitments kept by working with unbiased, third parties to monitor and publicly report on the progress our partners are making. For more information about PHA, please visit www.aHealthierAmerica.org and follow PHA on Twitter @PHAnews.

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