

**State Obesity Task Force  
Mission Statement:  
“Working toward prevention and reduction of obesity for a healthier  
Alabama”**

Obesity Task Force Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, August 18, 2010  
AL Power Company Water Course Building  
Clanton, AL

Bonnie Spear, chair welcomed the group and provided the following updates

The new Robert Wood Johnson report examines the latest data on school wellness policies. It is based on nationally representative samples of school districts. It compares school guidelines (over a three year period) with the 2007 Institute of Medicine (IOM) nutritional standards for competitive products sold in schools. This report serves as an update to their 2009 report school wellness policies on a national level. To see the report go to:

“[http://www.bridgingthegapresearch.org/client\\_files/pdfs/Monographs/WP\\_2009\\_monograph.pdf](http://www.bridgingthegapresearch.org/client_files/pdfs/Monographs/WP_2009_monograph.pdf)”

[School District Wellness Policies: Evaluating Progress and Potential for Improving Children's Health Three Years after the Federal Mandate](#)

The Southern Obesity Summit will be in Atlanta on Sunday, September 12 – Tuesday, September 14, 2010. <http://www.southernobesitysummit.org/> Alabama will have speakers there. On the last day, states will be participating in show casing their state specific information. If you are interested in the summit, please contact Bonnie.

The Alabama Obesity Institute was started from a grant written by several universities. UAB agreed to house the Institute, but it is not a UAB project. Research on implementation in rural areas may be the main focus. They are offering a free grant writing course on Monday, Sept 20, 2010, at UAB. David Allison ([dallison@uab.edu](mailto:dallison@uab.edu)) and Mona Fouad ([mfouad@uab.edu](mailto:mfouad@uab.edu)) are co-chair.

Bonnie is representing the Task Force and shared the minutes, pasted below.

Minutes of Alabama Obesity Initiative Telephone Conference - 6/24/2010

**Present:**

1. David B. Allison – UAB, AOI Chair
2. Mona Fouad – UAB, AOI Co-Chair
3. David R. Luthin, Ph.D.: Associate Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences McWhorter School of Pharmacy Samford University
4. Jim McVay, DrPA: Director, Health Promotion & Chronic Disease Alabama Department of Public Health
5. Mary McIntyre - Alabama Medicaid Agency
6. Tim Garvey - UAB
7. Cardwell Feagin – Viva health
8. Monica Baskin - UAB

**Introductions**

**Mission**

- To advance knowledge in obesity through collaborative efforts in the State of Alabama.
- To bring in funding for research and research training to advance knowledge in obesity through collaborative efforts in the State of Alabama.
- Open to any disciplinary focus from most basic research to most applied.
- Distinction from Alabama Obesity Task Force (AOTF). AOTF is for applications. AOI is for research and research training, which can include research on applications and training in applications research.

**Funding**

- Currently just over \$170,000 from the State of Alabama.

**Extant Successes**

- Developmental Aspects of Obesity Workshop held in April - <http://www.norc.uab.edu/courses/conferences/conference2010>
- T32s – reached beyond UAB – Two applications submitted to NIH in May. Participants from Alabama A&M and UA at Tuscaloosa were included.

**September Meeting**

- Mon 9/20/2010 "Successful Grant Writing — from the Perspective of Funding Institutions"
- Tues 9/21/10 – AOI meeting

**Next Steps**

Meet in September to identify those uses of our funding which could include, but are not limited to hiring grant writers, hosting meetings and workshops, and offering pilot grants, which will most likely lead to near-term gains in research and research training resources in multiple disciplinary areas and at multiple institutions within the State of Alabama.

The State Dept of Education's Quality PE Task Force was charged to define what quality P.E. classes would look like, develop curriculum, and select the fitness testing tool to be used statewide. Several OTF members are on this committee, including Bonnie, Michael Jackson, Hank Williford, and Ronnie Floyd. The committee has completed its work. Eight schools were selected to be a pilot of the new materials before going statewide. Teacher training is a strong component of this process. Superintendents, principals, and teachers will be trained on the new guidelines. The committee will meet again, after the pilot to make needed changes- as determined by the pilot.

At the May meeting Tracey Delaney, Alabama Dept of Economic and Community Affairs, presented information on the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreational Plan Summary. She provided summary booklets for the recreational plan and for the State Trail Plan. In addition, the Bureau of Tourism has a Passport program encouraging people to walk the trails. On Sept 1, Bonnie and Mim Gaines have a meeting with Jodi Waites, ADECA, to see how the OTF can work with them to promote use of trails and other increased physical activity venues in AL.

Mim Gaines shared the start of the Etowah County Obesity Task Group. A core planning group is being formed by Quality of Life Health Services, Inc. who seeks to be the lead agency in developing an initiative designed to reduce childhood obesity. A mission statement, five year plan and a name will be developed during the coming months. The core planning group suggested additional partners for the project which will target all of Etowah County. Prospective partners will be contacted in advance of the next meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

Mim provided an update on the grant with NICHQ and AAP. The OTF was named a team member of this project and several members have assisted (Julia Sosa, Michael Jackson, Brandi Pouncey, Bree Garrett, Helen Wilson, and Mim). The project's goal is to train medical providers to be advocates for childhood obesity issues. The Brewton community trained health care providers and local leaders. Mim shared copies of The Brewton Community Training Tool Kit.

Mim shared the 2009 BRFSS release on state obesity. Alabama's ranking dropped from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> based on the release. Caution was given before getting excited about the drop. The decrease from 32% to 31% was not statistically significant. The good news is that we did not increase. There are 9 states that are now over 30% obese.

Julia Sosa, from the State Health Department provided the handout, "Summary of the National Plan of Action" from the National Partnership for Action to End Health Disparities. To see the plan go to:  
<http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/npa/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=1&lvlID=31>  
The plan focuses on 5 areas: awareness, leadership, health system life experience, cultural and linguistic competency, and research and evaluation. Julia reviewed the areas. ADPH is working to explain these messages. If you are interested in having Julia or another ADPH staff attend a meeting, please let her know. (Julia.sosa@adph.state.al.us)

Fred Smith provided a summary of the initiative taken in the Anniston area through the BITE Grant (JSU/ Anniston Wellness). The group has been successful in expanding a community walking group to include adults and youth. The church based teams are recognized for the steps/miles accomplished. As a result of working with the community, a senior aerobics class and a senior nutrition class started. The program also provides budget friendly meal information with meals served, and youth summits. JSU students are utilized for teaching and for conducting health fairs. Different students, such as nursing, physical education, and family and consumer sciences are involved with the efforts. Mr. Smith shared a video highlighting the programs. "Potential can overcome the problem" and "Enthusiasm can't be taught, it must be caught" are two phrases the wellness program practices. For more information go to:  
<http://www.jsu.edu/edprof/wellness/>

Sylvia J. Edward, from the Alabama Breastfeeding Coalition provided educational information concerning obesity prevention and reduction through breastfeeding. Her power point will be available on the OTF web site, on the Resources page. Ms. Edwards built on the message from Ms Sosa, and stressed reaching the population takes tailoring for the cultural aspects. She discussed new evidence finding fat cells are laid down differently in formula and breast milk babies. [http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/03/science/03milk.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/03/science/03milk.html?_r=1)

A national goal is to increase the number of Baby-Friendly Hospitals; Alabama does not have any. Team work to address using breast milk is needed. This includes worksite wellness initiatives, hospitals, any professional working with women of childbearing age, and those professionals working with men (to support breastfeeding). The Alabama Breastfeeding Coalition has a website to promote their "Working and Breastfeeding" recognition project.

"<http://www.adph.org/albfcomm/Default.asp?id=1997>"

For more information, visit "<http://14.nwscc.cc.al.us/>"

One of the OTF goals is to provide more direction to worksites in Alabama. Laurie Eldridge- Auffant provided the plans for a wellness manual. The target audience for the manual will be the worksite and the community. The manual will include nutrition, physical activity to prevent obesity, but the focus of the overall manual will be broader. The OTF committee will use other states' manuals, such as WI, as references. The chapters of the manual have been identified. The OTF workgroup reviewed the progress and helped set next steps.

Heather Whitley gave a brief overview of the progress made with developing a student committee for the OTF. The committee would enable students to work directly with projects addressing obesity. UA will serve as the pilot, to learn how to engage students from different colleges on campus. The OTF workgroup reviewed the progress of the OTF Face Book page.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.

The next meeting will be November 16, 2010.

**Note: If you are interested in participating with the Wellness work group or the student work group, please let us know. (Wellness- Laurie Eldridge-Affant at [Laurie.Eldridge-Auffant@adph.state.al.us](mailto:Laurie.Eldridge-Auffant@adph.state.al.us) and Student- Heather Whitley at [whitlhp@auburn.edu](mailto:whitlhp@auburn.edu))**