

# RDNs and the Prevention and Public Health Fund

Registered dietitian nutritionists play a critical role in community-based prevention programs, including many that receive support from the Prevention Fund. Whether the programs involve helping communities access healthy foods or working to prevent type 2 diabetes, RDNs are on the front lines of preventive care. Below are a few examples of programs that have been funded through the Prevention Fund that utilize the unique expertise of RDNs.

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## Baltimore, Md.

## North Dakota

## Washington, D.C.

## California

## Missouri

## Utah

## Healthy Places for Kids to Eat

## Clark County, Nevada

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### **Baltimore, Md.**

RDNs in Baltimore use PPHF funding from the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant, Diabetes Prevention, Stroke and Heart Disease Prevention and Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention divisions for several health and wellness initiatives. These include

- Doubling SNAP benefits at farmers' markets through the Maryland Market Money Incentive Program
  - Efforts are also underway to increase the number of farmers markets accepting SNAP benefits and to understand how farmers' markets are used throughout the state.
- Supporting market to mealtime education at farmers' markets, as well as the evaluation of this education in regards to impact on fruit and vegetable consumption.
  - Promoting worksite wellness by bringing farmers' markets to businesses and having participating businesses complete healthy score cards to see how healthy they rank through the Healthiest Maryland Businesses.
  - Providing training sessions for businesses on healthier vending and technical assistance on nutrition supportive environments through the Health Department .
  - Allowing Maryland physicians to take advantage of Diabetes and Obesity Medicaid coding training sessions and supporting Walk Maryland Day, which takes place on the same day as International Walk to

School Day.

- Supporting the creation and administration of breastfeeding training modules for hospitals interested in becoming Baby Friendly hospitals and the arrangement of hospital breastfeeding policy guidelines for those not pursuing the Baby Friendly recognition but interested in increasing breastfeeding.

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## **North Dakota**

RDNs and organizations in North Dakota use Million Hearts funding for hypertension prevention programming. These includes:

- Developing a statewide communications plan to remind residents to get their blood pressure checked routinely and connected clinical services with public health programming to ensure those with high blood pressure are receiving the medical attention they need. The program also involves healthy eating and physical activity promotion to help prevent and control blood pressure.
- State agencies, universities, and organizations collaborating through Healthy North Dakota on efforts to prevent chronic disease through health behavior changes. They share best practices, resources, and ideas.
- Organizations across the state addressing hunger and food insecurity in an effort to increase access to healthier food through Hunger-Free North Dakota.
- Funding cooperative agreements like "Building Capacity of the Public Health System to Improve Population Health through National, Nonprofit Organizations."
- Providing continuing education and training for public health professionals to enhance their skills Taking Charge of Change: A Workforce Development Program for Public Health Nutritionists.
  - This agreement has Academy members working the Academy and the National WIC Association on a mentoring program and a leadership development program. The aim of this program is to better equip health departments at combating chronic diseases, such as diabetes, obesity and heart disease.

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## **Washington, D.C.**

RDNs in Washington, DC are using REACH funding to connect individuals in local communities, specifically members of faith centers, to various health and wellness services, such as affordable food stores, clinics, and recreational resources. The Leadership Council for Healthy Communities, comprised of faith-based organizations and clinicians, also provides education regarding health insurance, chronic disease prevention, healthy eating/cooking and tips to increase physical activity in efforts to combat health disparities in DC.

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## **California**

An RDN from the Toiyabe Indian Health Project in California uses REACH funding from the Prevention and Public Health Fund to work with the nine tribes of the Eastern Sierra region to promote gardening and growing food locally. These projects including:

- Helping tribes start using raised beds and hoop houses to grow their own produce.
- Funding nutrition education purposes in educational centers, after-school programs, and head start facilities.

- Supporting activities of the local food coalition.
- Developing food policy in the local clinic, with the hopes of improving healthful selections at each meal.
- Funding a green prescription program is set to be piloted to combat food insecurity. Through this initiative, tribe members will be able to pick up produce from farmers markets or at actual farms with prescriptions from RDNs.

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## **Missouri**

An RDN at the Department of Health and Senior Services in Missouri uses PPHS money from the Prevention Fund for obesity prevention and control programs. Money from the fund is distributed to local public health agencies to implement strategies to combat obesity. The state department uses funds to provide training and technical assistance, to develop resources for smaller agencies and organization implementing programs, and to support salad bars in schools.

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## **Utah**

An RDN with the Department of Health in Utah uses PPHS money for their TOP Star Program, which aims to improve child care centers' nutrition and physical activity environments through training and technical assistance. Utah's program is based on the Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) program, developed by UNC Chapel Hill. Local health education specialists act as TOP Star consultants, who recruit child care centers, assess the physical activity and nutrition environments of the centers, and work with child care providers to set goals for improving the environments. TOP Star also focuses on increasing breastfeeding and reducing screen time among young children.

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## **Healthy Places for Kids to Eat**

The Association of Public Health Nutritionists (ASPHN) uses PPHF for Healthy Places for Kids to Eat (HPKE) in nine states - Arizona, Arkansas, Alaska, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, Tennessee and Utah. HPKE previously focused on three strategies for improving health with 3 states focusing on one of three initiatives: salad bars in schools, farm to institution, nutrition standards. Just starting its third year of funding, HPKE will now implement trainings for the nine states on sustainability, community engagement, and COIN (collaborative innovation network) through three calls. Through COIN, ASPHN can give money to states for programming to focus on childhood obesity prevention

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## **Clark County, Nevada**

In Nevada, RDNs in Clark County, received CTG funding (previously part of the PPHF) through 2014. They used these grants for the Clark County Health Vending Initiative, which helped improve the health content, including getting elimination of soda, of vending machines in recreation centers and public pools. They also used CTG funding for a media campaign promoting healthy beverage consumption.

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