

STATE LEVEL: NAHF ANNOUNCES NEW ERA OF SUPPORT FOR ITS NETWORK OF STATE AND GOVERNOR'S COUNCILS

The National Association for Health and Fitness: The Network of State and Governor's Councils (NAHF) has announced a number of major steps that will enable it to place new emphasis on assisting the nationwide network of State and Governor's Councils on Physical Activity and Health as well as a growing number of related health coalitions around the country. NAHF Board President Philip Haberstro outlined the following initiatives:

1. NAHF has relocated its offices to the headquarters of the Be Active New York State! Initiative in Buffalo, New York. Haberstro said this move will allow NAHF to greatly reduce its administrative expenses, and allow it to concentrate its resources more on field services to the nation's advocates for physical activity and health. In addition, NAHF will explore common interests with other national organizations to advance the cause of improving the public's health by working together to foster a reduction of inactive and sedentary lifestyles, a major cause of and contributor to chronic disease, premature death and disability.
2. NAHF is launching a range of new services that are designed to meet identified needs of the more than 40 states that have Councils established by their governors or other state organizations or agencies with the aim of improving health and well-being through increased levels of physical activity as well as other healthy behavior. Haberstro noted that these new services would include:
 - An electronic newsletter that will provide key information on strategies and successful approaches to increasing physical activity and improving health, geared specifically for the adoption by State or Governor's Councils and related health coalitions
 - A consultant team that can respond to opportunities and challenges for Councils in their efforts to improve health and reduce sedentary lifestyles- an electronic library of "best practice" strategies central to promoting physical activity
 - A "collaboration approach" to our work that will focus on aligning support from the corporate, philanthropic, and governmental sectors so that State and Governor's Councils and related health coalitions can gain vitally needed resources through partnerships and sponsorships
 - Developing a series of online tools that will focus on such critical areas as, strategic planning, health communications, planning, evaluation, and building effective health coalitions
3. NAHF will up-date many of its existing activities to insure strategic alignment with our mission. Haberstro commented on the following:
 - NAHF will work aggressively to "stay connected" with its market place
 - The NAHF Annual Meeting will become more concentrated on grass-roots needs and capacity building of those working at the community and state levels through State and Governor's Councils and related health coalitions programs as National Employee Health and Fitness Day, the largest of its kind, will become better coordinated with and linked to State and Governor's Councils
 - NAHF will expand its advisory council
 - NAHF will aggressively pursue fewer but more strategic collaborations, with

an emphasis on those that have the potential to impact at both the national as well as the grass-roots Haberstro levels, such as with the American College of Sports Medicine. Haberstro concluded, “These changes, together, will allow NAHF to make a significantly more tangible contribution to the important role being played by State and Governor’s Councils for Physical and Health. Ultimately the American public, and health of this nation, will benefit greatly from these steps being announced today.”