

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **LAKE COUNTY CHART MEMBERS ATTEND NATIONAL FORUMS TO COMBAT CHRONIC DISEASE AND PROMOTE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

Members of the Lake County community returned home last week from attending a National Action Institute in Denver, Colorado on July 20-23. While at this institute, participants learned firsthand from national and local experts about strategies to combat poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and chronic disease in Lake County. These community members are part of the Community Health Action Response Team (CHART) who have mobilized to address health concerns in Lake County. The Lake County CHART is part of an initiative called Action Communities for Health, Innovation and EnVironmental ChangE (ACHIEVE). Lake County was one of 13 communities who received funding in March 2009 from the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) and supported by the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). NACDD is one of five national partners who receive support from the CDC to provide direct technical assistance to these communities. In all, 43 communities nationally have received ACHIEVE funding.

ACHIEVE is a national, state and local partnership that works to advance leadership and action required to reduce chronic disease and its related risk factors. CHART members and partners are focusing on improving the environments where people live, work, play, and learn. Promoting actions and advancements around physical activity, nutrition, and tobacco control, as well as improving health systems and other systems of care that provide services to people with chronic diseases will give people of all ages the support needed to lead healthier lives in our community.

Presenters at the institute included national leaders in the fight against chronic diseases. Dr. Wayne Giles, Director of the Division of Adult and Community Health at the CDC, kicked off the program with information on the burden to our society caused by chronic diseases and the critical role

of chronic disease management. Prevention Institute policy guru Larry Cohen, MS provided sessions on building local policy and organizations practicing change through community work. Mark Fenton, noted author, television personality, and walking enthusiast, highlighted how the built environment impacts health and led participants through a walking tour of Denver, Colorado. Local community members from around the country provided practical examples of solutions in schools, worksites, healthcare settings, and the community, including community-based institutions and community planning efforts.

Lake County CHART members will continue to develop plans to promote policy, environmental change and long-term planning that support healthy living, such as nutritious school vending machines and meal offerings; access to parks, biking trails and sidewalks; worksite wellness improvement; and systems improvements for people suffering from chronic disease. “By building healthy communities and supporting people in healthy living, we can make a difference in the health of our nation,” said Dr. Wayne Giles. For more information on the ACHIEVE Initiative, visit [www.achievecommunities.org](http://www.achievecommunities.org) or contact Tori Luyster at the Lake County General Health District at (440) 350-2442.

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