

## Report

New Jersey Council on Physical Fitness and Sports

*New Jersey: The Wellness State*

*...dedicated to health, nutrition, recreation and wellness*

September 2002 - May 2005

*Submitted by Benjamin Schaffer, Immediate Past Chairperson from 1999 to 2005*

Dear Governor Corzine and State Legislature:

On behalf of the New Jersey Council on Physical Fitness and Sports it is our pleasure to present to you our second report. It is with great pride that we share with you a report that we feel reflects an active and productive Council that has truly made its mark as a state and national leader in the promotion of physical fitness, health and sports.

Health and fitness in our state and across the country is a lifestyle that we can never stop supporting. The cost of health care continues to increase each year in this country. All experts in the health field from the Surgeon General's Office to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention agree that our medical health costs could be greatly reduced if more people adapted more active lifestyles and learned how to eat properly. As an example, obesity is now considered a major health problem and proper nutrition and regular physical activity are the two main tools to help fight this new epidemic. In our schools we find that nutrition and physical activity are also major concerns. Our council is pleased to have had the opportunity to support legislation to improve food choices sold or distributed for free in schools.

Regardless of age or condition, active healthy lifestyles are the basis for a productive, healthy citizenry and this is why we are proud to be part of the state team addressing this public need. The vision of the New Jersey Council on Physical Fitness and Sports is to have New Jersey recognized as *'the Wellness State'*. The Council has never wavered from this vision. The accomplishments recorded in this report reflect the efforts of a very talented and dedicated assembly of Council members whose combined expertise make it possible to address the needs of our state with confidence. One current project, a book entitled *Get Fit NJ*, was created with chapters submitted by Council members and others. The result will be the publication of a book that can benefit the residents of New Jersey.

As you read through this report we are confident you will agree that the New Jersey Council on Physical Fitness and Sports has been an active productive Council that has taken their assigned task seriously and done it well.

Thank you for your continued support of the New Jersey Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

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Members, New Jersey Council on Physical Fitness and Sports

## Background of the Council

The New Jersey Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (NJCPFS) was created by legislation in 1999 to address the growing needs of health, fitness and sports in the state. The Council is made up of 16 members including the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services, or his designee. Fifteen public members from organizations with subject matter expertise are appointed including one member each from the New Jersey Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (NJAPERD), the Medical Society of New Jersey (MSNJ), New Jersey Recreation and Park Association (NJRPA) and the New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA). The Council has also invited resource members with other areas of expertise to participate. The vision of the Council since its inception is to have New Jersey recognized as *'the Wellness State'*.

Recent statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that poor diet and inactive lifestyles are a leading cause of death in the United States. The Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health concluded that moderate physical activity can substantially reduce the onset of heart disease, high blood pressure, certain types of cancer and strokes and continues to be one of the major factors in combating obesity.

Based on national and local data related to poor diet and physical inactivity and accepted recommendations to improve these areas, the Council aims at increasing awareness to help inform and guide the public. A carefully thought out NJCPFS Strategic Plan was put together to give the Council direction and guide its efforts. This strategic plan is periodically reviewed and revised by the Council.

One of the Council's most powerful strengths is its ability to work with its other state health and fitness partners. In addition to NJAPERD, MSNJ, NJRPA and NJSIAA, the Council partners with the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (PCPFS), National Association for Health and Fitness (NAHF), a coalition consisting of all state councils which sponsor National Employees Health and Fitness programs and the American Council on Fitness and Nutrition (ACFN). Other contacts include the Special Olympics of New Jersey and New Jersey Project ACES. This network allows the Council to work with other professionals across the state and the nation in order to share programs and ideas and to participate in national conferences and workshops.

The Council generally meets once a month to carry out its ambitious agenda. Each member serves on at least one special committee. All meetings are open to the public where new program ideas and suggestions are always welcomed. The existing committees include the Executive Committee (includes elected chair, vice chair, business secretary and treasurer); the Legislative and By-Laws Committee; the Finance Committee; the Education and Research Committee; and the Program and Public Relations Committee. The Council is housed under

the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS). Helping to guide the Council are two very capable DHSS staff members. Along with all the Resource Members, the Council is fortunate to have a strong base on which to build programs.

### **Council's Accomplishments**

Following on the accomplishments stated in the first Report (February 2001 to July 2002), the list of accomplishments has continued to grow. Listed in the first report were examples of how the Council was organized, the development of a strategic plan, the development of the Council exhibit and banner, the hosting of a National Health and Fitness Conference including the Gold Star Awards Program held in Morristown in May 2004 and also fundraising. Since the national conference was held in New Jersey, the Council nominated a major New Jersey institution, Johnson & Johnson, to receive the National Gold Star Award. This organization was recognized for their outstanding contributions to health, in particular the Live for Life® program. NJCPFS was also presented that year with an award as the most outstanding state Council in the country.

Listed below are the accomplishments of the Council from 2002 to 2005. All Council members are volunteers who give of their own time to help promote health, fitness and physical activity in the state. A review of their accomplishments will show some impressive achievements as a volunteer Council.

**Legislative Fitness Day:** The Council continues to support and participate in Legislative Fitness Day by partnering with NJAHPERD to share with our state legislators and legislative staff the benefits and need for physically active lifestyles.

**Senior Citizens Health and Fitness Games:** The Council joined forces with Montclair State University's Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation and the Essex County Division on Aging to conduct this full day of adaptive sports and health testing programs for senior citizens in the Essex County area.

**National Employees Health and Fitness Programs:** The Council did a direct mailing to 250 New Jersey corporations to promote fitness and health in the workplace. The mailing included a cover letter from the Deputy Commissioner of Health and Senior Services, a catalog of available worksite programs for easy reference and a recommendation that health and fitness programs should be implemented.

**Annual Medical Society Sports Medicine Seminar:** The Medical Society of New Jersey assures that the Council is included as a sponsor of this annual seminar held at Saint Peter's University Hospital in New Brunswick.

**The New Jersey Obesity Prevention Task Force:** Council is represented on this task force.

**Get Fit Challenge:** Council members worked closely with the Office of the Governor to create this website where New Jersey residents can log on and record their fitness activities. After completing a six week program, individuals are eligible to receive a certificate of achievement signed by the Governor.

**Let's Get Fit Grant:** The New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) received funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2003 to support the development of a youth media campaign targeting "tweens" ages 9-13. The DOE developed, in collaboration with New Jersey Network (NJN) and the Council, a series of public service announcements (PSA's) that were aired on NJN television. The PSAs promoted fitness for life and informed citizens how to reach the Council. In addition, an extended version CD-ROM and DVD was developed and sent to every K-8 school in New Jersey. The DVD promoted youth fitness and featured experts in the field along with footage from physical education programs in four school districts: Ridgewood, Paterson, West Deptford and Mount Laurel. In addition, NJN hosted a Family Fitness Webpage that featured clips from the CD.

**China Sports Exchange Program:** Council has received an invitation to set up a Senior Sports Exchange Program between Beijing, China, and the New Jersey Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. These talks are ongoing.

**Mayor's Wellness Campaign:** The Council has partnered with the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute on the development and promotion of a *Mayors Wellness Campaign* Toolbox that will equip mayors with the tools to develop and implement healthy living initiatives within a community setting. This campaign was launched in November 2005.

**Leaders' Academy for Healthy Community:** The Council will host this inaugural conference on May 12, 2006 at the Trenton Marriott, Lafayette Yard. This Leaders' Academy will provide valuable information and tools for individuals and communities for developing plans that promote health and physical activity at the local level. Community teams that attend the Leaders' Academy are eligible to apply for a competitive mini grant of \$2500.00 to launch or continue a community effort. A request for application for the mini grants and Leaders' Academy was released at the League of Municipalities Conference in November 2005. Mini grant awards will be made at the May 12, 2006 Academy. This Academy is an ideal fit with the *Mayors Wellness Campaign*.

**National Association for Health and Fitness (NAHF):** As a member of the NAHF, the Council is able to network through conference calls and share resources and ideas with the other state fitness councils. Another benefit of this membership is that it creates an opportunity for a close alliance with the

President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, the American Council for Fitness and Nutrition and the National Council for the Promotion of Physical Activities. Former Council Chair Ben Schaffer, was selected as the Outstanding NAHF Council Member of the Year and was presented with the award at the annual NAHF conference in 2005 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

**Common Ground Conference:** Rutgers The State University worked with a planning team to create a conference that encouraged all branches of government to work together to help build safe and healthier New Jersey communities. Council members attended and supported this event and the concept it embraced.

**Council Speakers Bureau:** Speaking at conferences, workshops and to the general public about health and fitness is another tool the Council uses to promote health and fitness in New Jersey.

**Get Fit New Jersey:** The creation of this book is being coordinated by a Council team. To accomplish the goal of creating the book, appointed Council members and other resource members were asked to write a chapter related to their field of expertise. The book was graphically designed by DHSS Printing and Graphics and it is anticipated that the book will be available for distribution to the public via the webpage and CD. It is hoped that this resource will assist New Jersey residents to live healthy, active lives.

### **Meet the Council Members**

#### **James McConville III**

Council Chairperson

Physical Educator, Long Branch School District, Monmouth County

#### **Gerald Collincini**

Council Vice-Chairperson

New Jersey Recreation and Parks Association\*

#### **Benjamin Schaffer**

Immediate Past Chairperson from 1999 to 2005

New Jersey Association for Health, Physical Education Recreation and Dance\*

#### **Patricia Swartz**

Council Treasurer

Department of Community Affairs, Office of Recreation

#### **John Maniglia**

Council Business Secretary

Educator and Coach, Pennsville School District, Salem County

**Richard Levandowski, MD**

Physician, Medical Society of New Jersey\*

**Robert Baly**

Educator, New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association\*

**Matthew Brzycki**

Coordinator of Recreational Fitness and Wellness Programs, Princeton University

**Timothy Michael Hosea, MD**

UMDNJ and Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

**Jeff Marmelstein**

Director of Fitness & Personal Training, The Club at Woodbridge

**Mary Jane Myslinski, EdD**

Associate Professor in the Doctoral Program in Physical Therapy, UMDNJ - School of Health Related Professionals

**Sharon Roerty, AICP/PP**

Director for Community Programs, National Center for Bicycling and Walking

**Felicia Stoler, RD**

Nutritionist, President New Jersey Dietetic Association 2005

**Joanne VanSant**

Director of Development, New Jersey Lung Association

**Katherine Werheim**

Exercise Physiologist, Drew University

**Celeste Andriot Wood**

Ex-Officio Member, Assistant Commissioner  
Department of Health and Senior Services  
Division of Family Health Services

\*organization appointments required by legislation

**Council Staff Member**

**Karin Mille, RD**

Nutritionist, Department of Health and Senior Services  
Division of Family Health Services, Child and Adolescent Health Program

**Department of Health and Senior Services Resource People**



**Maryann Ellsworth, RD**

Nutritionist, Department of Health and Senior Services  
Division of Family Services, WIC and 5 A Day Program

**Susan Lachenmayr**

Health Educator, Department of Health and Senior Services  
Division of Aging and Community Services, Older Adult Health and Wellness

**Resource People**

**Linda Morse, RN**

Manager, Department of Education  
Bureau of Core Curriculum Content Standards,  
Office of Academic and Professional Standards

**Nancy Vitalone-Raccaro, EdD**

Educator with expertise in early childhood special education

**John Gallucci, Jr.**

Director of the Saint Barnabas Athlete Training Center, Saint Barnabas Health  
Care System and Athletic Trainer for the New York/New Jersey MetroStars

**James McCall, PhD**

Coordinator, Health and Physical Education, Department of Education,

**A Look to the Future**

**Get Fit NJ Book Marketing:** The goal of the authors was to create the book and to distribute it to as many New Jersey residents as possible. The first step is nearly complete. Posting the book on the State Health Department webpage will increase the distribution potential.

**Leaders' Academy for Healthy Community Development:** As reported, this Academy will be offered in the spring of 2006. It is anticipated that 150 people will be trained to develop plans that promote health and physical activity at the local level. Through a competitive grant process, 10 - 20 communities will be awarded mini-grants to fund the proposal. This Academy will be offered on an annual basis so that gradually all municipalities will have the opportunity to receive funds to launch or continue efforts aimed at community wellness. This offering is an ideal adjunct to the *Mayors Wellness Campaign*.

**NJCPFS Awards Dinner:** The Council will consider staging an annual awards dinner. The purpose of an annual awards event is to recognize the achievements of individuals, organizations, companies and institutions for their



outstanding achievements in the promotion and delivery of health and physical fitness programs.

**Safe Biking and Walking:** The Council will continue to support these important community initiatives. *Safe Routes to School*, youth biking initiatives and other similar programs will help to promote healthy lifestyles on a local level.

**Collaboration and Partnering including:**

- **President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (PCPFS)** is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary during 2006. The NJCPFS will be participating in the scheduled national event by joining in the celebration and sharing programs and resources and to help make each state more active and healthier.
- **National Employees Health and Fitness:** The Council will continue to support the promotion of employee fitness through programs like the annual National Employees Fitness Day. Employee health and fitness programs benefit both employees and employers by increasing employee productivity, decreasing health care costs and improving employee morale
- **National Association of Health and Fitness:** The Council will continue to be part of this national network of state fitness councils and continue to share resources and programs.

**From the Immediate Past Council Chairman, Benjamin Schaffer**

**'The Gift of Fitness'**

The gift of fitness is a gift we either chose to take advantage of resulting in healthy energetic life styles or we chose to ignore and eventually suffer the consequences. The gift is free to every one willing to take the time to earn it. This gift does not have to take a lot of work and can be fun and exciting to experience. The idea that the gift of fitness takes a lot of work is very misleading. Fitness can be achieved by simply walking a little further, a little faster and enjoyable basic movement each day. A sedentary life style, over-eating, abuse of drugs or alcohol are personal decisions that often replaces commitment to fitness. Give this gift of fitness to your self and then to others. Feeling better, looking better and experiencing your full potential is your reward.