American Fitness Index™ Improves Lifestyles in 50 Cities

How does your city measure up? Yesterday, the American Fitness Index™ (AFI) expanded to include the 50 largest cities in the United States. At the 2008 Annual Meeting, the AFI program released pilot-phase rankings of 16 of the largest cities in the United States, based on various health indicators. The AFI program is supported by the WellPoint Foundation.

Walter Thompson, Ph.D., FACSM, and chairman of the AFI Advisory Board, made a special announcement of the top-50-cities rankings yesterday prior to the exhibit hall opening reception. The top-ranked city in the United States was Washington, D.C., closely followed by Minneapolis/St. Paul, Denver, San Francisco, and Boston. Cities were measured based on their metropolitan statistical areas, which include nearby suburbs.

The AFI is based on data collected by researchers at the Indiana University School of Medicine, and includes various health promotion partners from around the nation. The expanded AFI report includes detailed data on chronic disease, health, community and environmental indicators for each city.

The program also recently released a community action guide, designed to give communities a how-to on improving their ranking or just becoming a healthier place to live. National and local representatives convened in Dallas in March to build the guide.

The AFI advisory board is comprised of numerous dedicated ACSM members. For more information about the program and to learn how you can get involved in your community, visit www.americanfitnessindex.org.
ACSM Forges Ahead with Policy and Advocacy Initiatives

ACSM continues to be a key player in policy and advocacy initiatives at local, state and national levels. The Activity & Health Policy Network – developed by ACSM in 2006 following a historic scientific roundtable in Washington, D.C., that included the nation’s top physical activity and health organizations – has been integral in creating policy solutions that move America toward better health.

All Network activities further six key goals:
2. Achieve a national behavior change program (discussion underway with members of Congress and presidential transition teams).
3. Create a national physical activity plan (planning underway).
4. Facilitate increased federal research in physical activity.
5. Create a policy agenda (already engaged in outreach to Presidential, Congressional, and state leaders).
6. Focus on key populations and settings.

i. Populations (Youth, Older Adult, Racial and Ethnic Minorities, Persons with Disabilities)

ii. Settings (Schools, Communities and the Built Environment, Worksites, Healthcare)

In addition to actively generating support for legislation that enhances the role of physical activity in America and achieves these six goals, the Network and its organizational partners also recently issued a call to action to President Barack Obama, encouraging him to combat the nation’s health problems through decreasing physical inactivity. The 33 organizations that signed on to the letter included the American Dietetic Association, American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation, Trust for America’s Health, and more.

ACSM’s advocacy initiatives also include the Key Contacts Network, an action-oriented group that allows ACSM members to become policy advocates in their local communities.

Visit www.activitypolicy.org

Attend the network launch today at 3:15 p.m. in room 607 at the Convention Center.
ACSM Increasing Global Presence through Agita Mundo Partnership

What is “Agita Mundo”? Literally translated, it’s “agitate the world,” but for ACSM, it’s a partnership that’s making physical activity a global priority.

The Agita Mundo Network is part of CELAFISCs (Centro de Estudos do Laboratório de Aptidão Física de São Caetano do Sul), a Brazil-based organization that encourages research, advocacy and community education for physical activity and health. The Agita Mundo Network facilitates “World Day for Physical Activity,” a campaign promoting physical activity that mobilized more than one million participants in more than 6,000 events around the world. This April, participants from Venezuela to South Africa to Europe participated in World Day for Physical Activity.

ACSM facilitated an event in its headquarters city of Indianapolis on April 6, drawing hundreds of participants to a local health club, which offered free day passes and fitness classes. The event was broadcast on several Indianapolis television stations, reaching more than 200,000 viewers. In addition, ACSM’s Regional Chapters convened events around the United States.

ACSM’s partnership with Agita Mundo will continue to grow, building capacity and increasing awareness of Agita Mundo and World Day for Physical Activity among ACSM members and the general public.

Foundation Update: Silent Auction, Drinkwater fund

The Silent Auction might get you a signed football by a favorite athlete or cool new fitness gear, but there’s much more at stake than scoring a neat new gadget. The auction exists to fund scientific research through the ACSM Foundation’s research grant program, which primarily supports young investigators making initial contributions to furthering the health sciences.

Check out the auction in Hall F. Bidding closes 1 p.m. Friday, May 29.

Items in this year’s auction include autographed Wheaties boxes by triathlete Hunter Kemper and decathlete Bryan Clay; a customized TitanFlex transition road bike; professional sports memorabilia; and much more. Last year’s auction raised more than $12,000 for the research grant program. Visit the Silent Auction in the Exhibit Hall to bid on items and support important advances in sports medicine and exercise science.

The ACSM Foundation has also been successful in its efforts with the Barbara L. Drinkwater fund, established to make scientific discoveries in and clinical progress in the vital area of women’s health. In just a year, ACSM members have donated more than $13,000 to the fund. Want to contribute? E-mail Jessica Hancock at jhancock@acsm.org.

Youth Sports Expert to Speak at Communications Colloquium

Friday, May 29
8-8:50 a.m.
Room 204, Convention Center

Join author and expert Mark Hyman at ACSM’s annual communications colloquium. Hyman is a sports writer for BusinessWeek and former sports reporter for the Baltimore Sun.

Hyman’s insightful book, Until It Hurts, focuses on America’s infatuation with young athletes and the factors that have shaped today’s sports culture.

Hyman will lead a discussion with sports medicine and exercise science professionals on how safe, responsible information can help protect young athletes.

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Tomorrow’s Highlights, Today

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS ON FRIDAY, MAY 29

• 6:30 a.m.: Gisolfi Fun Run
  Convention Center

• 8 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.: Scientific and clinical sessions
  Various

• 9:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.: Exhibit Hall Open
  Convention Center, 4E

• 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.: Dill Historical Lecture
  Convention Center, 6B

• 11:45 – 12:45 p.m.: Student Meet the Expert session
  Sheraton Seattle, Metropolitan A

• 7 – 10 p.m.: Cocktail reception and awards banquet, Sheraton Seattle, Metropolitan Ballroom

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Visit NuStep booth #223 and meet ACSM member, Sandra A. Billinger, PT, PhD, FAHA, from the University of Kansas Medical Center and developer of the new two exercise protocols using the NuStep.

Available times to meet Dr. Billinger in the NuStep booth
Wednesday, May 27 from 6:30-8:30pm
Thursday, May 28 from 11:45am-3pm
Friday, May 29 from 11:45am-3pm

Bring this ad to NuStep booth #223 to receive free shipping on any order placed by June 5, 2009.

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