



CITY OF RAPID CITY

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA 57701

Department of Parks and Recreation

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March 2, 2009

Dr. Jay Maddock
Office of Public Health Studies
University of Hawai'i at Manoa
Biomedical Sciences D209
1960 East West Road
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dr. Jay Maddock:

I understand that West Virginia University is applying for a grant from the National Institutes of Health to test the possible success of a communitywide campaign to promote walking among the 50- to 75-year-olds who do not get enough exercise. This campaign sounds like it would be quite helpful to our community. Your efforts to encourage healthy walking should help reduce the risk for overweight, obesity, breast cancer, colon cancer, blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes. I understand that increased physical activity can reduce the risk for falls, help prevent osteoporosis, counter depression, and relieve stress.

We will do whatever we can to make this effort successful in South Dakota. However, our city is not committing any financial resources to this initiative.

Moreover, I also understand that five intervention cities will be selected at random from among 17 possible cities. I also understand that the actual intervention planning activities would begin in either 2010 or 2012.

Sincerely,

Alan Hanks, Mayor
City of Rapid City



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

11 February 2009

RE: Possible Physical Activity Campaign for your Community

Dear Mayor Hanks:

As indicated, we at the schools of public health at West Virginia University and the University of Hawaii, are making application to the National Institutes of Health for a grant to promote physical activity and exercise in five cities across the United States between 2009 and 2014. Your city is being considered for one of the interventions. Our goal is to determine if another city based campaign, *Wheeling Walks*, might be successful in South Dakota.

Unlike other physical activity campaigns, this one would promote walking among the 50- to 75-year-olds who do not get much exercise. We have selected 17 possible cities (population 20,000 to 200,000) across the nation, five of which will be selected at random to receive an intensive social marketing campaign and five of which will serve as comparison communities. In the comparison communities, nothing will happen other than a mail survey to policy makers and a telephone survey to 50- to 75-year-old residents to help us know what is going on in the communities.

For the intervention communities, there will be the following components:

- 1) Community Advisory Board** – We will work with you and other health professionals in your community to recruit approximately 25-50 people to serve as members of a community advisory board.
- 2) Paid Advertisements** – We will purchase paid ads on television, radio, and in the print media sufficient to reach at least 80% of the 50- to 75-year-old population with the messages (“walk at least 30 minutes daily”). To achieve this saturation, approximately 650 prime-time network television, 1500 radio, 1000 cable television, and 35 print ads will be purchased. To view the ads used in the *Wheeling Walks* campaign visit www.wheelingwalks.org and click on “Television ads” in the column on the right. These are the same ads used in *WV WALKS* and as a prototype for campaigns in Binghamton, NY, and in Hawaii.
- 3) Public Relations** – Specifically planned campaign media events (at least four in the eight-week period) will be conducted to attract media news coverage. We do this to communicate the campaign message on television, radio, and in newspapers. All public relations events are open to the public, and special invitations will be sent to public officials (mayor, town councils, county commissioners, and other elected representatives), sponsors, representatives of minority communities, state health department representatives, civic organizations officials, and other community leaders. Following the effective pattern established in *Wheeling Walks*, these public relations events may include:

WEEK 1--Campaign kickoff press conference
WEEK 2--Annual community walking challenge
WEEK 4--Physicians’ press conference urging
the community to walk

WEEK 6--Intergenerational walk with local
senior citizen sponsorship
WEEK 7--Presidents’ Walking Fitness Cup
WEEK 8--Campaign finale press conference

Similar activities in other communities attracted some 100 news stories and communicated the “walk at least 30 minutes daily” message in prime time news reaching some 80% of the target population.

- 4) **Community Health Activities** –These activities enhance social support, build walking skills, and promote policy and environmental change as a means to increase physical activity and exercise. For instance, there can be worksite and faith-based programs; physician’s “prescriptions for walking;” weekly educational features in newspapers or media specials on local television stations; a United Way-type thermometer displaying miles-walked-to-date at a prominent city location; activities focusing on family fun; celebrity walks led by mayors, council members, other dignitaries; short presentations to civic, faith-based and worksite groups emphasizing the fitness and health benefits of walking.
- 5) **Website** -- Similar to that of *Wheeling Walks*, the website would provide news about community walking events, links to articles in the media, personal stories about walking, information on how to safely begin a walking program, overcoming barriers, and how to locate and initiate community walking groups or leagues.

The *Wheeling Walks* model has been tested and successfully demonstrated to promote physical activity behavior change. Now, with assistance from the National Institutes of Health, we hope to bring the program to five more cities throughout the U.S. to further test its effectiveness. We expect we will experience success similar to what was achieved in Wheeling, West Virginia.

We hope you are interested in being involved and can write a letter indicating a willingness to have us work with your community (a sample letter is enclosed). Remember, however, the intervention city will be chosen at random. The chances of your city being selected are about 30%. Do not hesitate to email (wreger@hsc.wvu.edu) or to call me at any time (304/293-0763).

Cordially,

Dr. Bill Reger-Nash
Director
Nationwide Social Marketing Walking Trial

*Mere
suggestion
of a Name*

RAPID CITY WALKS

30+ Minutes Daily

An intensive 8-week campaign promoting 30+ minutes of moderate-intensive daily walking in accordance with the Surgeon General's recommendation for health-promoting physical activity.

September 1 – October 27, 2009

KICK OFF Celebration – September 1, 2009

PAID television, cable, radio, and newspaper ads

Celebrity / intergenerational Walks

Community educational activities

Neighbor walking groups

Weekly newspaper column

Weekly lecture series

Weekly media events

Mayor's Walking Fitness Cup

Walking Challenges

Website



The ads, events, and activities are designed to inform local residents of the benefits of walking and to encourage and support regular walking. Rapid City will be the center of activities but the TV, radio, and newspaper ads and coverage will be broadcast and motivate participants throughout all your region of South Dakota. Supportive community activities will be encouraged all over the area.

For more information, VISIT: www.wheelingwalks.org and www.wvwalks.org
or write Dr. Bill Reger-Nash, WVU Community Medicine, Morgantown, WV 26506-9190 - wreger@hsc.wvu.edu