

Case Studies in Action: Healthy Charlotte Council



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The release of the 2013 ACSM American Fitness Index® (AFI) Annual Report positioned Charlotte, North Carolina 36th out of the 50 largest Metro areas in the country—hardly a ranking to brag about...



That was precisely the reaction of Michael Tarwater, CEO of Carolinas Healthcare System and soon to be Chair of the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce, one of the largest and most active chambers in the U.S. For Tarwater, immediate questions loomed: Why were Charlotte's rankings so low? What's behind these rankings? What factors comprise the Index? And probably most important, what has to happen for Charlotte to improve in the rankings?

What immediately followed on the heels of the 2013 AFI rankings announcement is a great story of leadership, commitment, collaboration and lots of energy, enthusiasm and a simply stated goal that can best be described as Healthy Charlotte's "True North"—to move into the top 10 rankings of the ACSM American Fitness Index® within five years.

americanfitnessindex.org

What is Charlotte doing to move the needle?

- Tarwater selected "Healthy Charlotte" as theme for his year as Chamber Chair
- Chamber established Healthy Charlotte Council to establish longevity and to integrate efforts into the Chamber's overall program of work
- Council is co-chaired by executives from two major healthcare systems—Carolinas Healthcare System and Novant Health
- Programs are being developed to align three priorities: nutrition, physical activity and tobacco use
- A scorecard has been developed to track all progress of the council against the master goal of improving Charlotte's AFI ranking

Lessons learned...

- Coalition building: successful coalitions engage diverse representatives of community
- Leadership: actively-engaged leaders are typically someone who is already passionate about the issue
- Monitoring and Evaluation: evaluation occurs at every phase of project development



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