

Serendipity in D.C.: First Lady's Health Center Visit Generates High-Level Visibility for *We Can!*[™]

It was a day of celebration at Unity Healthcare's Upper Cardozo Health Center on June 29, 2009, when First Lady Michelle Obama made a short trip from Pennsylvania Avenue to the diverse, primarily Latino, Washington D.C. neighborhood of Columbia Heights where the center runs a number of health programs, including ***We Can!***

The purpose of her visit was to announce \$851 million in grants to health centers through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

"Community health centers provide care to the Americans who need it most, and their work has never been more important," said the First Lady.

"These grants will help Unity's Upper Cardozo and thousands of centers across the country expand and serve more Americans who simply can't afford insurance coverage anymore."

Prior to making the announcement, the First Lady participated in a roundtable discussion with several healthcare providers and patients to learn about the Center's services. One of the providers present was Jessica Wallace, a Physician Assistant and Project Coordinator of their ***We Can!*** program.

"We shared how ***We Can!*** is helping families in our community learn lifestyle choices that help them maintain a healthy weight," said Wallace. "We also discussed the importance of conducting program evaluations to demonstrate success; we now know that our families have increased their health knowledge and have made healthy behavior changes at home, and that those changes have affected health outcomes like weight and body mass index (BMI). The majority of our parents and children have been able to maintain or decrease their BMI over time—one woman has even lost over 40 pounds!"

The Center has been running an adapted ***We Can!*** curriculum in Spanish for the local community since April 2008; staff have offered a total of 40 classes in the clinic to date. More than 225 participants have learned about how improved nutrition, increased physical activity, and decreased screen time can help control weight.

The First Lady and her staff were so interested in what they learned about ***We Can!*** that Wallace and Unity's Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Aysha Corbett, were invited to a discussion at the White House Office of the First Lady's staff to provide more details about their program. During that September 16 meeting, Wallace presented them with a packet of letters from ***We Can!*** families, and a framed group photograph. The meeting went well, and further demonstrates the First Lady's commitment to programs that support healthy families, as well as her desire to engage with her new neighbors in Washington, DC.



Photo courtesy of Unity Health Care, Inc.

Scholastic Announces Grand Prize Winner in Healthy Lifestyles Contest

Teamwork.

It's what Joseph Grant, the Grand Prize Winner of Scholastic's "Make it Happen!" essay contest, says keeps him healthy. "Staying Healthy Together" is the title of the first grader's winning essay.

"My mom and I work together as a team to stay healthy. I eat right because my mom shows me how to food shop. We prepare a grocery list together, and she always includes fruits, vegetables for snacks, and we choose poultry and fish instead of red meat," said Joseph in part of his winning essay. "I run and play with my friends, which keeps me fit. TV is a special treat on family night... Mom says too much TV is no good."

"The fact that Joseph's essay echoes our three **We Can!** core messages—eat more nutritiously, increase your physical activity, and limit screen time—is uplifting news since it shows that our program messages are resonating with families across the nation," said Karen Donato, S.M., **We Can!** program coordinator. "We thank Scholastic and SUBWAY® Restaurants for making this possible by bringing **We Can!** messages—and news of our curricula and resources—to classrooms, homes and stores from coast to coast."

Working together, **We Can!**, SUBWAY® Restaurants and Scholastic magazine are spreading program information on how to maintain a healthy weight to millions of Americans through a partnership that made this contest possible. The contest asked parents to have their child tell a personal success story about eating better, staying active and spending less time in front of the TV or computer.

Joseph's reward includes \$5,000 of athletic equipment that will be donated to his school, Pride Christian Academy; a \$500 Scholastic gift basket; a \$100 SUBWAY® Restaurants card; and publication of his story online and in the Scholastic *Parent & Child* magazine.

There were six runners-up, all of whom received the Scholastic gift basket and the \$100 SUBWAY® Restaurants card. Two are from Ohio, two from the Deep South (Mississippi and Kentucky), one from the West Coast (California) and another—like Joseph—from Pennsylvania.

To obtain a copy of Scholastic's **We Can!** poster and other materials, cut and paste this link into your Web browser: www.scholastic.com/wecan.

Thanks to everyone who entered the

Make It Happen! Contest

Children who entered were encouraged to write a story about a personal accomplishment that had made them or their family healthy, stay active, or limit recreational screen time.

And the Winner is...

"STAYING HEALTHY TOGETHER"

by Joseph Grant

My mom and I work together as a team to stay healthy. I eat right because my mom shows me how to food shop. We prepare a grocery list together and she always includes fruits, vegetables for snacks and we choose poultry and fish instead of red meat. Mom does let me snack and usually I choose the water ice with no sugar, cereal or cereal sticks—great for snacking. To keep fit, I take Karate classes which teaches me a lot of things about staying strong and healthy and being a better me. Mom and I do a lot of walking together and Mom always says, take the steps first. I run and play with my friends which keeps me fit. TV is a special treat on family night and Mom and I always watch a family movie together. I like the old cartoons but Mom says too much TV is no good. TV time is limited to more fun things with friends and family. I like to stay healthy and that's why I love my Mom because we can do it together!

Visit Scholastic.com/wecan for more information and resources

Healthy Habits

Make healthy food choices and try to make sure your children get 60 minutes of physical activity every day. Encourage every member of your family to increase daily physical activity and have fun at the same time. Here are some suggestions to consider.

Make healthy food choices

Choose low fat meat and dairy products, whole grain breads and cereals, and plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. For helpful resources, visit www.kids.usda.gov

Bring others into it

Invite friends and family to go walking with you and your child. Plan a party with physically active games and activities for your family and friends.

Stay motivated

Be physically active with friends who are at the same skill level as you are. Create opportunities to be active with friends.

Use available resources

Identify recreational, community resources available in your community. Visit www.kids.usda.gov for more ideas and to find out if there is a **We Can!** store nearby that has great!

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