



Municipality of Anchorage

For Immediate Release:

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Anchorage, Alaska Awarded Medals Recognizing Achievements in Addressing Childhood Obesity through Let's Move! Cities, Towns and Counties

Anchorage, Alaska – The National League of Cities (NLC) has recognized Assembly Members Elvi Gray-Jackson and Dick Traini for taking the lead in recognizing recent completion of key health and wellness goals for *Let's Move! Cities, Towns and Counties* (LMCTC). LMCTC is a major component of First Lady Michelle Obama's comprehensive *Let's Move!* Initiative which is dedicated to solving the childhood obesity epidemic within a generation. LMCTC calls upon local elected officials to adopt sustainable and holistic policies that improve communities' access to healthy affordable food and opportunities for physical activity through five goal areas.

"We congratulate and commend Anchorage for your efforts to improve the health of your community's children and families," said NLC President Chris Coleman, Mayor of Saint Paul, Minnesota. *"Through the leadership and dedication of local elected officials in cities, towns and counties across the country, we are beginning to see a measurable decrease in obesity rates and a cultural shift towards health."*

Anchorage received five awards! One Bronze and one Silver medal were awarded because *Anchorage's Goal 1* achievements were successful in taking action to improve accessibility to healthy affordable food educational settings. The Bronze and Silver medals were given for having an active interagency collaboration supporting early care and education programs with professional development training and Let's Move Child Care resources. The NLC recognized the approaches and efforts in place to promote participation in LMCTC.

Our awards for achievements toward Goal V focus on promoting physical activity. We received a bronze medal because our Municipal Parks and Recreation Department has mapped all our existing play spaces, and a silver was given for not only mapping all play spaces but also creating a needs assessment and developing an action plan on how we can increase access to play. All the work that has been done and hours spent to create our three policies, programs or initiatives which will create access to play has been recognized and resulted in the top honor of a Gold medal! The work will continue to increase access by revitalizing playgrounds, creating trail systems as well as developing joint use agreements.

"Anchorage joins over 400 Cities where local elected officials have accepted First Lady Michelle Obama's call to adopt sustainable, long-term and holistic approaches to

addressing childhood obesity through the pursuit of five goals. This initiative is a wonderful step toward creating a healthy community.” said Assembly Member Elvi Gray-Jackson. “I am excited to have the participation of community health care providers, Anchorage Economic Development Corporation, Anchorage School District, Municipal Health Department, thread, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, University of Alaska Anchorage, United Way of Anchorage and several others who are all working together to make our community the healthiest in the nation.”

NLC is working in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and with the support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Association of Counties and other nonprofit organizations, to assist local elected officials who join LMCTC as they implement policy and environmental changes to prevent childhood obesity. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has awarded NLC a grant to provide technical assistance to local elected officials working to create healthier communities and prevent childhood obesity, including those participating in LMCTC.

For more information about LMCTC and *Anchorage’s* accomplishments, visit www.HealthyCommunitiesHealthyFuture.org.

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