



# YOUR WEIGHT MATTERS | NATIONAL CONVENTION 2025 –

## Education, Advocacy and Community in Action

*by Gianna Bevilacqua, OAC Communications Coordinator*

The OAC's 13<sup>th</sup> annual *Your Weight Matters* National Convention was a milestone celebration. Nearly 300 people traveled from across the globe to Washington, DC, for three days of education, advocacy and connection — an unforgettable experience that marked the OAC's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. From record-breaking advocacy efforts on Capitol Hill to the largest youth and family program in OAC history, YWM2025 reflected two decades of growth, determination and hope for people living with obesity.



## Learning, Growing and Advocating Together

This year's convention delivered one of the most impactful lineups in OAC history. Expert speakers from diverse backgrounds — obesity medicine, nutrition and mental health — shared science-based education and practical strategies. Sessions explored the complexity of weight, the impact of stigma, the role of mental health and ways families can build healthy habits together.

Meanwhile, during our Advocacy Hill Day, 75 OAC advocates from nearly 30 states organized into 14 teams and met with Members of Congress in 59 total meetings. They shared personal stories, highlighted barriers to care and called for policies that improve access to treatment, prevention and research. Many advocates were stepping onto Capitol Hill for the very first time and left determined to continue their efforts back home.

OAC's Thrive Together Youth and Families Program was another highlight of the weekend, bringing 20 families to Washington, DC. The program created a safe space where young people could not only learn about body image, mental health and obesity care, but also find real connection. Teens formed friendships with peers who shared similar experiences, laughed together, and supported one another in ways only they could truly understand. Just as moving was watching parents and caregivers connect, share their stories, and realize they were not alone in navigating the challenges of supporting a child affected by obesity. Together, these moments were a powerful reminder of the heart of OAC: no one should feel alone in their journey.

# What YWM2025 Meant to Attendees

The most powerful part of the *Your Weight Matters* National Convention is always the people. Year after year, attendees share how much it means to gather in a space filled with encouragement and belonging.

Here are just a few of their experiences from YWM2025:



*"I attended YWM2025 this year because I needed a recharge in my own journey. I had so much fun and support when I first attended the OAC Convention back in 2018 in Denver that I knew, deep down, I always wanted to be a bigger part of what the OAC was building. This time around, I was a little nervous but mostly excited. I knew many familiar faces would be there again, and I also knew I'd make new connections—because that's just the kind of place the OAC is. More than anything, I wanted to get back to a space where I truly belonged. A place where people got me, believed in me, and rooted for me without judgment."*

— Jess Perreca, Past Attendee/  
Scholarship Recipient



*"Attending my first Obesity Action Coalition National Conference was an uplifting and truly unforgettable experience. I discovered fascinating insights into the science of obesity and learned about exciting new treatments that bring hope for the future. Along the way, I met amazing new friends who share a passion for making a positive difference. I left feeling energized, joyful, and inspired to join the OAC in furthering its important mission to advocate and take action on obesity-related issues that touch the lives of everyday people."*

— Nate Platt,  
First-time Attendee



*"OAC gave me hope. But most of all, the Thrive program created a sense of inclusion and understanding while helping me understand my disease."*

— Nick Hackenburg,  
Thrive Together  
Program Attendee



## Carrying the Momentum Forward

As we reflect on this year's National Convention, one thing is clear: this community is stronger than ever. From the science shared in the session rooms to the voices raised on Capitol Hill, every moment reflected the power of connection and the determination to create a better world for people with obesity.

If you missed the event this year, make plans now to join us next year! We are excited to announce that the *Your Weight Matters* National Convention 2026 will take place in Orlando, Florida, July 23–25, 2026. Visit [YWMConvention.com](http://YWMConvention.com) to sign up for email alerts and be the first to know when the room block and registration open. Don't miss your chance to be part of another unforgettable weekend of education, advocacy and community.

YWM2025 National Convention events were made possible through the generosity of OAC members combined with the commitment of our National Sponsors, ensuring that the Convention continues to provide world-class education, advocacy opportunities and community connection. Sponsors of the 2025 Convention include Platinum Level — Eli Lilly and Company, Novo Nordisk; Gold Level — Boehringer Ingelheim; Silver Level — Amgen, Rhythm Pharmaceuticals; Bronze Level — Boston Scientific, Currax Pharmaceuticals, Genentech, seca, Wave Life Sciences; and Patron Level — Bariatric Advantage, Zealand Pharma. To learn more, please visit [YWMConvention.com](http://YWMConvention.com).

### *About the Author:*

*Gianna Bevilacqua, OAC Communications Coordinator contributes to the creation of communication pieces, which include social media, newsletters, member emails, and more. She has a background working with nonprofit organizations and enjoys making a difference and being a part of a growing community. Gianna attended The State University of New York College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill, where she majored in Communications in Technology and minored in Marketing.*



**YOUR WEIGHT  
MATTERS** | NATIONAL  
CONVENTION

brought to you by the  
Obesity Action Coalition

**July 23-25, 2026**

**Renaissance Orlando at  
SeaWorld® Orlando, Florida**

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# ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



VIBRANT COMMUNITY



NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



ANNUAL CONVENTION



ADVOCACY



PUBLIC EDUCATION

## LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

### Through the OAC Community, you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
  - Community Discussion Forum
  - Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE**



**JOIN TODAY: GO TO [OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN](http://OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN)**

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