



OAC
Obesity Action Coalition

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

The Power of Change



Our Mission:

To elevate and empower those affected by obesity through education, advocacy and support.



Our Vision:

To raise awareness and improve access to the prevention and treatment of obesity, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination, elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health and offer a community of support for the individual affected.

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A Message from OAC's President & CEO and Chair of our Board of Directors

2023 was another remarkable year for the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) as we continued our advocacy, education, support, and awareness initiatives, focusing on elevating and empowering people living with obesity. We are honored to share with you a reflection on our success!

In 2023, we took bold steps to reshape the narrative surrounding obesity that affects people living with the disease. By challenging misconceptions and amplifying our voices, we've seen a shift in how topics such as treatment options and the harmful impacts of weight bias are discussed. But our efforts were not just about changing perceptions about the disease – they were about fostering a deeper sense of understanding and compassion. While our work this past year was a step in the right direction, there is still more work to be done, but we will lead the charge until every person is treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

This year, we also achieved significant progress with our advocacy efforts to improve access to care and treatment. Advocacy has always been at the core of our mission, and 2023 marked a year of accelerated action. We engaged with policymakers, stakeholders and the wider community to pave the way for legislative changes that aligned with our vision for a better future. The impact of our advocacy extended beyond immediate wins and laid the groundwork for further progress.

The power of the OAC lies within our Community. We hosted two *Your Weight Matters* Conventions – virtually and in person – where OAC Members came together to share experiences, insights, and a common commitment to our cause. We celebrated the diversity within our community, recognizing that our strength lies in our unity.

Our successes are only possible with our dedicated members, volunteers and donors. Because of your support, we have made strides in creating change for those living with obesity in 2023. We are so very grateful for the generosity of our Community, which supports us in our mission to elevate and empower people affected by obesity every day.

As we reflect on the milestones of 2023, we look toward the future with optimism and determination. The path ahead is illuminated by the successes of the past. Our commitment to shifting narratives, strengthening our community and igniting change remains unwavering. In the coming year, we envision even greater strides, deeper connections and a more profound impact on the world around us. Together, we will continue to elevate and empower people affected by obesity every day.



Joe Nadglowski,
President & CEO



Kristal Hartman,
Chair of the National Board of Directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our National Board of Directors

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John Scott, MD



SHIFTING THE NARRATIVE

As the nation's leading grassroots obesity organization, the OAC tirelessly raises awareness about obesity, access to care, weight bias, and related issues. Our efforts have led to a significant shift in how society perceives obesity in recent years. We're proud to be the largest and longest-standing collective voice for individuals affected by obesity.

In 2023, the OAC strongly supported the scientific understanding of obesity as a disease and provided steadfast support to those impacted by it.



Collaborating with A24 on The Whale

Before *The Whale* was produced, A24 engaged OAC to give insight into the challenges faced by the individuals living with obesity. Our aim was to ensure that the portrayal of severe obesity in the film was both accurate and respectful, countering stereotypes often seen common in mainstream media.

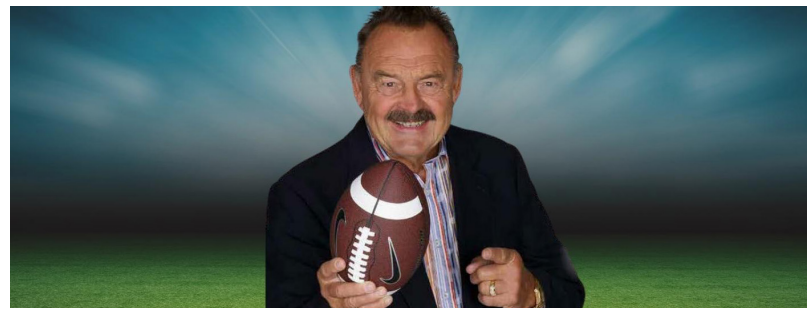
In January, we hosted a one-of-a-kind discussion, "The Whale: In Conversation with OAC," featuring lead actor Brendan Fraser, playwright Sam Hunter, and OAC volunteers. Led by OAC President and CEO Joe Nadglowski, this heartfelt discussion explored the profound impact of the film's portrayal of severe obesity. Fraser shared insights gained from conversations with OAC Community Members, emphasizing his commitment to portraying Charlie responsibly. Hunter revealed how the story was authentically crafted from personal experiences.

Fraser's exceptional performance earned him an Oscar Award, highlighting the importance of authentic representation in cinema.



Interviewing Chicago Bears Legend, Dick Butkus

We had the privilege of interviewing the iconic Chicago Bears linebacker Dick Butkus before his passing in late 2023. We are saddened by Mr. Butkus' passing, but feel honored to have had the opportunity to sit down with him and his son Matt for an interview published in our Fall 2023 edition of *Weight Matters Magazine*. The father duo eloquently emphasized the significance of prioritizing health and weight management for personal well-being and the well-being of loved ones, leaving a lasting impression with their invaluable insights.



Teaming Up with Powerhouse Allies

In 2023, we developed allied partnerships with organizations and companies that share our mission of supporting and empowering individuals in their pursuit of better health and well-being.

Through our collaboration with the NFL Alumni Association, we brought football legends Ottis Anderson and Richard Walker to our Your Weight Matters Engage Convention! Anderson, running back for the St. Louis Cardinals and New York Giants, and Walker, who played seven seasons in the North American Football League, presented *Taking Charge of Your Health with Football Legends*, where they discussed their weight and health journeys, shed light on the unique challenges faced by men in treating obesity, and explored strategies to overcome weight bias.

We joined forces with American Diabetes Association (ADA) to strengthen our advocacy efforts in 2023. Together, we co-hosted a policy roundtable in Washington, DC, that brought leaders from federal agencies and Capitol Hill to discuss opportunities and barriers to obesity care in government programs. This was the first time so many leaders from different parts of government came together to discuss what's working and identify solutions to improve access to obesity care!

SHIFTING THE NARRATIVE

Expanding Obesity Education

Remaining steadfast in the belief that education is the foundation of change, in 2023, we reaffirmed our commitment to offering accessible and reliable education. We strengthened our educational initiatives, empowering individuals with knowledge and creating a more informed and empathetic society.

We provided more than 200,000 pieces of science-based educational resources at no cost to individuals seeking essential health information, marking our highest distribution volume in a single year!

We expanded our extensive collection of free and low-cost resources, including:

- **OAC TV and Virtual Events:** We hosted 24 unique digital programs, including episodes of OAC TV's Health Talks and Fresh Perspectives and our annual *Your Weight Matters* Virtual Convention, bringing high-quality, science-based education straight to the homes of tens of thousands of individuals. Our digital programs saw nearly 13.3K views!
- **OAC Resource Library:** We produced fresh content for our digital library, adding more than 50 brand-new articles, brochures, videos and more. We utilized opportunities to empower our Community by leveraging our resources, unlocking premium articles for occasions like Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, giving everyone the opportunity to learn from experts.

- **Weight Matters Magazine:** We published our quarterly magazine that was distributed more than 80,000 times to Community Members, health care providers, donors, and volunteers. This quarterly publication included 50 brand-new articles designed to support and inform.

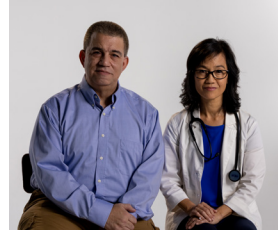


Amplifying Our Public Awareness Initiatives

Obesity Care Week 2023: We hosted another dynamic, week-long public awareness initiative dedicated to changing

the way we care for and about obesity. The week focused on raising awareness about what the disease of obesity is – and isn't, providing valuable, science-based resources on weight and health, and creating a more positive and impactful relationship between a patient and their healthcare provider.

One hundred and thirty four Champion organizations and individuals from 91 countries supported the initiative! Plus, nearly 1,000 letters were sent to 355 decision-makers urging them to expand access to obesity care. Obesity Care Week 2023 brought us another step closer to a society that understands, respects and accepts the complexities of obesity and values science and clinically-based care.



Supporting Families During Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

In September, we marked Childhood Obesity Awareness Month with a fundraising initiative aimed at putting an end to the bullying and peer victimization faced by children dealing with excess weight. Donors played a pivotal role in supporting children affected through OAC's comprehensive efforts in education, advocacy, and support.

During this month, we released a toolbox of resources for building healthy families. This toolbox featured nearly 30 guides, articles, videos and stories on understanding childhood obesity, developing healthy strategies for the whole family and overcoming weight-based bullying.

One of our proudest achievements of 2023 was the development of our Empower Early Youth Initiative, with our first-ever meet-up hosted during Childhood Obesity Awareness Month! At our *Your Weight Matters* Engage Convention, 11 families affected by childhood obesity came together to learn about obesity care and find meaningful connections with one another.



IGNITING CHANGE

Every day, the OAC and our vibrant Community passionately advocate for the fair treatment of all individuals, irrespective of their size or weight. Our unwavering commitment is aimed at fostering a world where weight bias is eliminated and comprehensive obesity care is universally accessible. Together, we're making strides toward equality, one step at a time.

- **Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA):** We worked tirelessly throughout the year to garner support for the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act (TROA), which would expand coverage for obesity treatments under Medicare. Our members nearly **1,500** letters urging their decision-makers to support this legislation. **This year, TROA was reintroduced in the 118th Congress and quickly gained support, ending the year with 64 Cosponsors in the House of Representatives and 18 in the Senate.**
- **OAC Hill Day:** In November, we were back in action in Washington, DC, on Capitol Hill! We met with 32 senators and representatives from 16 states to share the lived experiences of people affected by obesity and advocate for improved access to care. These meetings focused on support for TROA and opportunities to advance the legislation next year.
- **ImpactNOW:** We created a quarterly advocacy-focused newsletter showcasing our efforts and wins! This newsletter keeps our members up-to-date on the issues they care about and lets them know our taking action, along with their support, results in major strides toward equality for people with obesity.
- **Obesity Policy Roundtable:** In November, we joined forces with the American Diabetes Association and the Obesity Care Advocacy Network to co-host a policy roundtable in Washington, DC. The roundtable brought leaders from federal agencies and Capitol Hill to discuss opportunities and barriers to obesity care in government programs. This was the first time so many leaders from different parts of government, including Veterans Affairs, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US Office of Personnel Management, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and Congress, came together to discuss what's working and identify solutions to improve access to obesity care.
- **Food and Drug Administration (FDA):** We joined with partner obesity organizations to meet with the Commissioner of the FDA to discuss the need to update FDA Guidance for drug manufacturers of drugs for chronic weight management, the importance of including people living with obesity in drug clinical trials, and concerns over safety and compounding pharmacies. Following the meeting, the FDA announced that they plan to update the guidance for drug manufacturers.
- **Taking #OACAction:** OAC Advocates had the opportunity to take OAC Action across a variety of issues at the state and federal levels. Throughout the year, members made their voices heard, submitting nearly 14,000 letters, testifying in over 100 meetings with decision-makers and hearings!



IGNITING CHANGE

In 2023, we took action in 25 states to achieve major victories in our fight against weight bias and access to care!

Wins Against Weight Bias:



New York City approved a bill protecting people against weight-based discrimination in housing, public accommodation and the workplace.

Wins in Access to Care:



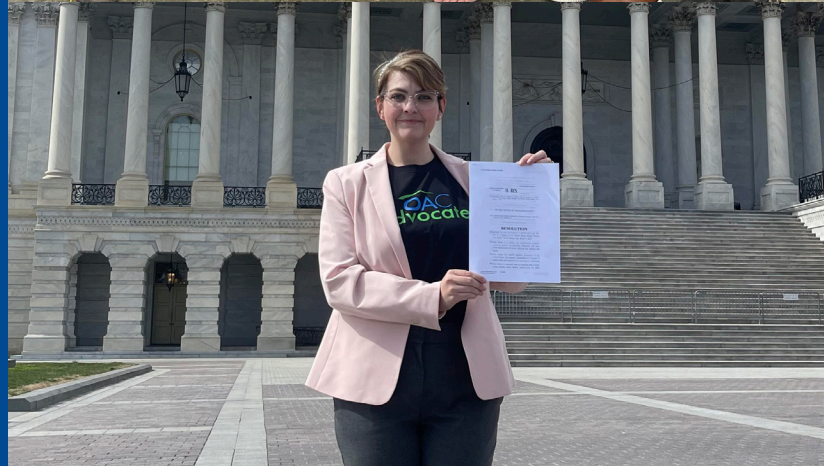
Delaware approved coverage for anti-obesity medications for state employees.



Connecticut approved a bill that expands Medicaid and Husky B coverage for prescription weight-loss drugs, nutrition counseling and bariatric surgery.



Illinois expanded Medicaid coverage to include anti-obesity medications.



We're making an impact internationally, too!

International Obesity Collaborative - The OAC, in partnership with The Obesity Society, launched a group of ten obesity organizations from across the US and around the globe to align on key messages and develop consensus statements. This year, the group finalized three consensus statements on body mass index, body positivity the five principles of obesity. These statements will advance fundamental truths about obesity around the world.

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY

Supporting and Uplifting Each Other is at the Heart of OAC's Mission

We have harnessed the power of this support to build a shared space for individuals to connect, all with the common goal of aiding each other on our journey to improved health.

The OAC Community is a vibrant and supportive environment where individuals facing similar challenges can find support, encouragement and connections. In 2023, we grew our membership base to more than **80,000** OAC Community Members.

We also hosted in-person and virtual events, introducing the OAC to thousands of individuals from across the world.

Your Weight Matters 2023 Convention

Our annual *Your Weight Matters* Virtual and Engage Conventions aimed to shift the narrative around obesity, emphasizing that obesity is not a person's fault, but each of us has the power to take back control of our health.

YWM2023-Virtual attendees walked away feeling empowered, motivated and inspired with newfound tools to apply to their everyday lives and a community of support to help them along the way.

During **YWM2023-Engage**, we introduced a brand-new youth-focused program. This initiative brought 11 kids aged 11-18 and their families from across the nation together for a one-of-a-kind experience designed specifically for teens living with obesity.

Families learned the science behind effective obesity care, while developing lasting connections with one another.

Some of the most heartwarming moments of the weekend were witnessing the teens smile, laugh and have fun with their new friends.

By the end of the weekend, many felt empowered to share their stories with the rest of the crowd. For the first time, these teens learned that they were not alone in their journey anymore because they had joined a powerful community of compassionate, supportive individuals who understood the challenges they faced.



The Rob Portinga Memorial Scholarship Fund: Turning Dreams Into Reality

The year of 2023 marked a momentous achievement: the realization of our goal to make attending the *Your Weight Matters Convention* an attainable dream for all! **Every single applicant of the Rob Portinga Memorial Scholarship was awarded a grant, paving the way for them to participate in the in-person convention.**

The success of the scholarship initiative is proof of the strength and compassion of our community and our belief in the power of education and connection.

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY

Our initiatives in 2023 not only expanded our community but also ensured that it became more diverse and inclusive. By fostering a sense of belonging and understanding the needs of our members, we continued to create a supportive environment for everyone affected by obesity.

- **Member Spotlights:** Throughout 2023, we encouraged our Community to connect through storytelling. We published 12 Member Spotlights on the OAC Blog and shared the stories through our newsletters and social media channels. These stories helped create a sense of shared experiences within our community and not only strengthened the bonds among existing members but also served as a powerful tool to connect with new individuals.
- **Virtual Support Chats:** One of our most impactful initiatives this past year was the introduction of recurring Virtual Support Chats! Virtual Support Chats are get-togethers hosted via Zoom with OAC experts and leaders, offering a safe and intimate environment for participants to connect with one another. This year, we host seven Virtual Support Chats, taking place after the premiers of our Health Talks and Fresh Perspectives.
- **Member Discussion Forum:** Nearly 1,200 individuals participated in our Membership Discussion Forum!
- **Sponsored Membership Program:** This year, we collaborated with 14 practices and three societies to further expand our reach and impact.



THE BIG PICTURE & LOOKING AHEAD

In 2023, the OAC and our Community became an unstoppable force for change. More so than ever before, OAC Community members felt empowered in their health journeys and energized to create a better world for people living with obesity, understanding that each one of us has a unique spark that has the power to illuminate the path ahead.

People affected by obesity face challenges every day, from misconceptions about the disease of obesity to pervasive weight bias and insufficient access to obesity care. But, when we use our unique strengths, we have the power to overcome obstacles and spark meaningful change.

Having recognized our collective power in 2023 – the Power of Change – we now turn our gaze to 2024 with eager anticipation. We're thrilled to share the exciting activities and initiatives we have planned for the year ahead.

Here's a sneak peak:

- **We're launching *Your Weight Matters* Regional events!** These free weight and health events are launching in various cities across the nation. We will be able to reach more people than ever before, offering new attendees the chance to learn how to take charge of their health and get involved in the OAC Community.
- **We're reenvisioning our *Stop Weight Bias* and *Your Weight Matters* Campaigns!** We have big plans for these public awareness campaigns, including filming brand-new PSAs and launching an expanded bias-free image gallery. Stay tuned as we unveil our new ways to bring attention to these important campaigns!
- **We're looking forward to another *Obesity Care Week*** changing the way society cares for and about obesity. In 2024, we're garnering support for the 5 Principles of Obesity, emphasizing the core values our organization is built upon.
- **We're engaging in more advocacy than ever!** We're working tirelessly to improve access to care and end weight-based discrimination in more than 35 states across the country, and that number continues to grow!
- **We're revamping ways to give back to our organization,** making it easier than ever for our generous donors to give in the ways that work best for them. In addition to traditional donation methods, we're launching our corporate giving and planned giving programs, enhancing the ways our supporters are able to help us continue our mission.
- **We're expanding our OAC Community to be even more inclusive than ever before.** Since individuals of all ages, races and backgrounds are affected by obesity, we want to ensure everyone finds the education and support they need and deserve!

Together, we will use our collective power discovered this year to ignite change for people with obesity across the world in 2024!

CHAIRMAN'S COUNCIL



Platinum

Novo Nordisk

Gold

American Society for Metabolic & Bariatric Surgery

Bariatric Advantage

Boehringer Ingelheim

Eli Lilly and Company

Pfizer

Potomac Currents

Silver

Amgen

Currax Pharmaceuticals

INTUITIVE

Medtronic

Bronze

Allurion

Calibrate Health

Found

Geisinger Healthcare System

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Billings Clinic

BonusLife

ConscienHealth

Gainesville Medical Obesity Specialty Clinic

New Life Center for Bariatric Surgery

ProCare Health

Rhythm Pharmaceuticals

The Better Weight Center

The Obesity Society

Woman's Hospital

FINANCIALS



- Donated Services 54.00%
- Membership 12.00%
- Grants 26.00%
- Program Revenue 5.00%
- Contributions 3.00%

- Program Services 88.60%
- Membership 8.10%
- Fundraising 3.30%



Thank you for **your** **support** in 2023!

Your contribution allows us to expand educational opportunities, continue to elevate conversations on weight and its impact on health, focus on ending weight bias once and for all and create new and impactful programs in 2024 and beyond.



obesityaction.org/donate





4511 North Himes Avenue, Suite 250 Tampa, FL 33614



813.872.7835



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