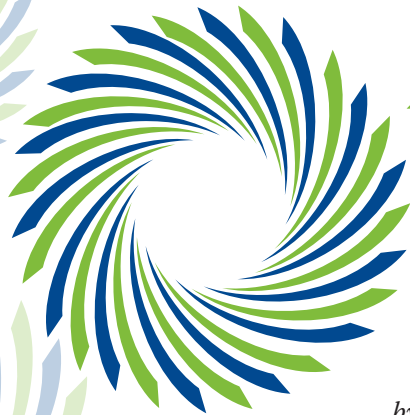


Bringing Together **Our People** ...

A Glimpse into the Emerging

**COMING
SOON!**



OAC Community

by Mckinzie Step, OAC Community Outreach Engagement Specialist

Imagine a place where you can be completely yourself. A place free of judgement and bias but rich with information, momentum and connectivity. Imagine a place where obesity isn't seen as a character flaw, but is instead treated the way any other disease should be – with understanding, respect and support.

When dealing with the disease of obesity, that kind of place is hard to come across. We exist in a world where weight bias and stigma are all too common. Education surrounding obesity is desperately needed. Individuals struggle to find the empathy, support and treatment they deserve. Now, let's circle back to the place we described above. What if that place existed?

That place *can* exist and *will* exist through the OAC's Community!



Since our inception in 2005, OAC has had the privilege of providing education, advocacy and support to millions of Americans affected by obesity. But, more importantly, we've also witnessed an increasing number of individuals who want to be connected, get more involved and make an impact. We've learned a lot from our membership in the past 13 years, and our members have truly paved the way for the excitement that is just beyond the horizon!

Honoring Our Past and Building Our Future

Since our founding, OAC has built a sustainable membership of more than 58,000 members from all across the country (*and some parts of the world*). Our membership is diverse – from those who walk the journey each day, healthcare providers who are on the front lines caring for those with obesity, loved ones who act as support systems and policy makers. Throughout the years, we've experienced a vibrant community naturally come to life. So the question is – how do we harness this powerful force?

“ Throughout the years, we've experienced a vibrant community naturally come to life. ”

While we've achieved tremendous growth, we recognize a greater need for our members and supporters to have the right platforms that foster continuing education, opportunities to get involved and ultimately connect with one another. An old African proverb that speaks directly to this truth goes like this:

“If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”

And that's exactly what we're after – going farther together. As such, we've taken a great deal of time to reflect on our long-term goals to effect change in obesity, along with what supporters really need. We've reflected on past OAC Conventions where our vibrant community has organically come to life. What we've discovered is that in order to continue growing, we need to invest more into the people than ever before.

This is why we have recently shifted our energies to developing a member experience designed to empower, support and encourage one another. We're cultivating that place where awareness, education, advocacy and support come alive and have a permanent home.

So... What Excitement is on the Horizon?

OAC is excited to announce that many groundbreaking developments are in motion to help us serve our membership and reach more individuals. The vibrant community that has naturally formed will soon come to life – OAC's Membership COMMUNITY! As members, you will be the first to know the complete details of what this entails in the weeks to come – but what we can tell you is that you are in for the experience you've been waiting for!

Along with the launch of OAC's Community and the many components that go along with it, we're also excited to unveil even more excitement that will only amplify your experience as an OAC member. Here's a sneak peek:

- ✓ **A Brand New OAC Web site** – OAC's new and emerging Web site is designed to give users an immersive and seamless experience as they navigate our mission, vision, resources, tools and action items. As a member, you will be the first to tour this work of art!
- ✓ **A Place to Share Your Personal Stories** – We're continuously inspired by the personal stories and experiences that our members share with us. So, we are building a place where these stories can easily be shared and also provide support to let individuals know they are not alone in their journey.
- ✓ **Resources to Help You Find the Right Healthcare Provider** – Finding the right provider has been reported as a major challenge among our members seeking care, which is why we've set out to help our members and the public easily find a qualified healthcare provider. This new resource, launching soon, is designed for individuals to take the next step on their weight management journey by discovering and working with healthcare providers who can meet their individual needs in an evidence-based, judgement-free way.
- ✓ **More Education** – The needs for education are endless, which is why we're committed to creating stronger programming that will allow us to unveil new and improved educational resources to facilitate greater understanding about weight and health, as well as outreach opportunities.

How Can I Be a Part of Building the Future of OAC?

With all the excitement to come, it goes without saying that our members will remain the foundation of it all. We've traveled great distances together, and will continue to do so until we reach our goals. Together, we will continue to:

- Stand-up to weight bias and demand greater respect for individuals of all sizes
- Advocate for expanded access to obesity healthcare
- Educate the world about all the different complexions of obesity
- Increase the recognition of obesity as a disease
- Encourage, support and assist individuals who are affected by obesity
- And so much more!

With continued growth, however, comes increased opportunity. There is still a need to work tirelessly in all of the above areas and strengthen our efforts. To do so, OAC requires a strong army of individuals who are willing to help us grow our presence and reach more people.

Conclusion

Rest assured – OAC is working diligently and passionately to continue growing, thriving and giving a voice to the more than 93 million Americans affected by obesity. We have some promising changes and opportunities on the way that mean great things for our organization and our entire community, so make sure you stay tuned to all that's in store!

Do you want to join us in building this future? Will you help move the OAC forward?

Here's what you can do:



Reflect – Take a moment to think about your interests, passions and strengths. What are you good at? What makes you happy, motivated and empowered? What can you contribute to help move our efforts forward?



Brainstorm – Spend some time thinking about how your strengths and passions can benefit the OAC and help us reach our long-term goals.



Reach Out to Us – Send an email to Membership@obesityaction.org and connect with us! We want to get to know you more and find the perfect place for you within our organization. We're building an arsenal of individuals to depend on as we unveil the new OAC Community, and you can be on the frontlines!



Start Taking #OACAction and Share Your Activities – Spread the word about the OAC; distribute our tools and resources; help us advocate for individuals with obesity when opportunities arise; help us fight weight bias; attend our events; donate to the OAC to make a change in other individuals' lives. Our new developments will provide even more opportunities to engage with us, but there's no harm in getting started now! Use the **#OACAction** hashtag to publicize your actions and encourage others to do the same!



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

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