

# 2013 OAC ANNUAL AWARDS

PRESENTED AT THE 2ND ANNUAL  
**YOUR  
WEIGHT  
MATTERS  
NATIONAL  
CONVENTION**



**D**uring the 2nd Annual *Your Weight Matters*<sup>SM</sup> National Convention, *Rise to the Challenge*, held in Phoenix, the OAC presented its 2013 Annual Awards. A total of seven awards were presented during the Annual Awards dinner. Four of the awards were open to nominations from OAC membership and the remaining three award winners were chosen by the OAC Annual Awards Program Review Committee. The OAC also added two brand new awards this year, the Healthcare Provider Advocate of the Year award and the Chairman's Award. Below, please find the 2013 OAC Annual Award winners:

## Bias Buster of the Year Award 🏆

*(award winner nominated by  
OAC membership)*

The winner of the 2013 "Bias Buster of the Year" award was Melinda J. Watman, BSN, MSN, CNM, MBA. In June, Melinda testified with courage and passion to a panel of legislators about her personal experiences with weight bias and obesity, the importance of respecting people of all sizes and shapes and protecting them from discrimination. Melinda spent years in clinical practice and recently founded "THE F WORD FAT tiny word, BIG impact,"



*Melinda J. Watman,  
BSN, MSN, CNM, MBA*

a company that provides educational seminars to organizations on understanding, managing and eliminating weight bias and discrimination.

She is a frequent author on the topic of weight bias and has written for the OAC's quarterly publication - *Your Weight Matters*<sup>SM</sup> Magazine. Melinda also recently completed a blog series on the OAC Blog, which focused on weight bias, perceptions about weight, personal relationships with weight and much more.

The OAC congratulates Melinda on winning the "Bias Buster of the Year" award.

## Healthcare Provider Advocate of the Year Award 🏆

*(award winner chosen  
by committee)*

The winner of the 2013 "Healthcare Provider Advocate of the Year" award was Christopher Still, DO, FACP, FACN. As a founding member of the OAC National Board of Directors, Dr. Still was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the development of the OAC. He has advocated for safe and effective treatment options for the disease of obesity on Capitol Hill and is a proud member of the OAC Sponsored Membership Program where he purchases one-year OAC memberships for all of his patients. Dr. Still has dedicated his life and career to helping individuals affected by obesity.



*Christopher Still,  
DO, FACP, FACN*

Dr. Still has been studying developments in obesity and nutrition support for nearly two decades. He directs the Geisinger Center for Nutrition and Weight Management as well as their Obesity Research Institute. His interest in weight-loss comes from his personal experiences with obesity. Dr. Still once weighed 385 pounds, and losing the weight was a life and career-changing experience. Dr. Still is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine, the American Board of Nutrition and the American College of Nutrition, among others.

The OAC congratulates Dr. Still on winning the "Healthcare Provider Advocate of the Year" award.

### Dr. Blackstone Outstanding Membership Recruitment by a Physician Award 🏆

*(award winner chosen by committee)*

The winner of the 2013 "Dr. Blackstone Outstanding Membership Recruitment by a Physician" award was the physicians of the St. Vincent Bariatric Center of Excellence.

In one year, the bariatric physicians of St. Vincent joined more than 795 patients through the OAC Sponsored Membership Program by purchasing one-year OAC memberships for each of their patients. The OAC would like to recognize the following bariatric physicians of St. Vincent for their dedication to increasing the voice of the OAC through the OAC Sponsored Membership Program:

- Brenda Cacucci, MD
- David Diaz, MD, FACS
- Christopher Evanson, MD
- Lori A. Hurst, MD
- John Huse, MD, FACS
- Margaret Inman, MD, FACS
- Douglas J. Kaderabek, MD, FACS

The OAC congratulates the physicians of the St. Vincent Bariatric Center of Excellence on winning the "Dr. Blackstone Outstanding Membership Recruitment by a Physician" award.

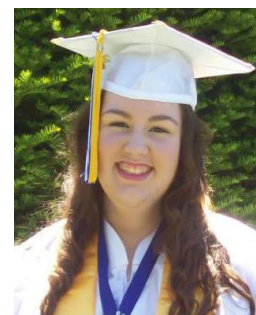
### Barbara Thompson Award for Advocacy 🏆

*(award winner nominated by OAC membership)*

The winner of the 2013 "Barbara Thompson Award for Advocacy" was Maria Caprigno. Since the age of four, Maria has struggled with obesity, which prevented her from having a "normal" childhood. At the age of 14, she took her health into her own hands and chose to have bariatric surgery. Throughout the past four years, she has lost almost

150 pounds and has become a voice for other children and teens affected by obesity. She has joined the OAC on Capitol Hill and stood side-by-side with the OAC in advocating for change.

The OAC congratulates Maria on winning the "Barbara Thompson Award for Advocacy."



*Maria Caprigno*

### Community Leader of the Year Award 🏆

*(award winner nominated by OAC membership)*

The winner of the 2013 "Community Leader of the Year" award was Phoenix Councilman Daniel T. Valenzuela. Councilman Valenzuela is an advocate for preventative healthcare, including boosting physical activity and making healthier food choices. He is the co-creator and ambassador of the FitPHX program, a citywide initiative to encourage residents to become more active and achieve their own personal wellness goals.

He recently helped launch the city's Senior Champions Program to empower seniors to reach for their own fitness "gold." Councilman Valenzuela is also a Special Operations Fire Fighter for the city of Glendale, Arizona, where he created programs to promote healthy living and physical fitness. Councilman Valenzuela is also currently working with Blue Cross Blue Shield in Maryvale, Phoenix, on obesity-focused prevention programs and services.

The OAC congratulates Councilman Valenzuela on winning the "Community Leader of the Year" award.



*Phoenix Councilman  
Daniel T. Valenzuela*

### Chairman's Award 🏆

*(award winner chosen by committee)*

The winner of the 2013 "Chairman's Award" was Robert Kushner, MD. As a member of the OAC National Board of Directors, Dr. Kushner has been instrumental in guiding the organization through his expertise and vast knowledge. He is one of the Program Agenda Co-Chairs of the Convention Program Agenda Subcommittee – the committee responsible for developing the educational agenda for the *Your Weight Matters*<sup>SM</sup> National Convention. Dr. Kushner is also a regular contributor to the OAC's quarterly educational publication - *Your Weight Matters*<sup>SM</sup> Magazine.



*Robert Kushner, MD*

Dr. Kushner is a professor of medicine at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and clinical director of the Northwestern Comprehensive Center on Obesity in Chicago. He is actively involved in the care of patients who struggle with obesity along with conducting clinical research and educating medical students. He is widely-known throughout the healthcare community. He is considered a thought-leader among his peers, and he is past-president of The Obesity Society.

The OAC congratulates Dr. Kushner on winning the "Chairman's Award."

## OAC Member of the Year Award 🏆

*(award winner nominated by OAC membership)*

The winner of the 2013 "OAC Member of the Year" award was Walter Medlin, MD. Dr. Medlin is an exemplary OAC member and has gone above and beyond in his efforts to raise awareness of the disease of obesity, increase OAC membership and educate all individuals affected by obesity. Dr. Medlin is also a participating practice in the OAC Sponsored Membership Program where he purchases one-year memberships in the OAC for each of his patients.



*Walter Medlin, MD*

Dr. Medlin is a frequent author in the OAC's quarterly publication, *Your Weight Matters<sup>SM</sup> Magazine* and often takes-on difficult topics to educate OAC members. He is the director of the Metabolic Surgery program at Billings Clinic in Montana and has struggled with his weight since first grade. After performing hundreds of bariatric surgeries, he underwent sleeve gastrectomy in 2008, with outstanding results. In 2011, he joined the OAC in advocating on Capitol Hill for safe and effective treatment options for the disease of obesity.

The OAC congratulates Dr. Medlin on winning the "OAC Member of the Year" award.

**The OAC congratulates all of this year's winners and thanks all of our members for their nominations to the OAC Annual Awards. For more information on the OAC Annual Awards, please visit [www.ObesityAction.org](http://www.ObesityAction.org).**





# 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](https://obesityaction.org/join)**

[info@obesityaction.org](mailto:info@obesityaction.org)

(800) 717-3117 | (813) 872-7835 | Fax: (813) 873-7838



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