

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

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Community Walking Project Gets Underway *"A Better Me: Fit, Happy and Healthy Tracks Participants' Steps"*

More than 100 participants comprising teams from seven area agencies and the community-at-large will be taking part in a fitness program designed to reduce health disparities among minority and underserved women and girls, Oneida County Health Department officials announced today.

"A Better Me: Fit, Happy and Healthy," involves a 90-day period of counseling on proper nutrition and physical activity, with participants 'walking steps' being recorded with pedometers issued to them by the health department. At the end of the program, the team logging the most steps will be awarded a prize as well as the top four individuals among the seven teams.

The program is being funded through a 2500-hundred dollar grant from the Department of Health and Human Services Regional Office on Women's Health which was awarded to the Oneida County Health Department earlier this year. At the time he announced the grant, Oneida County Executive Anthony Picente, Jr. said, *"Proper nutrition and regular physical activity must be encouraged in all quarters; and the message of their benefits in terms of overall health outcomes is best carried to residents who might not otherwise hear it through the involvement of community partners."*

Among agencies taking part in the program are the Utica Community Health Center, Faxton-St. Luke's OB Care Center, Yorkville Seniors, Cornell Cooperative Extension, For the Good, Inc., BOCES Utica Access Site and the Johnson Park Center.

According to Dr. Gayle Jones, Director of Health, monies from the grant will be used for educational programs and the prizes to be awarded.

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