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Governor Haslam Designates 14 Healthier Tennessee Communities
Number of designated communities now totals 59

NASHVILLE – Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and Governor's Foundation for Health and Wellness CEO Richard Johnson today designated 13 counties and one city as Healthier Tennessee Communities. The recognition honors Blount, Cannon, Carroll, Carter, Cheatham, Greene, Johnson, Robertson, Rutherford, Sequatchie, Sumner, Warren, and Washington counties.

The City of Kingsport, after achieving the initial Healthier Tennessee Community designation in 2016, is the first location in Tennessee to achieve bronze status under the new bronze, silver, and gold Healthier Tennessee Community criteria.

Representatives from the recognized communities traveled to Nashville to participate in the designation ceremony at the Tennessee State Capitol.

Gov. Bill Haslam delivered remarks congratulating the designated communities while stressing the importance of prioritizing preventative health efforts in all 95 counties.

“We must continue to encourage and enable community-led efforts like the ones we’re celebrating today if we want to improve the health and quality of life of Tennesseans,” Haslam said. “I congratulate these communities on their efforts to improve the health of their citizens.”

The Healthier Tennessee Communities initiative is a grassroots approach to improving Tennesseans’ health by engaging citizens and local leaders in cities, towns, counties, neighborhoods, and college campuses across the state.

To be designated, the communities established wellness committees and developed sustainable community-wide events and activities that support physical activity, healthy eating, and tobacco abstinence. They then tracked and measured outputs and accomplishments of the programs.

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The City of Kingsport achieved bronze status by implementing wellness initiatives in places of work and worship, focusing on health in early childhood, building a robust volunteer coalition, and directly engaging more than 10 percent of the community in their efforts.

“These communities understand the importance of health and wellness and are working to make it an integral part of life in their cities and counties,” Johnson said. “As we continue to do this, community by community, we will make this a healthier Tennessee.”

The Foundation launched the Healthier Tennessee Communities initiative in March 2015 with nine pilot communities. Today, more than 100 communities, neighborhoods, and college campuses are engaged with the program, and 59 have received the designation.

More information about the communities program, including a list of participating cities and counties and other Healthier Tennessee® initiatives, like the Small Starts® suite of interactive wellness tools, is available at healthierTN.com.

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About the Governor’s Foundation for Health and Wellness

The Governor's Foundation for Health and Wellness is a non-profit corporation dedicated to enabling and encouraging Tennesseans to lead healthier lives. Based in Nashville, the Foundation brings together a statewide coalition of employers, health insurers, hospital systems, local governments, school systems and healthcare-focused foundations and community organizations to effect positive, measurable change. The Foundation’s Healthier Tennessee initiative strives to increase the number of Tennesseans who are physically active for at least 30 minutes five times a week, promote a healthy diet, and reduce the number of people who use tobacco.