“Our passions for our health, our future and each other unite us. When we embrace our goals, there is no limit to what we can achieve – and by standing together as a community, our passions ignite and turn into action!”

At this year’s National Convention, an unmistakable fire was kindled throughout the course of the weekend. Individuals from multiple generations, locations and demographics gathered together and formed an incredible sense of community where there was no such thing as a “stranger.” Rather, each attendee – new and old – became part of a diverse, welcoming family where their triumphs, challenges and journeys were not only accepted, but embraced.

Although individuals arrived at YWM2016 for a variety of different reasons and motivations, there was something for everyone to gain and bring back home with them. New friendships, education and inspirations fueled these powerful three days at
Convention, and attendees learned how to unite their own personal goals with the goals of the OAC. With more than 600 registrants in attendance at YWM2016, the weekend was an unforgettable success where lives were changed, passions were ignited and new visions were created!

INSPIRED THROUGH EDUCATION

Program Agenda, attendees had the unique opportunity to learn from leading physicians, dietitians, researchers and scientists from across the industry. All of the diverse education offered at YWM2016 gave individuals the right kind of information to guide them on their journeys. This year, topics ranged from the basics of nutrition and available treatment options for weight to behavioral health issues such as food addiction and the science behind willpower. Our guest speakers and experts shared real facts and honest answers that attendees could connect with, and gave them the tools they were seeking to transform their goals and shape their journeys with weight and health!

INSPIRED BY SUPPORT

It goes without saying that having a strong support system is an important part of any journey, and a key component to managing weight and health. The OAC’s National Convention is a unique landing point along this journey because the environment created is not only supportive and empowering, but joins attendees together to support and uplift one another along the way. Even after the weekend comes to a close, we continue to see attendees connect and inspire each other throughout the year!

INSPIRED BY HEALTH

At Convention, health is the central part of all that we do, which is what inspired the creation of this annual event! Everything that YWM2016 provided – from nutrition information, exercise demonstrations, health screenings and more – was done with health in mind. The OAC recognizes that the struggle with weight exists, and understands the importance of having access to reliable healthcare, education, support and resources to improve health one step at a time.

Nutrition – From carefully crafted meals offered throughout the weekend to discussions about the “balance” between food and energy, attendees learned about nutrition in a variety of ways at YWM2016. Understanding the importance of food for our bodies, and learning how to make smart choices that benefit our overall health, was a fundamental takeaway from the Convention.
Exercise – The OAC knows that exercise is a core component of our attendees’ health plan. That’s why we offered a variety of fitness activities that they could engage with at YWM2016! From organized walks, runs and dance classes to aquafit, Tai Chi and even yoga, our attendees had plenty of opportunities to stay active and try something completely new.

Community Health Outreach Day – On the Saturday of the Convention, we opened the doors of our Your Weight Matters Healthy Living EXPO Hall to the local DC community in celebration of our Community Health Outreach Day! In partnership with the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington and B’More Fit for Healthy Babies, our Community Health Outreach Day offered the general public a chance to explore a variety of health-focused exhibitors from across the industry. Featuring more than 30 hand-selected vendor booths, the EXPO offered attendees many different products, services and even a free health screening to help individuals along their journeys toward improved health. This was an excellent opportunity for the OAC to engage the community with our belief in health awareness and education, and we were more than excited to meet and connect with brand new faces!
INSPIRED BY A NEW WAY OF THINKING

In order for our dreams to grow into reality, they require commitment. Every step forward that we take brings us closer to our goals, so it’s important that we keep striving for progress – one opportunity at a time! In fact, commitment takes us beyond our hopes – beyond our interests – and molds our visions into our future. We can’t reach our dreams without it!

INSPIRED THROUGH ADVOCACY

Weight and health aren’t always easy subjects to talk about, and that can often lead to silence. Those who struggle along their own journeys toward improved health may not feel that they can open up about their personal stories and challenges or seek help – and those who have the tools and resources to help may not understand how important their actions and activism really are for those individuals who struggle with weight on a daily basis.

That’s why the Your Weight Matters National Convention made advocacy one of many core focuses throughout the weekend. AT YWM2016, attendees learned a variety of ways to raise their voices and advocate for a stronger, healthier future – whether it be through specialized educational training sessions, a visit to Capitol Hill where the legislative process takes place or a community march around the Convention site to learn more about how to engage with the OAC. The weekend made sure to stress that no matter where you are or what resources are available to you, there’s always a way for you to raise your voice and make a difference on behalf of what you’re passionate about!

At YWM2016, those inspirations caught on fire. Attendees, OAC staff and board members alike felt the passion to do more and be more for our futures. Although our journeys may take us through triumphs, roadblocks and hurdles, we have to stand together and look ahead.

WE HAVE TO THINK BIG!
This larger vision became a brand new way of thinking at YWM2016. How hard were we willing to work to do more and to be more? What steps could we take to grow as individuals and to grow together? Throughout the weekend, these were the kinds of questions that our passions inspired – and it led us to one revelation: we were inspired to be ENGAGED!

Engaged with our health – YWM2016 showed us that we have the power to transform our lives by improving our health. By deciding to manage our weight and to make health a priority, we’ve already taken a very important first step! Now, how can we keep improving? What can we do to gradually become the best version of ourselves?

Engaged as a community – There is strength in numbers and power in the act of coming together. The Convention showed us that no obstacle is too big if we have the support of a community! How could we continue to encourage and uplift one another when Convention was over? In what ways can we stay connected, stay accountable and stay united?

Engaged with the OAC – A strong foundation is important for success – both individually and collectively – and that is exactly what the OAC aims to provide. We strive to educate, support and advocate for individuals affected by obesity. We want to elevate the conversation about weight and health and fight the discrimination that makes that conversation difficult. How can we grow stronger and increase our visibility? What more can we do to involve our members, volunteers and supporters with the work that we are a part of?

Our time together at the OAC’s National Convention was nothing short of powerful. It is our hope that you felt inspired by this weekend of community in Washington, DC even if you weren’t there, because the impact of Convention stretches beyond our attendees – it is meant to showcase our passion for anyone who wants to be involved with the OAC in some way. We encourage you to stamp your commitment by joining us in becoming ENGAGED!

Will you mark your attendance for next year’s Convention? Will you be a part of your vision? We want YOU!
Why Join the OAC?

The OAC is the ONLY non-profit organization whose sole focus is helping those affected by obesity. The OAC is a great place to turn if you are looking for a way to get involved and give back to the cause of obesity.

Why YOU Should Become an OAC Member

Quite simply, because the voice of those affected needs to be built! The OAC not only provides valuable public education on obesity, but we also conduct a variety of advocacy efforts. With advocacy, our voice must be strong. And, membership is what gives the OAC its strong voice.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Official welcome letter and membership card
- Annual subscription to the OAC’s publication, Your Weight MattersSM Magazine
- Subscriptions to the OAC Members Make a Difference and Obesity Action Alert monthly e-newsletters
- “Bias Buster” Alerts, altering specifically to issues of weight bias
- Immediate Advocacy Alerts on urgent advocacy issues and access to the OAC’s expert advocacy team
- Ability to lend your voice to the cause