



Austin's WeViva receives 'Wellness Frontiers' Award

Coalition of U.S. healthcare leaders recognizes WeViva for innovative approach to improving health and wellness

Austin – The Healthcare Leadership Council, a coalition of chief executives from the nation's leading healthcare companies and organizations, has named Austin-area wellness program, WeViva, as the recipient of its Wellness Frontiers Award. The award recognizes entities that successfully implement an evidence-based wellness program aimed at preventing disease and improving population well-

being.

WeViva offers accessible and affordable fitness and nutrition programs to people in low-income communities. Studies have shown that low-income minority individuals have significantly higher rates of obesity and diabetes than the general population. By encouraging healthy eating and fitness in at-risk communities, WeViva aims to reverse that trend.

“Experts are often quoted saying diet and exercise is the key to reversing diabetes and other obesity related illnesses, but nutrition education and gym memberships are expensive,” says Carolyn Haney, founder and Executive Director of WeViva and a licensed masters social worker. “I saw all these new gyms popping up all over the affluent areas of Austin and realized that the people who truly needed the access to these programs were not being served.”



“The American Diabetes Association has recognized that Hispanics in particular were more vulnerable to obesity related illness than other groups and found in its research that many Latino parents, focusing on the needs of their families, were not likely to devote time and money to their own health” said Paul Pearson of the Healthcare Leadership Council. “WeViva’s program targets the health leaders of families – the mothers. Because of this program, families are eating healthier and getting active. Carolyn Haney and the WeViva board took diet and exercise to the streets and it is working.”

HLC Regional Director, Paul Pearson, presented today’s award. Following the presentation, program participants joined in a Zumba class at the Sierra Vista

Apartments. This is one of more than 30 free classes offered weekly by WeViva across Austin. Classes are held at area apartment complexes, elementary schools, and community centers. Participants receive free exercise and nutrition classes and childcare is provided.

For more information, WeViva is online at www.weviva.org and Healthcare Leadership Council can be found at www.hlc.org.

About the Healthcare Leadership Council

The Healthcare Leadership Council (HLC), a coalition of chief executives from all disciplines within American healthcare. Through the HLC, the nation's healthcare leaders jointly develop policies and programs to achieve their vision of a 21st century system that makes affordable, high-quality care accessible to all Americans.