DSU to Hold Weight Management Strategies Conference April 5-6

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Delaware State University's College of Education, Health & Public Policy will host a Weight Management Strategies Conference on April 5-6 in the Martin Luther King Jr. Student Center.

Under the theme of "Obesity doesn't have to be a Delaware Epidemic," the conference will include health care professionals, community advocates, service providers and members of the public for an educational event that will focus on strategies for overcoming the First State's obesity problem.

The conference is taking place during National Public Health Week.

In 2011, about 29 percent of adults in Delaware were obese, according to a study by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Trust for America's Health. This earns the state 19th place among all states and Washington, D.C., for the percentage of obese adults, those with a body mass index of 30 or higher, in a report from the two organizations called "F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America's Future 2012."

According to the study, if the state's obesity rate continues on its current path, 65 percent of Delaware adults will be obese by 2030, earning the First State third place for the highest obesity rate.

Dr. Frederick K. Asinor, dean of DSU's College of Education, Health and Public Policy, says that the level of obesity in Delaware is unacceptable because this is a disease that something can be done about.

"It is a consequence of our choices. And many of those choices are made passively, in a comfortable but rigor-free environment," Dr. Asinor said. "So we can prevent obesity by excising and reducing our fat, sugar and salt intake knowing that these are products that are linked directly to obesity, heart disease, cancer and stroke, among other killer diseases."
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The conference is designed to facilitate the creation and the implementation of weight management strategies for communities, companies or organizations that reduce the incidence and prevalence of obesity.

The conference will include as a keynote speaker Dr. Calvin B. Johnson, founder and president of the Altre Strategic Solutions Group, LLC, and the 24th Secretary for Health of Pennsylvania, as well as special guest of honor Dr. J Nadine Gracia, deputy assistant secretary for Minority Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The conference will also feature a number of health and social work professionals from the Mid-Atlantic Region, including:

- Hank Cardello – director of Obesity Solutions, Hudson Institute
- Dr. Donna M. Christensen –member of the U.S. House of Representatives (U.S. Virgin Islands), Congressional Black Caucus' Health Braintrust
- Dr. Jodi Dampeer-Moore – associate professor, DSU Dept. of Nursing
- Dr. Susan M. Gross – research associate, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
- Dr. Erica M. Jackson – associate professor, DSU Dept. of Public & Allied Health Sciences
- Dr. Tina L. Jordan – professor, DSU Dept. of Social Work
- Rich Killingworth – chief of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Del. Division of Public Health

- Dr. Giridhar Mallya – director of Policy and Planning, Philadelphia Dept. of Health
- Megan A. Maloney – visiting professor of movement science, DSU Dept. of Public & Allied Health Sciences
- Mary Kate Mouser – executive director, Nemours Health and Prevention Services
- Terry M. Murphy – president and CEO, Bayhealth Medical Center
- Dr. Karyl Thomas Rattay – director of the Del. Division of Public Health
- Dr. Margo Wooten – director of Nutrition Policy, Center for Science in the Public Interest

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