



City of New Bedford
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City of New Bedford
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

P R E S S R E L E A S E

New Bedford Reaches Communitywide Health and Wellness Goals, Receives White House Recognition as One of 58 Communities

Awarded 5 Gold Medals for Promoting Physical Activity and Healthy Eating

New Bedford, Massachusetts –The City of New Bedford will be recognized during a ceremony at the White House with First Lady Michelle Obama for reaching five key health and wellness goals as part of the nationwide *Let’s Move!* Cities, Towns and Counties (LMCTC) initiative. LMCTC is the First Lady’s comprehensive initiative dedicated to solving the problem of obesity, so that children born today will grow up healthy and able to pursue their dreams. Through Mass in Motion New Bedford (MiM NB), the City of New Bedford has achieved gold medal status in each of the program’s five key areas, making New Bedford one of just 58 other communities in the nation to earn the same distinction.

As part of this initiative, *Let’s Move!* Cities, Towns and Counties (LMCTC) invites local elected officials to adopt long-term, sustainable and holistic approaches to addressing childhood obesity. Participating communities commit to five goals designed to promote sustainable strategies intended to improve the health of its residents.

The screenshot shows the National League of Cities website. At the top, it says "NATIONAL LEAGUE of CITIES" and "NLC is working in conjunction with Let's Move! Cities, Towns and Counties to create healthier communities for healthy kids." Below this is a navigation bar with links: HOME, LEARN THE FACTS, GET STARTED, TAKE ACTION, SEE PROGRESS, NEWS, FAQ, RESOURCES, ABOUT US. The main content area is titled "NEW BEDFORD, MA" and contains a paragraph about the city's history and its participation in the LMCTC program. Below the text, it says "MEDALS ACTIVITY (RANK 1)" and displays five gold medals with Roman numerals I through V. To the right of the text is a portrait of Mayor Jon Mitchell with his name below it.

“Health and wellness has been a priority since I came into office so it’s nice to see our efforts getting results. As mayor and as a parent, there is nothing that I want more than for our children to grow into healthy, happy adults who can pursue their dreams without limitation. Setting these communitywide health and wellness goals and finding creative ways to meet them is helping our

children to find their way to a healthy future,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell. “Mass in Motion New Bedford has been a key partner in improving New Bedford’s health and wellness and I want to praise Kim Ferreira for her leadership on this initiative.”

The Mayor’s Office and MiM NB have been committed to working with a range of partners to implement policies and programs that improve nutrition and create more opportunity for physical activity, especially among children.

Examples of the many projects that helped New Bedford to reach its goals include:

- Partnering with several local daycares to implement internal policies that boost nutrition and physical activity
- Working with New Bedford Public Schools to designate “Wellness Champions” at each school
- Partnering with New Bedford Parks, Recreation & Beaches to promote the “Play in the Park and Summer Food Programs”
- Working with the “Safe Routes to School” initiative to increase opportunities for children to get more exercise, encouraging students to walk or bike to school on a daily basis
- Implementing the *Healthy Meeting Guide Policy*, which offers healthy food and snack suggestions for city employees when planning meetings and events

“We are so excited to be one of only a handful of cities across the country to receive all five gold medals,” says Kim Ferreira, director of MiM NB. “The *Let’s Move* Campaign has been a great opportunity to learn from other cities and implement effective programming and policies that get kids moving and eating healthier.”

Kim Ferreira will attend the celebratory event at the White House later this week, where New Bedford will receive official recognition for its efforts and success.

“We congratulate New Bedford for your dedication to building a healthier community for children and families,” said NLC President Ralph Becker, Mayor, Salt Lake City, Utah.

“Through the tireless leadership and action of local elected officials in cities, towns and counties across the country, we hope to see continued progress in reversing America’s epidemic of childhood obesity.”

NLC is working in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and with the support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Association of Counties and other nonprofit organizations, to assist local elected officials who join LMCTC as they implement policy and environmental changes to prevent childhood obesity. More than 490 cities, towns and counties are participating in LMCTC, and nearly 80 million eat healthy foods and be physically active.

About Mass in Motion

Mass in Motion is a statewide movement led by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health that helps local communities increase opportunities for residents to eat better and move more in the places they live, learn, work, and play. Learn more about MiM NB by visiting the website at massinmotionnewbedford.org or liking their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/massinmotionnewbedford>.

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