

# Texas Healthy Community

Fit City Tyler promotes active lifestyles through our annual health and wellness initiatives.



Fit for Life  
youth **ART** contest

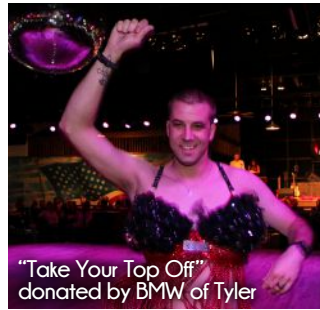
FIT BITE

walk WITH a DOC



Discover the Fit City Tyler Active Living Plan and how you can get actively involved with Fit City Tyler

FitCityTyler.com



"Take Your Top Off"  
donated by BMW of Tyler



J.B. Smith

Women's Council of Realtors  
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Bras for the Cause  
"Give Cancer the Boot"  
  
October 9th  
Cowboys  
  
See more at tylertoday.com



"Stealing Second Base"  
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Shannon Rice, Sharon Green,  
Becky Sigler



Roshell Bell, Savanna Miller,  
Amanda Folmar

## Register Today!

September 7, 2019



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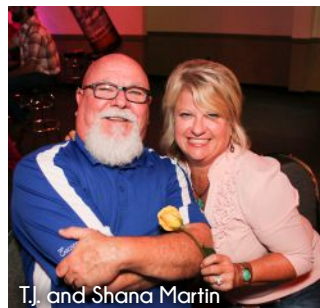
"Sweet and Southern"  
donated by Maya Properties



Cindi Featherston-Shields,  
Michelle Carson



Holly Burke, Bob and Amber Murray, Shanda Fairchild



T.J. and Shana Martin



"Day of Tatta's"  
donated by Major Mortgage

# Adult Obesity in East Texas

by Terrence Ates, M.Ed., TTS | Public Information Officer and Director of Community Outreach  
North East Texas Public Health District (NET Health)

In 2010, the Fit City Tyler Health and Wellness Coalition was created due to the concurrent epidemic of obesity and sedentary lifestyles that were then viewed as the greatest threat to the health of the citizens and communities of Tyler. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's 2017 release of "The State of Obesity in Texas," the state has the country's 14th highest adult obesity rate. One out of every three adults in Texas are obese and the adult obesity rates now exceed 35% in seven states.

The convenience of sedentary living remains a public health issue, which is why Fit City Tyler has established a variety of health programs aimed at individuals, businesses and nonprofit organizations. "We're hoping people make changes in people's lives," says George Roberts, CEO of the Northeast Texas Public Health District and a cofounder of Fit City Tyler. "Today's children are not expected to live as long as their parents, due to poor eating habits and nutrition. Fit City Tyler is about supporting healthy and active lifestyles for the entire family unit."

The creation of the "Fit for Life" Youth Art Contest and the Healthiest Workplaces Awards are two examples of Fit City Tyler programming that have effectively increased the knowledge and the behaviors related to sedentary lifestyles, yet the most successful initiative has been the annual Lighten Up East Texas regional weight loss challenge. Since its inception in 2013, the 6-year combined weight loss of the 6,421 participants who completed the annual event exceeded 52,000 pounds, which is more than the combined weight of the elephants at the Caldwell Zoo.

Instead of rewarding whoever loses the most pounds, Lighten Up East Texas awards significant prizes through a random drawing of anyone who loses 5% of their weight. Earlier this year, the male winner of our \$5,000 grand prize was Tyler firefighter Brett Hilsabeck, who lost 6% of his starting weight. Although there were entrants who lost more pounds of weight than he, Brett is an example of how a little bit of weight loss can yield great returns.

Fit City Tyler has generated tremendous community support for Lighten Up East Texas by having businesses and nonprofit agencies become public weighing locations. In 2017, one of our grand prize winners was Cathleen Potichko, an employee of Tyler ISD who weighed-in and weighed-out with her campus nurse at Gary Elementary School. Demetrius Salas, another 2017 Grand Prize winner, works at Ingersoll Rand and entered Lighten Up East Texas at their employee health fair that is held as a part of their year-round Health Progress Program. Any type of company can enter their employees into Lighten Up East Texas at their worksite, whether you work in an office, at a school, in a factory, in municipal government, in the private sector, for a nonprofit organization, in a clinic, at a hospital or in the hospitality industry. Lighten Up East Texas is available for any company to use a weight scale and to identify a contact person who can collect the registration forms of their employees.

Community locations that serve as exercise facilities, nutrition stores and social service agencies have also participated as public entry locations for Lighten Up East Texas, such as the Glass Recreation Center, iLoveKickboxing, Carter BloodCare and Smoothie King. The Center for Healthy Living, located at 2815 Frankston Highway in Tyler, is an extension of the Northeast Texas Public Health District and provides free healthy living resources and increased access to preventative health care services. During their weekly Healthy Living sessions, attendees can try an exercise they have never experienced before, like Tai Chi, Zumba and chair yoga. Many of the public weighing locations are similar to the Center for Healthy Living, in that they allow entrants of Lighten Up East Texas to become exposed to easy alternatives to maintain an active lifestyle that will support their weight loss goals.

Everyone can help make a visible impact upon the adult obesity rates in our region by participating in the Lighten Up East Texas weight loss challenge. Registration is free and is open to anyone over the age of 18. Entry will be available at many public locations, yet you can also create a registration location at your worksite and create friendly competition between you and your coworkers. Visit [LUET.org](http://LUET.org) or send an email to [JoinFitCityTyler@gmail.com](mailto:JoinFitCityTyler@gmail.com) to receive full details about programs available.

