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MEDIA RELEASE

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Health Organization Passes Baton to YMCA *Y to lead countywide efforts to make people healthier*

SAN JOSE—After six years of leading the Healthy Silicon Valley collaboration, [The Health Trust](#) has turned over the lead role and fiscal responsibility for [Healthy Silicon Valley](#) and its collaborative work to [YMCA of Silicon Valley](#).

“The YMCA of Silicon Valley, with its commitment to building healthier communities, is a natural leader for the Healthy Silicon Valley collaborative,” said Frederick J. Ferrer, CEO of The Health Trust. “The Health Trust was so pleased to lead the collaborative during its formative years, and we are thrilled the YMCA will be assuming the leadership role. We pledge to continue our support.”

Healthy Silicon Valley is a group of more than 100 organizations and individuals working together to equip communities throughout the county with a range of resources, programs and activities to help people become healthier. It supports preventing obesity and related conditions, increasing physical activity, and promoting healthy nutrition.

The collaborative—made up of health, fitness and wellness organizations, private doctors, Chambers of Commerce, and a variety of government, education and community service agencies—supports prevention and wellness activities and promotes public awareness about healthy nutrition and increased physical activity.

“YMCA of Silicon Valley is excited to work even more closely with our partners to build upon the strong foundation that has been created by the Healthy Silicon Valley collaborative,” said Wende Hutton, chair of the YMCA Activate America® Committee. “It’s about public and private partnerships working together to further advance our collective commitment to healthier communities.”

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Since its founding in 2002, Healthy Silicon Valley has evolved into a premier health collaborative in the U.S., modeling many successful approaches. It has served as a planning and policy leader in many advocacy efforts, including organizing soda-free summer campaigns, supporting and passing menu-labeling ordinances and legislation, increasing physical activity and healthy snacks in after-school programs, and conducting wellness surveys to gather data.

“The YMCA is uniquely positioned to guide community collaborative efforts,” said Dr. Wes Alles, director of [Stanford University Health Improvement Program](#), a partner in the national [YMCA Activate America](#)® initiative. “It has a proven track record of successfully helping entire communities take action to increase physical activity and promote healthier eating habits.”

Healthy Silicon Valley History

In 2002, The Health Trust began talks with The California Endowment, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Community Foundation Silicon Valley, and The Valley Foundation to explore how they might help to develop a healthier Santa Clara County.

A year later, when Surgeon General Dr. Richard Carmona called for immediate action to reduce and prevent obesity, help people develop healthier eating habits, and increase physical activity, the foundations came together to support a project called Healthy Santa Clara County. The group added more funders and supporters and changed its name to Healthy Silicon Valley in 2005.

The YMCA Activate America® initiative supported the efforts already underway and added the development of Fit for Learning Afterschool, an initiative with the Santa Clara County Office of Education and the Bay Area Afterschool All-Stars, to advance health and wellness in all after-school programs. The YMCA also launched its first annual Activate America Recognition Luncheon to acknowledge organizations, agencies and corporations for striving to make Silicon Valley the healthiest place for people to live, work and play.

The collaborative completed a Community Action Plan and later received a two-year, \$300,000 grant by the California Endowment and additional funding to support specific projects. Healthy Silicon Valley holds an annual Healthy Communities Taking Action Conference, drawing hundreds of health and environmental professionals to San Jose’s City Hall.