

# Be Active WV Mini-Grant Program 2020 Success Story



## WALK WITH A FUTURE DOC WVU School of Medicine

### What Public Health Problem Was Addressed?

The US Department of Health and Human Services advises that adults get 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity each week with additional minutes of physical activity contributing to better wellness. According to the WV Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR), the prevalence of obesity in West Virginia is the highest in the United States at 37.7%. and that 28.5% of adults in West Virginia do not participate in regular physical activity or exercise. Walking is one of the easiest and most accessible ways for individuals to increase their physical activity.

### What Approach Did They Take?

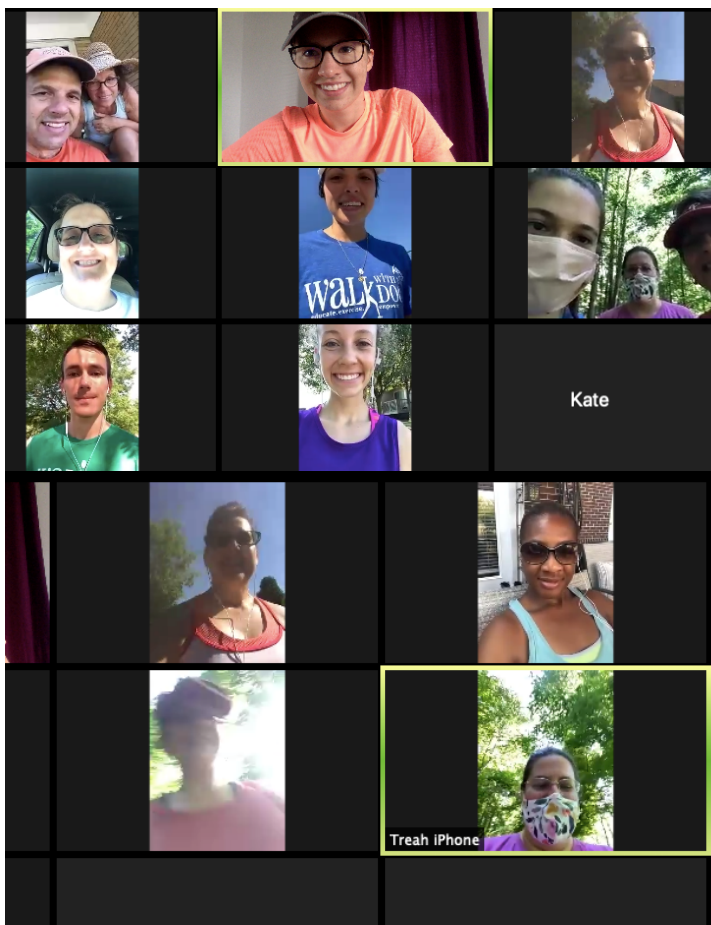
Walk with a Future Doc is a free program for individuals to achieve 60 minutes of physical activity while sparking conversation with medical students, physicians, and other participants. It has become a great way to engage medical providers with community members. By partnering with physicians at WVU Medicine and medical students at WVU, this program allowed for great conversation and education on relevant health topics pertinent to the WV population. The biweekly virtual walks have engaged participants in both physical and mental wellness while also educating participants on topics health topics such as the benefits of exercise, how exercise affects sleep, Fad Diets and more!

### What Were The Results?

The program Walk with a Future Doc at WVU School of Medicine was able to reach 30+ individuals from 4 counties across West Virginia since the first walk on June 27, 2020. To maintain social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual walks were held via Zoom for 60 minutes. With the change to virtual walks, the program was able to expand the reach beyond the Morgantown, WV community. Participants joined virtual walks from 7 states. Many participants remarked that they enjoyed the virtual format of the walk. One walk participant stated that she "enjoyed listening to the educational conversation while getting an hour of physical activity." Others said, "I had so much fun this morning walking & listening to you all from Barre, VT!" and "I had a great time walking and learning about sleep this morning from Delaware, Ohio. Thanks!" All participants were able to achieve almost half of their weekly exercise goal of 150 minutes by engaging in our program.

### What's Next?

Walk with a Future Doc at WVU School of Medicine will continue to host bi-monthly virtual Zoom walks until in-person gatherings are permitted. Once in-person gatherings are permitted, chapters will exist on Morgantown, Charleston, and Martinsburg campuses. They hope to continue building a safe and educational community for the general public to increase health knowledge and take steps towards a healthier lifestyle. Follow them on Facebook at WVU Walk with a Future Doc for up to date walk information!



Through these 60-minute walks, we are getting community members out and about to improve not only their physical but also their mental and social health. The virtual walks have uniquely allowed us to "walk" with participants on sunny beaches of SC, trails of WV, local neighborhoods, and small towns.

-Mia Antinone, current 2nd year medical student at WVU School of Medicine

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