

# Oklahoma Turning Point Director State Report

On behalf of the entire Turning Point staff, welcome to the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Turning Point Conference and 4th Annual Policy Day! This year's conference theme of *Community Partners Creating Health in Every County* is fundamentally and essentially what Turning Point's mission entails. Turning Point is an initiative to transform and strengthen the health system in Oklahoma by making it more community-based and collaborative and with over 70 strong partnerships across the state we are seeing giant strides in improved health outcomes. One of our ultimate goals is to eventually have at least one partnership in every county in the state.

Rather than the expected and somewhat typical top down approach to public health, Turning Point seeks input from communities to help identify community priorities and implement local solutions. For over 14 years, Turning Point has partnered with communities all across Oklahoma to work on local innovations such as community health centers, worksite wellness, extensive walking trails, community gardens, tobacco control, improved school health activities, nutrition and fitness, and advocacy for health improvement policies, whether environmental or organizational.

Turning Point was founded on the belief that diverse groups working together can better identify and influence the determinants of health. Turning Point starts at the local level, building broad community support and participation in health priority setting and action, engaging and linking affected people at the local level.

We have planned for a full year to bring our communities the best conference ever! Registration is at an all time high and this year's breakout sessions include pertinent, detailed information. The Conference will highlight successes and strategies that each community can take back and use, duplicate, and implement. Our Turning Point breakout sessions include: Certified Healthy Oklahoma Programs, Child Health, Nutrition and Fitness, Legislative Processes and Local Initiatives, MAPP 101, Tobacco at the local level, and Students Mental Health. Policy Day breakout sessions include: Fitness/Built Environment, Behavioral Health, Nutrition, Tobacco, and School Health.

This year our staff increased to 14 consultants serving communities throughout the state. Beginning in May of last year, Turning Point entered into an agreement with the Tobacco Endowment Settlement Trust (TSET) to provide technical assistance to 15 Nutrition and Fitness Grantees across the State of Oklahoma, thus providing communities with additional resources to address obesity.

Enjoy the conference and let us know what you think. All suggestions no matter how small are always appreciated and never taken for granted. One last thought, if you are not currently connected with a Turning Point partnership check out our map and find your Turning Point Consultant and help us make Oklahoma healthy!

Respectfully,

*Arlinda Copeland*

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Director