

# HEALTH ACTION SUMMIT SPEAKERS 2010

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ALAN BLUM, MD  
MARK FENTON  
MARI GALLAGHER

**D**r. Alan Blum joined the University of Alabama faculty in 1999 as professor and the first holder of the Gerald Leon Wallace Endowed Chair in Family Medicine. A graduate of Amherst College and Emory University School of Medicine, Dr. Blum completed his family medicine residency and fellowship at the University of Miami. He was editor of *The Medical Journal of Australia* and the *New York State Journal of Medicine* and then served 13 years on the faculty in family medicine at Baylor College of Medicine.

Dr. Blum's involvement in counteracting the tobacco pandemic led him, as a resident, to form DOC (Doctors Ought To Care), a national organization focusing on school-based and community wide health promotion. For this effort, Dr. Blum received the first National Public Health Award of the American Academy of Family Physicians. Former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop called him an "unsung hero of the world of public health."

At the University of Alabama, Dr. Blum has established the Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society. He has been collecting tobacco-related items and historical artifacts for over 40 years. In his spare time, he is writing on a book of his sketches and stories of patients. He and his wife, Doris, have three sons, Leon, David, and Samuel.

**M**ark Fenton is the former editor-at-large of *WALKING Magazine*; host of the March 2000 PBS pledge special, *Walk to a Better Life*; and now host of the new PBS series, *America's Walking*.

From 1986 to 1990, Mark was a member of the United States national racewalking team five times, and represented the U.S. in numerous international competitions. Mark's research in exercise science began with the study of the biomechanics of

walking at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His work led to numerous publications related to exercise science, human performance, and athletic footwear and materials, while also providing plentiful experience on the health benefits of walking. Mark used that knowledge as a regular columnist in WALKING Magazine and as a speaker and motivator on public health and fitness issues.

Mark has become a vocal pedestrian advocate and recognized authority on public health issues and the need for community, environmental, and public-policy initiatives to encourage more walking and bicycling. He is the health representative to the four-person executive committee of the Partnership for a Walkable America. He's also author of the new book, *The Complete Guide to Walking for Health, Weight Loss and Fitness*; as well as *The 90-Day Fitness Walking Program*, *Precision Walking*, and *The New Walker's Logbook*, and he appears frequently on broadcast and cable television news, health, and lifestyle programming. Certain that he must practice what he preaches, Mark still walks regularly - usually with his wife Lisa, and children, Maxwell and Skye - for fun, health, and to stay in shape for hiking, cycling, orienteering, kayaking, and cross-country skiing whenever they have a chance.

<http://www.pbs.org/americaswalking/series/host.html>

**M**ari Gallagher is Principal of Mari Gallagher Research and Consulting Group. Clients and partners include grassroots community and civic organizations, government entities, foundations, and major international corporations. She and her firm have collaborated with the Institute of Medicine of the Academy of the Sciences, the Urban Institute, Harvard, MIT, the National YMCA, and many other organizations.

Mari is also the Founding President of the National Center for Public Research. NC for PR's mission is to provide meaningful and unbiased data and information to improve quality of life, quality of health, and financial wellbeing for all people and communities.

Publications include "Examining the Impact of Food Deserts on Public Health in Chicago" sponsored by LaSalle Bank (now Bank of America), a breakthrough study which popularized the term "food desert" across the country. MG was the first to develop a block-by-block metric for "food deserts" and "food balance" linked with health measures and has since done similar work in Detroit, rural Michigan, Louisville, Harlem, Savannah, Birmingham, Los Angeles and other areas. Mari's work motivated Congressman Bobby Rush to address the problem of food deserts through the Farm Bill and through the mandating of a follow-on

study to be completed by the USDA. Mari's research shows that residents of food deserts die prematurely more than they would otherwise from diet-related conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer. Under Mari's leadership, MG has provided free diabetes screenings to school age children in Richmond, Virginia, to help identify diabetic and pre-diabetic children and adolescents.

Mari's work continues to be covered by USA Today, National Public Radio, CNN, and many other venues. Mari also writes for the Huffington Post, which has 14 million unique visitors daily.