



**national association  
to advance  
fat acceptance**

## NAAFA Newsletter

**National Association to  
Advance Fat Acceptance**  
August 2014

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### NAAFA Chairman Jason Docherty Has Passed Away



It is with a heavy heart that we report the passing of NAAFA's Chairman of the Board, Jason Docherty, on July 28, 2014 as a result of complications from pneumonia. Jason served first as Co-Chair then as Chairman of NAAFA's Board of Directors since 2005.

When he joined the NAAFA Board, Docherty was the Executive Vice President of New Media for Barnes McInerney, Inc., a marketing firm in Toronto, ON. Jason and his team were responsible

### I Know Girls

[August Video of the Month](#)

Mary Lambert got famous last year as the featured singer on Macklemore & Ryan Lewis's "Same Love". Here, she performs a spoken word song about the real issues that some real girls have.

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=j7tIFfKCESg>

### Quick Links

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[End Bullying Now](#)

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for the development of NAAFA's website and all of the branding and support materials that NAAFA has at its disposal today.

Jason was dedicated to ending discrimination against people of large body size and realizing Equality at Every Size. He was instrumental in the development of the NAAFA Size Diversity Toolkit, the NAAFA Child Advocacy Toolkit, and a long list of brochures and fact sheets to support people of large body size as we deal with life and the challenges we face. But the one thing that touched his heart the most and made him most proud was to see his END BULLYING NOW logo on the shirts and backpacks of hundreds of adults and children. It is Jason's legacy that will live on as NAAFA continues to work to end bullying of all people, large and small.

Please remember his family and close friends as we deal with this tremendous personal loss and loss to the size acceptance community.

## NAAFA Concludes Successful 2014 Conference

On August 10th, NAAFA concluded another successful annual event held this year at the Crowne Plaza Dulles Airport in the Washington, DC area and hosted by NAAFA-Capital Chapter. Although this conference was overshadowed by the loss of NAAFA's Chairman of the Board Jason Docherty, who passed away on July 28, 2014, NAAFA members rose above their sorrow and worked to continue the fight for Equality at Every Size.

The NAAFA Board of Directors met prior to the conference in order to make some of the tough decisions that needed to be made in order to move forward. We are proud to announce that Phyllis Warr will assume the responsibilities of Interim Chairperson of the Board, Peggy Howell has been named Vice Chair along with her Public Relations responsibilities, Donna Frey will serve as Membership Director, and Darliene Howell has joined the Executive Board as NAAFA Secretary and Research Specialist. NAAFA Treasurer and NAAFA-Capital Chapter President Tony Harrell secured our comfortable and convenient venue and was instrumental in the 2014 Conference and its success.

Board members appealed to the NAAFA membership to consider volunteering their talents to serve on the NAAFA Board of Directors or to suggest and help manage projects that might increase membership and fundraising so that NAAFA will not only survive but thrive as we move forward.

First time attendees and longtime members alike walked away from our time together feeling appreciated, accepted and hopeful for the future of the size acceptance movement.

## Darliene Howell Joins NAAFA Board of Directors



The NAAFA Board of Directors is proud to announce the appointment of long-time NAAFA member Darliene Howell to the Board of Directors as Secretary and Research Specialist. Darliene has already served NAAFA for several years by taking minutes of Board meetings and researching information on size related topics. As a result, she comes to this office already familiar with the internal workings of the organization. Additionally, she has served as the President of the NAAFA-Clark County Chapter since January 2014.

Ms. Howell is retired from the Human Resources Department of the County of Sonoma, CA where she worked as Department Analyst. During her career with Sonoma County, Darliene served in the Public Defender's Office, Department of Human Services, Juvenile Probation Department, and finally Human Resources. Darliene's experience includes Project Management, Data Base Management, team leadership, staff supervision, department liaison and statistician. These skills have served her well in her work with NAAFA.

Over the last four years, Darliene has worked on her own form of activism by creating a database of studies and news articles relevant to the size acceptance community. Eventually she found it necessary to create two files, one for adults and one for children. This resource has been invaluable in developing news releases, letters, brochures and toolkits for NAAFA. We believe it is unparalleled. Join us in congratulating and supporting Darliene in her new position.

## "Dear Abby" Gets it Very Wrong!

In her August 11, 2014 column, "Dear Abby" advised "OFFENDED DAUGHTER IN CHICAGO" to respect her mother's wishes regarding the type of swimwear she wears when at her parent's home. NAAFA agrees and supports this suggestion, but what followed as "advice" to this young woman was inappropriate and wrong in so many ways.

"While you say you are comfortable in your own skin, it would be interesting to know what your physician thinks about your obesity," says Abby. OFFENDED wrote Abby for advice about swimwear, not seeking medical advice. You cannot tell by looking at one's weight or body size whether or not they are healthy. Fat does not equal disease and thin does not equal health. Only OFFENDED knows her physical journey and her relationship with her healthcare provider. Many enlightened healthcare providers support Health at Every Size. By doing the research, you will find that individuals can be both fat and healthy.

"I suspect that your mother would be prouder of you if you were less complacent and more willing to do something about your weight problem," continued Abby. OFFENDED wrote that she is comfortable in her own skin. She does not view her weight as a problem. Good self-care includes loving oneself, including your body, just as it is right now. How is her weight anyone else's business, particularly that of an advice columnist? Abby has revealed her true self, one who is judgmental and prejudiced, and who harbors bias against people based on their body size.

A 2002 study indicates that 47% of overweight girls and 34% of overweight boys have faced weight based teasing by family members. A 2007 study indicates that this kind of treatment results in poor self-esteem, depression, body dissatisfaction, poor interpersonal relationships, and suicidal behavior. Parents should love and support their children whatever their body size!

## My Weekend with NAAFA

*by Salima Jefferson*



From August 8-10, I spent my weekend at the 2014 NAAFA Conference in Herndon, VA. It was not only my first NAAFA event, it was also my first fat acceptance event ever. I was extremely nervous at first, but when I walked into registration on Friday, I was welcomed with big smiles and warm hugs. Peggy Howell and Phyllis Warr immediately made me feel like I belonged there. Friday night's karaoke party was a lot of fun. Even though I was not confident enough to get up and sing, I was very happy to be there. Looking around the room and seeing people like me, fat people, made me a little emotional. Coming from a place where I'm usually the only fat person in the room to a place where there are happy fat people all around me was amazing. I made instant connections with people with whom I hope to be life-long friends.

The sessions on Saturday were great with topics like women's health, bullying, and relationships. I wish they ran a little longer to be able to really get deep in conversation, but they were successful in igniting a thought process that I didn't have before. The session on bullying was very interesting and eye-opening to me because I was never really bullied growing up or even now. Sure I've heard tons of stupid comments from ignorant people, but the only bully in my life was me. It's so easy to be self-deprecating and harmful to yourself both emotionally and physically, even when you know it's wrong. I honestly don't know how I would have handled some of the shocking situations about which the other ladies were sharing. I can only applaud them for being as strong as they were in getting through them. The entire day was filled with new topics, new people and new confidence for me. Being at the conference helped me begin to be comfortable in and with my own body and mind. I know it will take time to be completely comfortable and I'm honestly not sure if that day will ever happen, but it is nice to feel like I have a starting point. I am looking forward to fully loving myself and being able to share my life with someone else who appreciates me too.

Sunday I awoke with mixed emotions. I was ecstatic to have had such a wonderful weekend and was torn apart that it had to end. Knowing that I would not be able to wake up every day to all of those smiling faces and positive outlooks was difficult for me to process, but knowing I would keep in touch with people via Facebook helped to put my mind at ease. I appreciate everyone at the NAAFA Conference and credit them for allowing me to leave with a fresh state of mind. I am

excited to continue new friendships and reconnect at future events. I just want to say thank you for an unforgettable experience.

## A Movie Review of *Tammy*

by Tony Harrell

Here in the Washington/Baltimore area, NAAFA-Capital Chapter likes to plan gatherings where we attend movies featuring fat actors in prominent roles and then follow it up with discussion and an enjoyable meal. Our latest outing was to see the movie *Tammy* starring Melissa McCarthy in the lead.

*Tammy* is a woman from the Midwest whose bad luck and bad decisions have contributed to an overall lackluster existence. The movie opens on a day when an unfortunate series of events compel her to take an impulsive road trip to Niagara Falls. Her alcoholic grandmother, played by Susan Sarandon, is eager to join in, and eventually becomes as much of an asset as a liability. At this point, I feel one must suspend belief that Sarandon's character is old enough to be *Tammy*'s grandmother. One must also believe that Allison Janney, who might have been more convincing as *Tammy*'s older sister, is instead her cynical mother.

So: is the movie funny? In my layperson's opinion, it had its moments. There are also some pleasantly surprising guest appearances in the movie. I had an overall feeling of discomfort at watching many of *Tammy*'s circumstances play out. Mind you, it had nothing to do with *Tammy* being a fat person. The movie was co-written and directed by Ben Falcone, who is not only Melissa's husband but is also perhaps most (in)famously known as the love interest of her character in "Bridesmaids." There is one scene where *Tammy*'s size is criticized, but it is quickly resolved and should not be a reason to avoid the film.

That said: by the time this review is published, it is likely that *Tammy*, whose box office was lackluster out of the gate, will be gone from the theaters. If it is not, and your local theater is still offering it for full price, then I would wait a few months until it is released on streaming video and cable. I am optimistic that Melissa McCarthy's bankability is such that she will be able to come back from this experience with a stronger screenplay and movie role.

## From the Chair



by Phyllis Warr

Just prior to this year's NAAFA Conference, we suffered an unimaginable tragedy, the death of long-time Chairman of the Board of Directors, Jason M. Docherty. Although the Board was reeling from this occurrence, it kept its focus on what needed to be done and dealt with the business at hand, the conference.

The NAAFA Board of Directors, led by treasurer and conference chair Tony Harrell, landed in Herndon, Virginia for a three day planning retreat prior to the beginning of the conference Friday evening. Tony did a great job of selecting and working with the Crowne Plaza Dulles Airport Hotel to meet the needs of conference attendees, while getting the best and most for our money.

While our days were long, they were very productive. The Board retreat was planned and conducted by Board member Donna Frey, who used her expertise as a trainer to guide us. Donna did a great job. It was during the retreat that I was voted Interim Chairperson of the Board of Directors. I assure you all that I will do my best in this new position. I have big shoes to fill. There are all of the hardworking chair people who preceded me to whom, I am sure I will be compared; most notably, and recently, Jason. I learned a lot about leading a Board from him and hope to use some of what I learned.

As the Interim Chairperson, I see my job as continuing the work of NAAFA and finding ways of making it better and stronger than before. Those are the most important tasks. In addition, I must lead the search for a permanent chairperson to guide the Board and its membership. We need someone dynamic, with great ideas, who listens to others, recognizes the needs of the organization and is able to find people to assist in helping NAAFA thrive.

The Board will be looking for people to add to its numbers. At the conference, we asked for volunteers to let us know their skills and offer their services as potential Board members and/ or to assist the Board. If you were not able to attend this year's conference, you can still volunteer. Contact me at [PWarr1995@aol.com](mailto:PWarr1995@aol.com) and tell me about your skills and talents, and most importantly, how you can help NAAFA fight for Equality at Every Size.



## Increase Your Mobility



by Cinder Ernst

Hello NAAFA Friends,

As I write this, my knee is killing me. Good thing I'm the knee pain coach, ha! I'm writing this lying down with ice on my knee.

Handling knee pain doesn't mean it will never happen; it means you know how to proceed when it does. I figured out I needed some help with this bout of knee pain so I tried acupuncture and it has helped. It's good to know when you need help; it's even better when you get it!

In July, I taught several workshops on improving your mobility. Participants learned how you can:

- Hurt less when you get up from a chair;
- Walk a little further without pain, and;
- Stand longer with more comfort.

You can learn that too by going to <http://cinderernst.com/mobility>; on this page, you will find the training call along with videos

and documents that will help you get up, walk and stand with more ease.

As always let me know if you have questions or feedback [coach@cinderernst.com](mailto:coach@cinderernst.com)

See you in September!

Love,  
Cinder

## Media and Research Roundup

by Bill and Terri Weitze

[Check <http://naafa.org> and <http://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/naafanews/conversations/topics> for the latest news.]

May 30, 2014: The *Journal of Eating Disorders* publishes Amanda Sainsbury (who has two diet books out) and Phillipa Hay's article titled "Call for an urgent rethink of the 'health at every size' concept" (first link) even though it cites no HAES resources. A correction article takes on Health at Every Size principles one by one, still arguing that fat people are unhealthy and only weight loss will make them healthy.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3995323>

<http://www.jeatdisord.com/content/2/1/13>

June 30, 2014: Poet and activist Sonya Renee Taylor starts a campaign to raise \$80,000 to build and staff The Body Is Not an Apology program, with a commitment to living unapologetically and celebrating every aspect of our humanity. Check out their Facebook page and website (second and third links), and donate if you wish (campaign closes August 22).

<https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/whenwesayyes-we-can-build-the-world-s-most-powerful-radical-self-love-website>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Body-Is-Not-an-Apology/201907573156278>

<http://www.thebodyisnotanapology.com/>

July 8, 2014: A new study associates extreme obesity with substantially elevated rates of total mortality; with most of the excess deaths due to heart disease, cancer, and diabetes; and major reductions in life expectancy. Of course, "associated with" is not the same as "caused by," and rather than recommending research in how to reduce these diseases, the researchers want more money for obesity intervention.

<http://myscienceacademy.org/2014/07/08/extreme-obesity-may-shorten-life-expectancy-up-to-14-years/>

<http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pmed.1001673#pmed-1001673-g002>

July 17, 2014: Samm Newman successfully battled Instagram when the company claimed her selfie in her underwear violated their policies against nudity. As Samm points out, Instagram has a history of objecting to photos of partial nudity only when the subject has an unconventional body type.

<http://thinkprogress.org/culture/2014/07/17/3460951/plus-sized-teen-fights-back-against-instagram/>

July 17, 2014: With so much focus on weight loss, Lacie Glover worries that the importance of good nutrition is fading to the background. She provides a list of reasons why making healthy food choices is good for every body.

<http://news.yahoo.com/7-reasons-eat-healthy-nothing-losing-weight-145501864.html>

July 18, 2014: Following his appearance before a Senate subcommittee on dietary supplements, physicians give their personal opinions on TV personality Dr. Oz including, "Oz is an embarrassment to the medical profession," and "He is a quack, peddling snake oil." The full discussion is available on medscape.com (login required).

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/828225>

July 23, 2014: Researchers review data to evaluate weight-loss and weight-neutral (like HAES) approaches to health. They conclude that weight-centric approaches do not work and often lead to poor health outcomes, and suggest that more study be done on weight-neutral approaches. See the second link for ASDAH's (Association for Size Diversity and Health) press release concerning the article.

<http://www.hindawi.com/journals/jobbe/2014/983495>

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2014/07/prweb12054298.htm>

July 30, 2014: A paper (non-peer reviewed and not yet available online) presented at the Society for the Study of Ingestive Behavior's annual meeting finds an association between dieting at a young age and major health issues later in life, including eating disorders and substance abuse.

<http://nymag.com/scienceofus/2014/07/trouble-ahead-for-girls-who-start-dieting-young.html>

August 1, 2014: A study finds that a community-based exercise intervention, focused on fitness rather than weight loss, can in many cases cause a metabolically abnormal fat person to transition to a metabolically healthy classification.

[http://www.dovepress.com/articles.php?article\\_id=17813](http://www.dovepress.com/articles.php?article_id=17813)

August 1, 2014: Two letters in *JAMA Internal Medicine* object to a study from April 2014 that questioned the classification of obesity as a disease, pointing out the problems with two drugs (Belviq and Qysmia) that have limited efficacy (5% weight loss) and dangerous side effects. Of note, both of the authors of the letters have financial connections with the companies that manufacture the drugs in question, despite claiming to represent "obesity advocacy" groups.

<http://www.medpagetoday.com/Endocrinology/Obesity/47064>

<http://archinte.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1828746>

August 6, 2014: An article in the *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance* looks at size bias that is present in the school gym and other physical activity settings.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07303084.2014.927668>

August 13, 2014: *The New York Times* talks about some recent videos that are size positive and/or encourage people to accept themselves just the way they are. All three videos feature diversity seldom seen in videos.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/14/fashion/meghan-trainor-colbie-caillat-and-sara-bareilles-address-body-image-issues.html>

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=7PCKvCPvDXk> (All About That Bass, Meghan Trainor)

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=GXoZLPSw8U8> (Try, Colby Caillat)

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=QUQsqBqxoR4> (Brave, Sara Bareilles)

*Founded in 1969, NAAFA is a non-profit human rights organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for fat people. NAAFA works to eliminate discrimination based on body size and provide fat people with the tools for self-empowerment through public education, advocacy, and member support.*

On the web: <http://www.naafa.org>

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