



# NAAFA Newsletter

**Official Publication of the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance**

**Holiday 2009**

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## About NAAFA

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.

## Quick Links

**Our Website**  
**2010 Convention**

**Join Our Mailing List!**

**:: 916-558-6880**

## NAAFA 2010 Convention: Back to the Bay

NAAFA will be returning to the San Francisco Bay Area for our 2010 fund-raising convention. Plan now to join us at the Westin San Francisco Airport Hotel. Room rates are \$89 per night and can be booked for August 5 - 9, 2010! The [Westin](#) is prepared to receive your reservation today.

We have worked hard to keep the cost of this convention down and to move quickly in making our convention package available early this year. NAAFA is introducing a three tiered convention registration fee. Our \$199.00 *SUPER EARLY BIRD SPECIAL* starts now and is available until January 31, 2010. The Early Bird Special price is \$225.00 from February 1 through May 31, 2010. Beginning June 1, 2010, full convention price will be \$265.00.

If you've ever been to a NAAFA Convention, you know how affirming, fun, and informative it can be. NAAFA is not just a human rights organization; it's a community, and the Convention is when we can fully experience the feeling of community.

The 2010 NAAFA Convention Package makes a great holiday gift for you, your family and all your friends!

It's easy to register for *both* the convention *and* the hotel through our website at [NAAFA.org](#). Register today to participate in this life-changing event. Watch our website for more exciting details as they become available.

## Gifts That Keep on Giving

*by Peggy Howell, NAAFA Public Relations*

The holiday season is upon us and I know that even in this tough economy, giving to our family, friends and those less fortunate than ourselves is on all of our minds. Americans generally pride ourselves in being generous and time and again we have shown that to be true! Sadly, the decline in our economy has crimped our style for many of us and we need to make every dollar count.

We are also at a very important juncture in the history of our nation. Desperately needed healthcare reform is becoming a reality and many NAAFA members are part of the millions of Americans who are currently considered "uninsurable". This is change we all need and NAAFA is proud of the part we are playing in bringing about change that will benefit all of us.

I would like to suggest ways that you can help fund the projects that NAAFA is involved in while giving gifts of meaning and purpose to others. Fifteen dollars is all it takes to buy a family member or friend a contributing membership to NAAFA for one year. NAAFA's 2010 SUPER EARLY BIRD SPECIAL convention package is only \$199.00 through 1/31/2010. Wouldn't you love to receive a convention package as a holiday gift? I know I would!

Don't forget that the purchase of gifts for others or a donation to NAAFA is tax deductible for the gift giver! Any of these great gifts will keep on giving long after the holiday season is behind us. Your generous gift to NAAFA will enable us to move forward in our efforts to improve the lives of people of all

sizes and end discrimination for good! May your holidays be filled with love, laughter and big fat hugs!

## Lincoln University Drops Required Fitness Class

December 6, 2009: NAAFA is pleased to announce that Lincoln University's faculty has decided to drop their policy that would have required students with a BMI above 30 to lose weight or complete a fitness course in order to graduate.

The article below presents the November 30 press release asking the university to remove this policy. We would like to thank all of you who made phone calls and wrote letters to President Nelson expressing your concern about this discriminatory policy. This is a victory for the fat kids!

### Lincoln University Gets a Failing Grade

November 30, 2009: NAAFA, a civil rights organization dedicated to protecting the rights of people of size, is shocked that the historically Black college Lincoln University is engaged in discriminating against their fat students. It was not so many years ago that people were not allowed to pursue higher education based on their skin color. Now Lincoln University will deny graduation based on the size of one's body.

Lincoln's policy that requires fat students to reduce their weight below a BMI of 30 or complete a one semester fitness course serves to further stigmatize students of size on campus. Students of all sizes engage in unhealthy practices. Health and nutrition education are good for every body and singling out fat students is discriminatory.

The Rudd Center at Yale University published: "In a study of more than 2,400 overweight and obese adults, 79% reported that they had coped with weight bias by eating more and 75% reported that they refused to keep dieting in response to bias. In addition, adults who experienced weight bias were more likely to engage in binge eating. Other evidence suggests that weight stigma reduces the desire to exercise and thus makes obese adults less active."

Fat students are already less likely to go to college (Crosnoe, 2007) due to the stigmatization of weight and the perceived discrimination they expect to experience in college.

NAAFA recommends the immediate withdrawal of this policy and practice.

NAAFA offers to assist Lincoln in developing a health policy that encourages students of all sizes to engage in healthy lifestyle behaviors independent of numbers on a scale and BMI calculations.

NAAFA encourages Lincoln University to incorporate Health At Every Size (HAES) principles into their policies and practices ([naafaonline.com/dev2/education/haes.html](http://naafaonline.com/dev2/education/haes.html)).

"It is an unacceptable situation, when an institution of higher learning engages in such short sighted and harmful practices. A letter along with a NAAFA Size Diversity Toolkit will be sent to Lincoln's President, in the hope that a new perspective can chart a better path for all concerned," stated Lisa Tealer, NAAFA Board Member and corporate diversity professional.

### In Memoriam: Lisa Brown

by Peggy Howell

It is with a heavy heart that I must share the news that long time NAAFA member Lisa Brown (pictured in center with Wendy Devey and Karen Gribbin) passed away as a result of complications from double pneumonia. Lisa left this world on November 1, 2009

 Lisa Brown, Karen Gribbin, and Wendy Devey

and her funeral service was held Wednesday, November 4, 2009 in Pittsburgh, PA.

Lisa was a member of the Pittsburgh chapter of NAAFA and always attended every east coast convention. Wendy Devey and Lisa Brown were best friends. I love what Wendy had to say in her closing words at Lisa's grave side, "There is so much I could say about our Lisa Brown. As you already know, not only did she dance to the beat of a different drummer, she WAS the drummer. And I was so lucky to play along in her band."

Memorial contributions may be made to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, 333 E. Carson St., Ste 441 Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

## Media and Research Roundup

[Editor's Note: As we continue to play catch-up in this column, you can find the latest size acceptance news, good and bad, at the NAAFA News RSS Feed at [NAAFA.org](http://NAAFA.org)]

February 2009: A study claims that acupuncture is an effective treatment for "obesity". However, The International Journal of Obesity states that the evidence is not fully convincing because of poor methodological quality of the trials.

[www.nature.com/ijo/journal/v33/n2/abs/ijo2008269a.html](http://www.nature.com/ijo/journal/v33/n2/abs/ijo2008269a.html)

February 3, 2009: Jared Wheat, CEO of Hi-Tech Pharmaceuticals, is sentenced to 50 months in prison in an unusual criminal case that explored both illegal online pharmacies and the legal, but barely regulated, US dietary supplement industry. Prosecutors backed off on the issue that the dietary supplements were spiked with ephedrine alkaloids, which has been a banned substance since 2004.

[www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28983195](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28983195)

February 3, 2009: Plastic surgeon Dr. Bahman Guyuron's study on the faces of identical twins, finds that over the age of 40 that the heavier twin is perceived as younger (under 40, the heavier twin is perceived as older). Dr. Guyuron points out that losing abnormal amounts of weight not only have harmful effects on your health, but on your appearance too.

[http://journals.lww.com/plasreconsurg/Abstract/2009/04000/Factors\\_Contributing\\_to\\_the\\_Facial\\_Aging\\_of.19.aspx](http://journals.lww.com/plasreconsurg/Abstract/2009/04000/Factors_Contributing_to_the_Facial_Aging_of.19.aspx)

February 4, 2009: A study in *The Journal of Gerontology - Medicine*, looking at fatness and fitness as mortality predictors in a group of elderly male veterans, finds that the men with the highest BMIs who were also fit were living the longest.

<http://biomedgerontology.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/64A/6/695>

February 5, 2009: RadarOnline.com reports NAAFA's stance on the media hype over Jessica Simpson's weight, stating NAAFA believes a person's body size is not anyone else's business.

[www.radaronline.com/exclusives/2009/02/fat-acceptance-group-has-simpsons-backside.php](http://www.radaronline.com/exclusives/2009/02/fat-acceptance-group-has-simpsons-backside.php)

February 8, 2009: This year the 2009 Grammy Award winners include two beautiful, talented fat women - Jennifer Hudson (Best R&B album) and Adele (Best New Artist and Best Female Pop Vocal Performance).

[2009grammywinners.com](http://2009grammywinners.com)

February 21, 2009: Amy Wooten's article in *The Chicago Free Press* on the issue of lesbians and "obesity" is a mixed bag. There is a lot of hue and cry about higher BMI scores in the lesbian population; but if you keep reading, the article becomes distinctly HAES friendly with good information from folks like Linda Bacon, Marilyn Wann and Esther Rothblum, Ph.D. [Article no longer available due to closure of Chicago Free Press.]

February 22, 2009: Jungwee Park's report on "obesity" in the workplace for the Canadian government seems to do everything it can to blame the fat worker. Fat workers take more sick days, but is that because they are fat, or because they are on average older, poorer, and have more stressful jobs? This report acknowledges the covariates, but in the end blames the fat.

[www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-001-x/2009102/article/10789-eng.htm](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-001-x/2009102/article/10789-eng.htm)

February 22, 2009: *The Observer* reports that the "obesity epidemic" will cause cancer deaths to double in the next 40 years, according to Sir Michael Marmot (Univ. College of London). No statistics or cites to studies are offered to support Marmot prediction of impending catastrophe.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2009/feb/22/cancer-obesity-link>

February 25, 2009: An article in *The New York Times* posits a new eating disorder where children have anxiety over eating "bad" food. Eating disorder specialists worry that some parents are becoming overzealous, even obsessive, in efforts to engender good eating habits in children, possibly creating an unhealthy relationship with food.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/26/health/nutrition/26food.html>

February 26, 2009: With great pleasure, Sigrun Danielsdottir announces the publication of new "Obesity Prevention Guidelines" posted by the Academy for Eating Disorders that manage to keep the focus strictly HAES. Ms. Danielsdottir added, "The only thing that would have been more HAES was to have the guidelines simply read: Stop it!"

<http://www.aedweb.org/media/Guidelines.cfm>

February 26, 2009: *The New England Journal of Medicine* publishes a study on different calorie-restricted diets. Each diet emphasized a different food type (protein, carbohydrates, and/or fat), and all had the same results - initial weight loss followed by weight regain. The study concludes that "Reduced-calorie diets result in a clinically meaningful weight loss regardless of which macronutrient they emphasize." They forgot to add that such diets are equally meaningless when it comes to long term weight loss.

[content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/360/9/859](http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/360/9/859)

March 2009: *The Journal of Nutrition* publishes an overview on a symposium on food addiction proposing that fatty or sugary foods are not addictive as such but become so following a restriction/binge pattern of consumption. In other words, rather than being an effective treatment for food addiction, dieting can cause it.

[jn.nutrition.org/cgi/content/abstract/139/3/617](http://jn.nutrition.org/cgi/content/abstract/139/3/617)

March 2, 2009: Radaronline.com reports on NAAFA's position that 24 Hr. Fitness, a sponsor of The Biggest Loser, is anti-fat and requested that NAAFA members cancel their memberships. According to Peggy Howell, 24 Hr. Fitness is known for refusing membership to fat people because of their size.

<http://www.radaronline.com/exclusives/2009/03/biggest-loser-sponsor-is-antifat-says-group.php>

March 3, 2009: *Medical News Today* reports on a study on stigmatization against fat people, finding weight bias among those studying to be dieticians. The article points out that these stereotypes are similar to negative attitudes reported by a range of healthcare providers, indicating a clear need to address these issues in the training of healthcare professionals.

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/140818.php>

[http://www.adajournal.org/article/S0002-8223\(08\)02197-4/abstract](http://www.adajournal.org/article/S0002-8223(08)02197-4/abstract)

March 5, 2009: Katherine Hobson's article for *US News*, "If Diets Don't Work, What's the Solution to Obesity in America", is the stuff that makes teeth grind. She starts out with statistics showing that diets don't work, but then devolves into the same old talk of fatness as a problem to be solved by turning fat people into thin people instead of fat people into healthy fat people.

[health.usnews.com/articles/health/diabetes/2009/03/05/if-diets-dont-work-whats-the-solution-to-obesity-in-america.html](http://health.usnews.com/articles/health/diabetes/2009/03/05/if-diets-dont-work-whats-the-solution-to-obesity-in-america.html)

March 9, 2009: What is up with New Zealand? First they blocked immigration of fat people, next their Ministry of Health is purposing spending millions to fund WLS, and now they want to drill holes in the heads of fat folks and inject genetic material to make them thin. As the NZ Herald reports, based on the success of the animal trials, Professor During, a neuroscientist, wants to start human clinical trials - as early as within 12 months.

[www.nzherald.co.nz/health/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=204&objectid=10560663](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/health/news/article.cfm?c_id=204&objectid=10560663)

<http://www.nature.com/nm/journal/v15/n4/full/nm.1933.html>

March 9, 2009: Good news from Canada - sort of. Canada's Supreme Court has refused to hear the appeal of airlines as to the 1 person/1 fare ruling. Further, the Court has denied the airlines a year in which to develop its policies. The 1 person/1 fare ruling goes into effect January 4, 2010.

However, before you start booking your flights, the Court has also left it up to the airlines to develop their own screening policies; which should make everyone nervous. But at least, it's a step in the right direction.

<http://www.aero-news.net/index.cfm?ContentBlockID=487dcdea-865c-47e2-a738-5e0225ef38b3>

March 11, 2009: A proposed New York State tax on soda (aka the obesity tax) is dropped from the state budget. Although calling this an "obesity tax" is absurd because people of all sizes drink soda, this just shows how fatness is used in political scare tactics. [And unfortunately Gov. David Paterson proposed it again in October.]

[www.nydailynews.com/ny\\_local/2009/03/11/2009-03-11\\_thank\\_obama\\_stimulus\\_means\\_no\\_ipod\\_or\\_so.html](http://www.nydailynews.com/ny_local/2009/03/11/2009-03-11_thank_obama_stimulus_means_no_ipod_or_so.html)  
[www.baylor.edu/lariat/news.php?action=story&story=64595](http://www.baylor.edu/lariat/news.php?action=story&story=64595)

March 12 and 16, 2009: The UK proposal to tax chocolate (another "obesity tax") gets two fat doses of scrutiny. First, fat rights activist Fatima Parker appears last on a 3-hour Shane O'Conner's Breakfast Show on BBC Radio to provide the size acceptance movement's stance, closing the show with the song "Big Girl You Are Beautiful". Second, columnist Rob Lyons of spiked gives good information about the paucity of evidence that being fat is not the death sentence often implied, and concludes that the war on fat is not about health at all, and that there is an unhealthy class element to the obsession for slimness.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/console/p002c7lf>  
<http://www.spiked-online.com/index.php?site/article/6358>

March 12, 2009: Critics of USDA programs (ranging from school milk to food stamps) now claim that these programs contribute to the "obesity epidemic" according to Reuters UK. Thomas O'Connor of the USDA and Kelly Brownell of Rudd Center believe that the evidence on the issue, at best, mixed, and Brownell speculates that fat people are once again being used as a scapegoat for people who want to see the funding to such programs cut.

[uk.reuters.com/article/idUKTRE52B7OU20090312](http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKTRE52B7OU20090312)

March 14, 2009: Size rights activist Sigrun Danielsdottir is nominated for the "Society Award" from the largest newspaper in Iceland, Frettabladid, in the category "fight against prejudice". (See related February 26 story.) As researcher Dr. Linda Bacon points out, "It's wonderful that Iceland is recognizing size prejudice as a critical issue."

March 14, 2009: Boulder Business and Professional Women names Carmen Cool's Boulder Youth Body Alliance as its Business of the Year. BYBA employs creative techniques and peer leadership development to provide alternative messages to youth about weight, health and concepts of beauty.

[www.boulderbpw.org/celebrationofwomen.html](http://www.boulderbpw.org/celebrationofwomen.html)

March 16, 2009: In an incredibly biased article, Reuters reports on a new program meant to help babies from becoming fat by controlling the pregnant mother's weight. Dr. Robert Kushner states that children of "overweight" mothers are more likely to be "overweight", because the mother passed along her bad eating and lifestyle habits. Apparently, Dr. Kushner doesn't believe that the mother may be simply passing along her fat genes.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSTRE52F0JV20090316>

March 16, 2009: Even though she isn't fat by most standards, Meghan McCain (daughter of John McCain) stands up for size acceptance in her response to radio host Laura Ingraham's comment on Ms. McCain's size, as reported in the New York Times. Thank you Ms. McCain for an eloquent and well-reasoned response that we can all embrace.

[well.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/16/a-conservative-pundits-plus-size-remark](http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/16/a-conservative-pundits-plus-size-remark)

March 18, 2009: New York City NAAFA member Donna responds to critics after her appearance on The Tyra Show; the video is linked below (the show was repeated on August 10).

[tyrashow.warnerbros.com/2009/08/after\\_the\\_show\\_donna\\_responds.php](http://tyrashow.warnerbros.com/2009/08/after_the_show_donna_responds.php)

March 18, 2009: Dr. Arya Sharma, Chairman for Cardiovascular Obesity Research and Management at the University of Alberta and Scientific Director of the Canadian Obesity Network states, "It's not enough to just know how big someone is. In order to make medical decisions, you need to know how sick someone is." Dr. Sharma has come to the realization that fat people can be and often are healthy! [Original article no longer available; link is to a related article.]

<http://www.canada.com/health/Body+levels+good+indicator+overall+health+Doctor/1274380/story.html>

March 20, 2009: Not only are weight-loss products ineffective, they can also be outright dangerous. For the second time, the USFDA has expanded their list of tainted weight-loss products. Not only do they contain undeclared ingredients but some contain prescription drugs in amounts that greatly exceed maximum recommended dosages.

<http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm149547.htm>

March 23, 2009: CNN reports on the numerous scams involving acai berries. The Center for Science in the Public Interest states that claims of weight loss are unfounded; and there is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that it will help shed pounds, flatten tummies, or perform any of the other commonly advertised functions.

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/HEALTH/03/23/acai.berries.scam/index.html>

March 31, 2009: Arena Pharmaceuticals claims success for its entry in the weight-loss drug category, lorcaserin, in its first late-stage clinical trial. After taking the drug for a year, patients lost an average of 5.8% of their body weight (patients on the placebo lost 2.2% on average). With these underwhelming results, Arena's stock dropped by 28% - a really significant loss!

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/31/business/31obese.html>

March 31, 2009: A German study purports that giving children more access to water during the day (as well as lessons on the benefits of drinking water) reduced the children's risk of becoming "overweight" by 30%. But the study didn't show a statistically meaningful difference in BMI scores or consumption of sugary beverages. Which leaves unanswered - on what basis do they claim success?

[well.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/30/school-water-fountains-to-prevent-obesity](http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/30/school-water-fountains-to-prevent-obesity)  
[pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/123/4/e661](http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/123/4/e661)



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