



**national association  
to advance  
fat acceptance**

## NAAFA Newsletter

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### AMA Rules Against Advisors: Fat Now a Disease!

Against the recommendation of their scientific advisors, the AMA declares obesity a disease. Many believe this will further damage the already fragile relationship between physician and fat patient.

Patients of high body weight are one of the groups of people who are least inclined to seek medical attention because of the discrimination they face.

Physician's weight bias, already a major problem, is now moving beyond just stigmatization to clear dislike and negativity toward the overweight, (Brochu P, Esses V, [2009]). Couple this with the fact that physicians have received insufficient or no training to address or examine fat patients and are frustrated with the lack of resources available to them (Amy NK, et al [2006]), setting the stage for a powder keg of discrimination, the likes of which we have never seen before.

Into this environment of bias and discrimination, the American Medical Association (AMA) declares that obesity is a disease. "The AMA just put its official stamp of approval on the widespread weight bias of physicians," stated NAAFA Advisory Board Member Dr. Deb Burgard. "This act furthers the 'War on the Obese.' Economic greed and weight stigma have trumped science and the advice of the AMA's own expert committee, and it is a sad day for the relationship between doctors and their higher-weight patients...People are losing confidence that their doctors have their best interests at heart...This decision represents a clear victory of economic interests over science."

Key points against AMA Ruling:

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July 2013

### A Lot to Offer the World!

[July Video of the Month](#)

NAAFA is very excited to have Lynne Hurdle-Price join us as a keynote speaker at the 2013 NAAFA Convention. You will no doubt be able to relate to what she has to share about her life and experiences as a fat woman. This month's video is Lynne's TEDx talk, just a taste of what we can expect to enjoy:

[tedxwomen.org/speakers/  
lynne-hurdle-price/](http://tedxwomen.org/speakers/lynne-hurdle-price/)

### Quick Links

[NAAFA Home](#)  
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AMA turned away from science and the recommendations of its own scientific advisors  
 AMA cited economic motives in colluding with corporate interests  
 AMA failed to reach this decision with input of the relevant community of higher-weight people

NAAFA votes:  
 NO CONFIDENCE in the AMA

NAAFA demands:  
 A reversal of this designation and an immediate roundtable discussion that includes higher-weight people from every community.

In response to the AMA decision, fat activists have started the *#IAMNotADisease* hashtag on Twitter. Author and fat activist Marilyn Wann started a [Change.org](http://www.change.org) petition, which is already getting strong support. NAAFA encourages everyone who supports Equality At Every Size to sign and share the petition with others: <https://www.change.org/petitions/american-medical-association-stop-defining-obesity-sic-as-a-disease>

## NAAFA Announces Dr. Linda Bacon as Closing Keynote Speaker for its 2013 Annual Convention & Expo!



NAAFA has announced that Dr. Linda Bacon, Nutrition Professor, Researcher, and Author of *Health at Every Size; the Surprising Truth About your Weight* ([www.LindaBacon.Org](http://www.LindaBacon.Org) and [www.HAESbook.com](http://www.HAESbook.com)), will be a featured keynote speaker at its upcoming 2013 Annual Convention & Expo. The name of Dr. Bacon's keynote is *Meeting Resistance, Cultivating Resilience*.

Linda Bacon, PhD, is a researcher whose three graduate degrees, research, and clinical expertise uniquely prepare her to understand and translate the physiological, psychological, and socio-cultural underpinnings of weight. She is currently a Nutrition Professor at City College of San Francisco and an Associate Nutritionist at the University of California, Davis. An internationally recognized authority on weight and health, Dr. Bacon has published her work in top scientific journals as well as the highly acclaimed bestseller, *Health at Every Size: The Surprising Truth about Your*

*Weight* which has been widely accepted by scientists, health professionals and the general public.

"Dr. Linda Bacon keynoting at this year's convention demonstrates NAAFA's commitment to promoting the message of adopting health, regardless of weight," said Jason Docherty, NAAFA Board Chair. "Her credentials on the subject matter are unmatched, and we couldn't be more pleased to have Linda deliver our closing keynote remarks. She will prepare us to best live our daily lives in a society obsessed with weight bias, discrimination and stigma. Her message will send our convention attendees back home with much-needed resilience."

## NAAFA Announces Michelle Anderson as Keynote Speaker!

NAAFA announces that Michelle Anderson, Miss Plus America 2011, will be a featured keynote speaker at its upcoming 2013 Annual Convention & Expo. The name of Anderson's keynote is *Why We Share Our Stories*.

Anderson is the first openly HIV positive woman to ever run for and win a national pageant title. She currently resides in Dallas, Texas and is very active in her community as: an Advocacy Mobilizer for AIDS Healthcare Foundation, Consultant for the Afiya Center HIV Prevention and Sexual Reproductive Justice, Co-Chair of Campaign to End AIDS Southwest, Treasurer/Board Member for ADAP Advocacy Association, member of the Texas Black Women Initiative and Blogger for *A Girl Like Me!* She has dedicated much of her personal life to educating others on



HIV/AIDS throughout the greater Dallas area and across the United States. She plans to finish her degree in Social Work where she will be able to continue to spread the message, and educate people regarding HIV/AIDS as well as use her title to raise awareness, end stigma, shame and blame associated with HIV infection among women of color.

"Michelle and her message of acceptance embody everything that NAAFA is trying to achieve," said Brandon M. Macsata, NAAFA Convention Committee Chair. "When she submitted her entry in the 2011 Miss Plus America pageant, she was shunned; not because she was African-American, or a plus size woman, but rather because she is openly HIV-positive. We need to move past these labels and barriers, and Michelle's story will serve as an inspiration for every NAAFACon attendee".

Additional information about Michelle winning the Miss Plus America 2011 pageant is available online at <http://plusamerica.org/michelle.asp>.

## DJ Jose Heredia to Rock the House at the NAAFA 2013 Annual Convention & Expo!



Jose Heredia aka DJ Satisfaction of Satisfaction Entertainment will be the featured DJ at NAAFA's upcoming 2013 Annual Convention & Expo. DJ Satisfaction will be rocking the house at Friday's "Once Upon a Vegas Night" Dance Party & Costume Ball, Saturday's Awards Dinner, Fashion Show and After Party, and Sunday's Pizza Party and Talent Show as well as the swim party.

Born in the bustling metropolis of Mexico City, and growing up in the sleepy southeastern suburb of South Gate, CA, Jose was touched by music on many levels.

"Jose has established an amazing reputation throughout southern California, and elsewhere," said Brandon M. Macsata,

NAAFA Convention Committee Chair. "His skills as a deejay and emcee are sure to keep our energy high and us on our feet!"

Many of you may have experienced DJ Satisfaction at the BBW Network's Vegas Bash the last several years. Additional information about Satisfaction Entertainment is available online at <http://djsatisfaction.com/>.

## NAAFACon Raffles

By Phyllis Warr, Raffle Empress

The excitement is building and there is much to do before the convention begins. When you are packing, remember to toss some of those cute address labels that charities sent you to entice your donations into your bag. They are convenient to use on raffle tickets. As you know, the convention is our major fundraising event. Those who have attended convention before know that I will be working hard to get your money for raffle tickets. The labels will make it easy for you to put your name on your tickets. Again, our tickets are cheap, only 1 for \$1, \$5 for 6, \$10 for 20, \$25 for 75!

We have a great variety of prizes that you can win: cute extra-large "Oh, Cabana Boy" towels, gift cards for Starbuck's Coffee and Amazon, beautiful jewelry and



more.

So, don't forget to budget raffle ticket money and support NAAFA's programs, you may win a great prize for your efforts.

## A Day at the Spa!



By Darliene Howell

Traveling can be stressful. While the 2013 NAAFA Convention is filled with educational opportunities and fun, sometimes we just need some "down-time." Since the Westin Las Vegas has such wonderful amenities, Peggy and I took advantage of one of them so we could share the experience with you.

The Hibiscus Spa and Salon, housed on the second floor of the Westin Las Vegas, is well equipped to provide you with whatever spa service you desire! From massages to

wraps, facials to manicures and pedicures, hair cuts and styling, the Hibiscus Spa and Salon has it all.

Peggy decided to have a full-body massage and pedicure while I chose a manicure and pedicure. We were welcomed at the front desk with smiles and a tour of the spa. Peggy went into the locker room to change into a robe while I waited in the Relaxation Lounge with a refreshing cold drink. The locker room provides access to a sauna, steam room and outdoor hot tub.

After changing, Peggy joined me in the Relaxation Lounge to wait for her massage therapist. Kelly was welcoming and asked about Peggy's preferences in the amount of pressure and type of massage. I asked Peggy later how her massage was and she said, "Great! I should do this more often."

My manicurist, Nicole, greeted me and showed me to her nail station. She asked my preferences in service and was very personable. After my manicure, I moved to the pedicure chair which was comfortable, with vibration and massage selections. I was pampered with a fabulous pedicure that made me feel relaxed. I must say that I was treated well. Later, Peggy joined me in the pedicure room to receive her fabulous treatment.

We both highly recommend the spa services and were ecstatic to find that **the spa is extending a 20% discount on all spa services to all convention attendees!** Simply let them know you are part of the NAAFA Convention to receive your discount.

The Hibiscus Spa and Salon is open daily from 8am to 8pm. For additional information on the Spa's services, go to <http://www.westinvegas.com/las-vegas-spa>.

## "Feel Good" Flying

By Cinder Ernst

I hate flying and what it feels like on my body, but I love getting to my vacation or destination. One way to help ease the pain of flying is to do some simple targeted exercises while you are sitting. Without some exercising and moving about on the



plane you are more likely to be stiff and sore when you arrive and some folks may even have circulation problems from the flight.

On the other hand, one of my clients was amazed when she tried these exercises on a flight from SF to Hawaii - she could walk unassisted off the plane for the first time in years!

Here's what to do.

- Start with your feet; tap your toes up and down and side to side 5 times.
- Then gently squeeze your knees together 5 times, gently. Did I say gently? Yes, I did.
- Now push your lower back gently into the seat 5 times, you can gently squeeze your butt with this.
- Gently (notice the theme here) squeeze your shoulder blades together 5 times, this is called a

Shoulder Blade Kiss.

- Next, roll your shoulders twice to the back and twice to the front.
- Look gently to the right, then the left.

If nothing hurts (if you do this gently it's more likely nothing will hurt and you will do more good than harm for yourself) you can repeat this sequence often during your flight.

It's good to do it as soon as you sit down and also before you stand up and of course in between.

If you'd like to learn a good stretch to do before you get on the plane and again when you arrive go to <http://lesskneepain.com> and watch the "hamstring stretch" video on that page.

See ya in Vegas!  
Cinder

## Welcome to Vegas!



One last newsletter before the 2013 NAAFA convention in Las Vegas! We would like to remind you of a few important things to make your trip more enjoyable.

### FROM THE AIRPORT:

The Westin does not provide a free shuttle service. Shuttles to the Strip cost about \$8.00 per person, a taxi costs about \$15.00 and limo service is approximately \$40.00 per hour.

### SCOOTER RENTAL:

Scooter rental companies that have large scooters available to rent:

<http://www.702scooters.com> and  
<http://www.activemobilitylv.com>

### HYDRATE, HYDRATE, HYDRATE:

Always carry a bottle of water with you whenever you leave the hotel. The climate is very hot and dry. It is important to drink

a lot of water, even if you don't think you're thirsty, to maintain your health and enjoy your time in Las Vegas!

### PROTECT YOUR SKIN:

Be sure to wear sunscreen whenever you leave the hotel. The desert has very high, dry temperatures and you may not think it is as hot as it really is. Don't let a sun burn spoil your time at the NAAFA convention!

### HAILING A CAB:

In most cities you simple step off the curb and wave down a taxi, but NOT in Vegas. It's against the law for a taxi to stop in the street; this is for safety and to keep the traffic flowing. So when you want a taxi in Vegas, you just go to any

hotel valet, where they are all lined up waiting to take you anywhere you want to go. Also, note that there are handicapped accessible taxis that can take your scooter and you wherever you want, at no extra cost.

I was thrilled to learn that EVERY cab company in Vegas is required by law to keep handicapped vans in their fleets. Another difference is that all taxi cab companies charge the same price, so there is no need to call around to find the cheapest cab as one might do in many other cities.

NO MASKS, REAL OR FAKE WEAPONS IN A CASINO:

**IMPORTANT NOTICE** regarding Friday's costume night.... Casinos do not allow anyone to wear a mask in the casino. For everyone's safety, neither fake nor real weapons are allowed at all. This is considered a security issue and violations of this policy will not be taken lightly. Simply carry your mask if you plan to go to the casino/street level or go straight from your guest room to the convention area on the 2nd floor. DO NOT WEAR A MASK OR CARRY A FAKE OR REAL WEAPON TO THE CASINO LEVEL OF THE HOTEL.

We'll see you soon in Vegas, baby!

## Media and Research Roundup

by Bill and Terri Weitze

[There's more news at <http://naafa.org>]

April 2013: Speaking at TEDMED 2013, Peter Attia tells his personal story of moving from contempt to compassion for fat people. At the end, while he still believes that weight loss should be a goal for fat people, he advocates taking nothing for granted in the fight against type II diabetes, including the role of fatness in diabetes.

<http://www.tedmed.com/speakers/show?id=18028>

May 2013: A study finds that stigmatization is so pervasive, disruptive, and corrosive that it is a major factor in the poorer health of stigmatized groups, and should be considered in research on public health.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23488505>

May 28, 2013: The RAND Corporation's report on employer wellness programs, which was presented to the U.S. Department of Labor and Department of Health and Human Services last fall, is made public, and the results are that these programs are not effective "clinically or financially".

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/danmunro/2013/05/28/rand-corporation-briefly-publishes-sobering-report-on-workplace-wellness-programs>

June 13, 2013: Comparing three studies on employer "wellness" programs, researchers find that programs that punish fat employees, even if there are balancing incentives, are interpreted by employees as having a negative attitude toward fat employees and send a stigmatizing message.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23765268>

June 18, 2013: Fat and beautiful Gloria Shuri Navi discusses her relationship with her not-fat boyfriend. She faces incredulity from friends and strangers.

Disappointingly, Gloria also is happy that the relationship is leading to weight loss.

<http://shine.yahoo.com/love-sex/im-overweight-boyfriends-not-big-freaking-deal-134800157.html>

June 19, 2013: ROUNDUP EXTRA: The AMA announces that obesity would now be classified as a disease, despite the recommendation of its own Council on Science and Public Health (first link), leading many to suspect a profit motive linked to the 2014 Affordable Care Act provisions. (Previously, the AMA had classified obesity as a public health issue, but not a disease.) The announcement (second link) causes a stir in mass and blog media, including NAAFA's response (see related article above), and great essays by Marilyn Wann, Abigail Saguy, and Joslyn Smith (third through fifth links). On the bright side, most discussions provide both the pros and cons to this decision (remaining links). [We also have separate entries for other AMA responses.]

<http://www.medpagetoday.com/MeetingCoverage/AMA/39918>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/19/business/ama-recognizes-obesity-as-a-disease.html>

<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2013/06/19/1217298/-The-War-on-Fat-People-Doctors-Enlist>

<http://ideas.time.com/2013/06/24/if-obesity-is-a-disease-why-are-so-many-obese-people-healthy>

<http://wearetherealdeal.com/2013/06/25/a-disease-of-self-hatred>

<http://commonhealth.wbur.org/2013/06/obesity-ama-fat-acceptance>

<http://www.adn.com/2013/06/22/2949851/in-labeling-obesity-a-disease.html>  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/06/is-obesity-really-a-disease/277148>  
<http://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/Debate-grows-over-whether-obesity-is-a-disease-4622280.php?t=173f2c7d2a47b02379>  
<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/17336-group-claims-new-ama-policy-sanctions-discrimination-based-on-body-size>  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/02/business/few-signs-of-a-taste-for-diet-pills.html>

June 19, 2013: A study claims that fat teens have reduced hearing as compared to their non-fat peers and that this may lead to hearing loss in adulthood. The reason for this is not known, and scientists aren't sure that weight loss will improve matters, but even so, they prescribe weight loss.

<http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/06/19/obesity-in-teenagers-is-tied-to-hearing-loss>  
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/lary.24244/abstract>

June 19, 2013: David Berreby points out the underlying fallacies with commonly offered explanations for fatness. Since some other species are undergoing a trend of weight gain whether they are domesticated, wild, living in urban or rural areas, and even when living in labs where diet and activity is strictly regulated, human weakness of will may not be the reason. [See second link for the 2010 study which looks at the weight gain trend in animals.]

<http://www.aeonmagazine.com/being-human/david-berreby-obesity-era>  
<http://rspb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/278/1712/1626.short>

June 24, 2013: Pattie Thomas, Ph.D. takes on two topics in her Psychology Today blog. First, she discusses the fat bias demonstrated by educated persons who think fatness is a lifestyle choice, and second, she discusses the AMA's decision to classify obesity as a disease. Her message in both instances is, being a fat human does not make you "less of a human".

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/i-take-space/201306/what-do-you-call-fat-woman-phd>

June 24, 2013: According to a recent study, parental discussions focusing on weight and size tend to lead to disordered eating, dieting and unhealthy weight loss practices; but when the discussion focuses on healthy eating, the child is less likely to engage in disordered eating.

[http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2013-06/tjnj-cwt062113.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2013-06/tjnj-cwt062113.php)  
<http://archpedi.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleID=1700514>

June 25, 2013: In a special opinion piece for CNN, Marilyn Wann enlists some prominent members of the fat community to explain why obesity should not be classified as a disease, along the way exploring the motivations behind the classification.

<http://www.cnn.com/2013/06/25/opinion/wann-obesity-disease>

June 25, 2013: The Association for Size Diversity and Health (ASDAH) releases their position on the AMA's classification of obesity as a disease, condemning the decision and urging healthcare professionals to reject the classification.

<https://www.sizediversityandhealth.org/content.asp?id=11&mediaID=46&action=archive>

June 25, 2013: Vote on whether you agree with the AMA's classification of obesity as a disease through the US News Debate Club. Various arguments for and against the classification are presented, including one each by Peggy Howell and Abigail Saguy. You can give a thumbs up or down to each argument.

<http://www.usnews.com/debate-club/should-the-american-medical-association-have-classified-obesity-as-a-disease>

June 26, 2013: A meta-analysis out of Sweden claims to have shown that fatness causes cardiovascular disease (CVD) through a variant in a particular gene. It is not clear, however, why the researchers believe the higher weight causes the CVD when the gene variant they are looking at has been linked to both. Also unclear is what to do with the information, since there's no proven way to make fat people thin.

<http://www.mynewsdesk.com/uk/pressroom/uu/pressrelease/view/overweight-causes-heart-failure-large-study-with-new-method-clarifies-the-association-879564>  
<http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001474>

*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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