



2014

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# *Annual Report*

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**ACTIVE LIVING BY DESIGN**  
*[activelivingbydesign.org](http://activelivingbydesign.org)*



# *Bridging the past to our future*

When Active Living By Design (ALBD) started 13 years ago as a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, we focused on increasing routine physical activity by improving the environments in which people live, travel, work and play. ALBD was at the forefront of the “active living movement,” a new paradigm that challenged the premise that health is primarily a matter of individual choice. This movement helped shift the conversation from its focus on education and behavior change to the impact of policies and environments (both social and physical) on the choices people have to be physically active.

Since then, research and local action have confirmed the importance of place-based approaches to improve health, validating the work of the healthy communities movement that started over 25 years ago. At the same time, ALBD expanded its mission to include healthy eating and other social determinants of health. We also worked with a variety of local, state and national partners to create healthy communities for all, especially those at greatest risk for chronic disease based on race, ethnicity, income and/or geographic location.

In 2014, we enhanced the ways in which we support those who support others. For example, we continued to catalyze community change by coaching change agents, including funders who are investing in place-based work and community leaders who are coalescing local action. With a shifting funding environment and tremendous growth in local expertise, we also adapted our business model to better meet the needs of a maturing field.

Looking inward, we changed our administrative infrastructure, leaving our 12-year home at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and becoming a fiscally-sponsored project of Third Sector New England. This affiliation offers more flexibility and expertise in nonprofit capacity building that will help us expand and sustain our work. The transition also helped strengthen our brand with a new website, new publications and a more consistent presence in social media.

You'll see examples of our work in this report and even more on our website. We feel privileged to partner with so many committed and inspiring people, and we look forward to further collaboration in 2015. Please contact us any time to discuss how we can deepen our work together or start something new.



**Sarah Strunk**  
*Executive Director*

## We advanced healthy communities by supporting funders . . .

In the fall, ALBD joined the expanding network of **County Health Rankings & Roadmaps** (CHR&R), a national program led by the **University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute** and the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**. In this role, ALBD is serving as a thought leader, contributing to the communities engaged in the CHR&R network, and managing a new program that will support community leaders' efforts to build capacity and engage in action to create a culture of health.



**County Health  
Rankings & Roadmaps**  
A Healthier Nation, County by County

Building on our longstanding partnership with the **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation**, in September we launched a new collaboration with CA-based **Prevention Institute** and NC-based **CareShare Health Alliance**. Together, we are taking a deliberate approach to building the capacity of safety net providers of clinical care to engage in community prevention to improve population health. ALBD consulted on program design, helped select candidate communities, served as faculty for training workshops and will provide technical assistance to grantees in 2015.

*“I can’t imagine going to anyone else . . . for expertise in partnership work, in prevention, in policy, systems and environmental change. To me, there was no other choice.”*

**Jennifer MacDougall**  
Senior Program Officer  
Healthy Active Communities  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of  
North Carolina Foundation



After more than a decade of working at the intersection of community coalitions and those who invest in them, we shared our perspectives on place-based healthy community grantmaking and collaboration in a collection of lessons learned. This resource, called ***Investing in Healthy Community Change***, helps small and large funders of place-based healthy community initiatives leverage their investments, achieve their goals and sustain their results.



## ... coaching community leaders ...

“Working with ALBD has deepened our expertise and put us in contact with networks and resources that are essential as we look at improving the quality of life in our region.”

**Ruth Morrison**  
Outreach Manager  
Active RVA

We were pleased to continue our engagement with Richmond, VA-based **Sports Backers** as it works to create the most active region in the country. Leveraging the success of its Active RVA campaign and related programs and events, ALBD is helping staff and partners achieve collective impact by measuring and implementing sustainable programs, policies, systems and environmental changes.

We moved from planning to action this year through our work with the **John Rex Endowment** in Wake County, NC. Based on our formative research and program design in 2013, ALBD helped John Rex Endowment staff launch new Wake County Healthy Community Grants in six municipalities throughout the County. ALBD is also collaborating with Raleigh-based **Advocates for Health in Action** to provide technical assistance and build a learning network of municipal grantees.



We proudly sunset our six-year **Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities** childhood obesity prevention initiative in August and recognized the many accomplishments of this diverse portfolio of 49 grantees. **Growing a Movement** and its companion **infographic** include an array of examples, brief vignettes and takeaways that offer successes and lessons learned from this national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

### CREATING A LASTING IMPACT



# 2,183

POLICY & ENVIRONMENTAL  
changes to prevent childhood obesity

### EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS



Despite the recession, grantees generated

# \$140 MILLION

—which was more than four times the initial \$33.4 million investment.



We also produced ***Lessons for Leaders: Navigating the Process of Healthy Community Change***, to provide leaders of local healthy community partnerships with practical, field-tested, strategic advice to help them be more proactive and effective.

## *... enriching learning networks ...*

ALBD served multiple healthy community coalitions, as well as regional and statewide grantmakers, by providing training on a variety of topics, such as sustainability planning, community engagement, coalition management, equity, and policy, systems and environmental change strategies. Through interactive workshops that engaged healthy community leaders, we contributed to and learned from peers in the **Cincinnati** region and throughout the states of **Louisiana, Minnesota** and **North Carolina**.

**“One of ALBD’s greatest strengths is the ability to deal with complex or multi-faceted issues ... that ability to help detangle them and identify a frame that’s most effective to advancing a conversation.”**

**Jill Naylor Chamberlain**  
Senior Project Manager  
Center for Prevention  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield  
of Minnesota

## *... and advising partners.*

To grow capacity in the field, ALBD team members participated in 17 national and 12 local and state initiatives in North Carolina. For example, we served on the Voices for Healthy Kids Strategic Advisory Committee, a program of the American Heart Association. We provided leadership to the boards of the Alliance for Biking and Walking, the Safe Routes to School National Partnership and Farmer Foodshare. We also participated on the Culture of Health Prize National Review Team for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and are helping the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention develop its first Walking and Walkability Course. It’s an honor to collaborate with such esteemed programs and such passionate people.

## *We strengthened our organization to serve others better.*

On February 1, we joined **Third Sector New England**, which provides management and leadership resources to help nonprofits support healthy, just communities. It's a perfect mission fit and provides ALBD with more flexibility to meet our clients' needs.



**THIRD SECTOR®**  
*New England*



We expanded our reach by refreshing our brand through a new mobile-friendly website, **activelivingbydesign.org**, with an improved resource section and a stronger social media presence. We're now publishing a monthly newsletter and are on **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **LinkedIn**. We invite you to join us in the healthy communities conversation.

In addition, we published three new products, described throughout this report, that delve into the lessons we've learned from 12 years in the field. We aim to share these resources as broadly as possible to help all leaders—be they investors or advocates, practitioners or policymakers—create healthier environments.

**“Community leaders engaged in social change efforts will find [Lessons for Leaders] compelling and credible.”**

**Ian Thomas**  
*State and Local Program Manager*  
*America Walks*



## *We diversified our funding and expanded our client base.*

We were pleased to work with a broader range of partners, such as non-profit organizations, insurance companies and hospital conversion foundations. While foundation grants still accounted for most of our total revenue (\$1,910,903), the expansion of ALBD's consulting services led to more short-term contracts for assessment reports, strategic and sustainability planning, training and coaching. In addition, 17 projects and initiatives serving local, regional, state and national clients offered an array of opportunities for ALBD to collaborate with thought leaders across the country and with local advocates on the ground.

### PROJECTS & INITIATIVES



### REVENUE



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### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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#### Contact us

[activelivingbydesign.org](http://activelivingbydesign.org)

400 Market Street | Suite 205

Chapel Hill, NC 27516

P: 919.843.2523 / F: 919.903.9190

Active Living By Design partners with nonprofits, local leaders and funders to create healthy communities. We can help you make your streets safer, bring healthy foods to your stores, and build parks, playgrounds and other active spaces for children and adults.

## OUR TEAM

ALBD has an experienced, multidisciplinary team with backgrounds in public health, public policy, planning, community development, communications, nutrition, design, architecture, business and social work.



**Casey Allred, BS**  
*Operations Manager*

*Customer service extraordinaire with southern hospitality and charm*



**Richard Bell, MCP**  
*Senior Project Officer*

*Student of systems change and advocate of the small, slow and connected*



**Philip Bors, MPH**  
*Senior Project Officer*

*Recovering advisory board member, weeknight advocate and active weekender*



**Fay Gibson, MSW**  
*Senior Project Officer*

*Old-school community organizer and advocate for social justice and equity for all*



**Charla Hodges, MPH**  
*Research Assistant*

*Avid consumer of books and emerging public health planner focused on inclusivity*



**Joanne Lee, MPH, RD**  
*Senior Project Officer*

*Adventurous strategist, cross-cultural explorer, and human and animal welfare champion*



**Sarah Moore, MArch**  
*Communications Coordinator*

*Designer, walk/bike advocate, travel junkie and urban enthusiast with rural roots*



**Mary Beth Powell, MPH**  
*Senior Project Officer*

*Environmental advocate, self-proclaimed policy wonk and die-hard Carolina basketball fan*



**Tim Schwantes, MSW, MPH**  
*Senior Project Manager*

*Life-long learner, community-focused connector, proud lefty and pop culturist*



**Sarah Strunk, MHA**  
*Executive Director*

*Healthy communities networker, integrator and distance runner on the go*



**Risa Wilkerson, MA, Marketing and Communications Director**

*Encourager, collaborator and simplicity seeker with a heart for social justice*

## ADVISORY BOARD



**Donna Chavis, BS**  
*Chair*

*Co-Founder, The Center for Community Action*



**Niiobli Armah IV, MA**  
*Vice Chair*

*Managing Director, We-Collab*



**Geni Eng, MPH, DrPH**

*Professor of Health Behavior, UNC Chapel Hill, Gillings School of Global Public Health*



**Kate Kraft, PhD**

*National Coalition Director, America Walks*



**Tyler Norris, MDiv**

*Vice President, Total Health, Kaiser Permanente*

Our advisory board members and external advisors represent a variety of disciplines and perspectives. They provide valuable input and expertise related to our work.

## EXTERNAL ADVISORS



**Chuck Alexander, MA**

*Senior Vice President and Director, Public Health Team, Burness*



**Jamie Bussel, MPH**

*Program Officer, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*



**Josh Sattely, JD**

*Compliance and Legal Affairs Specialist, Third Sector New England*





# *thanks for your support!*

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## **REFER US**

*We value the trust you place in ALBD when you recommend us to others. Thank you for spreading the word about the good work we've done together.*

## **PARTNER WITH US**

*From brief telephone consultations to long-term partnerships, we're here to help you achieve your healthy community goals. Let's start a conversation to explore how we can collaborate.*

## **CONTACT US**

*Visit us at [activelivingbydesign.org](http://activelivingbydesign.org) to read our blog, learn about new projects and explore our resources page.*