Motivations for Moving: An Analysis of Physical Activity in Residential College Students

Presenters: Cassandra Eddy and Ladasia Cooke

Advisors: Jennifer McDonald, ScD and Thomas Hart, MS

Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between social and ecological determinants of health and physical activity (PA) in residential college students, specifically, Skidmore College students. We primarily investigated the relationship between a student's distance from physical activity resources and their physical activity level. The methods included a 35-question web survey and testing of a 23 student sub-cohort of survey respondents. Similar to results from a previous study of college students, our results suggested a positive relationship between proximity to resources and use of PA resources; residence halls and apartments closest to the campus' Sports Center were hot spots for residents that had used the most popular physical activity resource on campus (the cardio room). Our analyses also indicated a relationship between knowledge of available resources, class year, and use of resources; not only were upperclassmen generally more knowledgeable about resources available on campus, but they were also more likely to have used the cardio room. Our most interesting findings stress the importance of reducing health disparities across socioeconomic class; white respondents came from parents with higher incomes and education levels, were more likely to have used the cardio room, and were more likely to agree with statements about physical activity being beneficial for health.