

## News release

### 2013 OPTIFAST® “New You” Weight Loss Winners Announced

#### *Patients and Clinicians from Arizona, California, Colorado and Mississippi Honored for Dedication to Healthy Lifestyle Improvements*

**Florham Park, N.J., June 24, 2013** – Nestlé Health Science today announced the winners of the fourth annual OPTIFAST® “New You” weight loss contest. Three OPTIFAST patients, whose combined weight loss totals more than 429 pounds,\* will receive an all-expense paid trip to New York City for a weekend of pampering to celebrate their personal transformations towards a healthy lifestyle. In addition, two remarkable OPTIFAST healthcare professionals will be honored with the OPTIFAST Inspire Award for their relentless dedication to helping patients lose weight and adopt healthier habits.

“Sadly, the rate of obesity continues to rise in the United States, but hearing the success stories of individuals who have made a commitment to healthy changes through the OPTIFAST Program gives all of us hope,” said Maureen Monahan, director and general manager for the U.S. OPTIFAST business. “These individuals did not accept the status quo, but instead transformed their lives with the support of a holistic weight loss program.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 69.2 percent of adult Americans are overweight or obese.<sup>1</sup> The OPTIFAST “New You” weight loss contest recognizes patients who strive to create healthier lifestyles and the medical professionals who helped them get there.

The 2013 OPTIFAST “New You” contest patient winners are as follows. To view their before and after pictures, visit [www.optifast.com](http://www.optifast.com).

- **Angie Thornton, Tupelo, Mississippi:** At the age of 50, Angie weighed 444 pounds and believed that she would be permanently confined to a wheelchair due to her extremely limited mobility. With little hope, she was sure that she would become unable to care for her aging parents and see her grandchildren grow up. Through the OPTIFAST Program, Angie lost an astounding 215 pounds, nearly 50 percent of her total body weight\*. In less than a year, Angie became totally free of the use of her wheelchair, or any other assistance, and now lives her life to the fullest. Her new found confidence allowed her to literally walk away from an unfulfilling job, and begin a new career that feeds her passion for life.
- **Elizabeth Weld, Tempe, Arizona:** Elizabeth did not struggle with her weight for most of her life. However, a few years ago she was prescribed a medication that caused her to gain weight rapidly. She withdrew from her normal physical activities and many of her friendships. At age 34, Elizabeth spent a lot of time alone and could not imagine dating, which caused her to turn to food for comfort. Feeling like she had to make a significant change, Elizabeth started the OPTIFAST Program and lost 120 pounds, nearly 50 percent of her body weight\*. Today, Elizabeth’s self-esteem is on the rise, and now says that “walking into a room in a new dress feels exciting instead of painful.”
- **Jorge Jestes, Carmichael, California:** Jorge struggled with his weight for most of his life and was diagnosed with hypertension, sleep apnea and blood sugar levels bordering

diabetes. At age 50, he knew he needed to transform his habits, his health and his life. With the help of a supporting network of physicians and others in the OPTIFAST Program, Jorge lost 94 pounds, more than 33 percent of his body weight\*. To celebrate his recent weight loss, Jorge took a solo motorcycle journey from Florida to California. He found that the new habits he learned in the OPTIFAST Program helped keep him on track while on the open road.

The 2013 OPTIFAST Inspire Award recipients are as follows. To learn more about these healthcare professionals, visit [www.OPTIFAST.com](http://www.OPTIFAST.com).

- **Angela Tran, MD, Med-Fit Medical Weight Loss Clinic, Denver, Colorado:** For many years Dr. Tran prescribed medications for her patients with diabetes and high blood pressure. However, the time soon came when she knew that she needed to help motivate her patients first before they could improve their relationship with food. Using the OPTIFAST Program and a fitness regimen, Dr. Tran now helps patients address the challenges that led to their weight gain and take steps to begin healthier lives.
- **Kaiser Permanente's Medical Weight Management Program Team, San Francisco, California:** The team at Kaiser Permanente's Medical Weight Management Program, including Dr. Carla Callao, Dr. Nelly Vayngortin, Mary Daly, Kelly Huff and Iran Pont, has inspired patients like Andrew Kluger, who nominated the group, in ways he never thought possible. Said Andrew of the team: "at no time were they judgmental, but instead were the most encouraging and thoughtful group of people I have ever experienced." This team has been dedicated to motivating patients through positive messages and the OPTIFAST Program since 2012.

"Supporting patients experiencing an often difficult period of time and inspiring them to make changes to positively impact their lives takes compassion and commitment," said Dr. Jamy Ard, co- director of the Wake Forest Baptist Health Weight Management Center and medical director for OPTIFAST. "Both Dr. Tran and the Kaiser team exemplify the spirit necessary to not only motivate their patients to get healthy, but also inspire fellow healthcare providers to provide the highest level of care ."

#### **About OPTIFAST®**

OPTIFAST was developed in 1974 to fill the growing need to address obesity in a healthy, effective way. As diseases related to obesity became more prevalent, and more and more people began taking drastic measures to treat the problem, OPTIFAST was introduced as a sensible option for lifestyle transformation. The program combines support and counseling, lifestyle education, and medical monitoring with meal replacements to help people lose weight\* which can in turn reduce weight-related health risks. A team of dedicated medical professionals provide support. The OPTIFAST Program is available in over 400 clinics nationwide. OPTIFAST is a business segment within Nestlé Health Science. For more information, to see patient stories and to find a clinic, visit [www.optifast.com](http://www.optifast.com).

#### **About Nestlé Health Science**

Nestlé Health Science, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Nestlé, intends to spearhead the development of science-based personalized nutritional solutions. Building on its core HealthCare Nutrition business, the company has ambitions to address chronic conditions in the area of Gastrointestinal Health, Metabolic Health and Brain Health. Nestlé Health Science offers nutritional solutions for people with specific dietary needs related to illnesses, disease states or the special challenges of different life stages. Nestlé Health Science employs around 3,000 people worldwide and has its headquarters in Lutry, Switzerland. For more information, please visit [www.nestlehealthscience.us](http://www.nestlehealthscience.us).

\*The typical OPTIFAST patient loses over 50 pounds in 18-24 weeks. For many dieters, weight loss is only temporary. For more information, please visit [www.optifast.com](http://www.optifast.com).

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Health Statistics. Health, United States, 2012: With Special Feature on Emergency Care. Hyattsville, MD. 2013. Chart 63. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hus/hus12.pdf#063>