



# 2023 IMPACT REPORT

**CREP**

Coalition for the Registration  
of Exercise Professionals®





## DR. GREGORY DEGNAN

Dr. Gregory Degnan, M.D., serves as medical director of the Atlantic Coast Athletic Clubs based out of Charlottesville, Virginia, and the associate clinical professor of orthopedic surgery at the University of Virginia. He maintains an active clinical practice in orthopedic surgery at Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital in Charlottesville, where he is also the chairman of the board of managers, in addition to serving as the vice chairman for the Sentara Quality Integrated Network in the Charlottesville region. He has published numerous articles and provided many interviews in peer-reviewed journals. Dr. Degnan's passion is driving the move toward integrating the fitness industry into health care.

**“In the world of healthcare, licensure and certification is critical for the vetting of providers to whom we entrust our patients. As healthcare has moved towards the recognition that the fitness industry is an important partner in the care of our patients, CREP registration provides a metric to allow us to vet the professionals with whom we partner.”**

- Dr. Gregory Degnan  
Medical Director, Orthopedic Surgeon, and Adjunct Professor  
Sentara Healthcare, Cleveland Clinic

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## REGISTERED EXERCISE PROFESSIONALS: THE NEW STANDARD TO PROVIDE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE EXERCISE PROGRAMS

### Dear Members, Supporters and Friends,

As the Board President of our esteemed organization, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the importance of following our mission in 2023.

Our mission is to promote and advance the fitness and exercise profession by setting high standards for education, certification, and ethical practice. We strive to provide our members with the resources, support, and networking opportunities necessary to achieve excellence in their field.

According to the data gathered from the National Health Interview Survey (2004-2010) and Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (2006-2011), “inadequate levels of aerobic physical activity were associated with an estimated 11.1% of aggregate health care expenditures.”<sup>1</sup> While physical activity has shown to be effective to reduce the risks associated with cardiovascular disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, colon and breast cancers, and depression, less than half of Americans meet the minimum US Physical Activity Guidelines. CREP® is uniquely positioned to address the skyrocketing healthcare costs through physical activity through our network of registered professionals. Our advocacy and outreach efforts with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), Physical Activity Alliance (PAA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and Health Level Seven International (HL7) are examples of how we are positioning our registered exercise professionals as a cornerstone of health, well-being, and sports performance.

Looking to the future, our mission will continue to be of utmost importance to the Coalition. We anticipate the need for quality health and fitness services will continue to increase, and our organization is well-positioned to meet that need and continue to be a thought leader in the space. Together, we can continue to raise the bar of professionalism and thrive in our industry through prioritizing the health, safety, and well-being of our clients and the communities in which we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Francis Neric'.

**Francis Neric, MS, MBA**

President, Coalition for the Registration of Exercise Professionals

<sup>1</sup>Carlson SA, Fulton JE, Pratt M, Yang Z, Adams EK. Inadequate physical activity and health care expenditures in the United States. Prog Cardiovasc Dis. 2015 Jan-Feb;57(4):315-23. doi: 10.1016/j.pcad.2014.08.002. Epub 2014 Aug 9. PMID: 25559060; PMCID: PMC4604440.





# ABOUT US

CREP is a not-for-profit 501 C(6) corporation composed of leading certification organizations offering NCCA or ISO 17024 accredited programs for distinct exercise professional roles recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor. Primary to the mission of the Coalition is to provide individuals of all ages and abilities with resources and leadership to assist in safely and effectively reaching their goals of achieving more active, healthy lifestyles through movement, physical activity or exercise for recreation or performance.

CREP advances its mission by maintaining the United States Registry of Exercise Professionals® (USREPS®), an internationally recognized registry of exercise professionals in the United States, and as an advocate for the exercise professional who holds NCCA-accredited exercise certification on issues that pertain to regulation, access and scope of work. Current exercise certifications of member organizations listed in USREPS include Certified Personal Trainer, Certified Group Fitness Instructor, Advanced Health and Fitness Specialist, Exercise Specialist, Registered Clinical Exercise Physiologist, and Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist.

# OUR MISSION

The **mission** of CREP is to secure recognition of registered exercise professionals for their distinct roles in medical, health, fitness and sports performance fields. CREP's **vision** is for consumers and other allied health professionals and policymakers to recognize registered exercise professionals for their leadership and expertise in the design and delivery of physical activity and exercise programs which improve the health, fitness and athletic performance of the public.



Click to learn more about our work at [USREPS.ORG](https://www.usreps.org)

LEARN MORE







**TRENDING**  
**WHY WE CONTINUE OUR MISSION...**



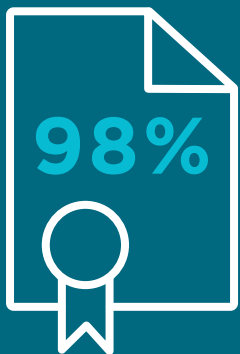
US Report Card  
on Physical  
Activity for  
Children is a D-.<sup>1</sup>



**1/3**

of young adult military  
applicants do not  
meet the Army's  
weight standards for  
enlistment.<sup>2</sup>

Nationally,  
**41.9%**  
of adults have obesity.<sup>3</sup>



of employers require  
**NCCA-accredited**  
certification upon  
hire.<sup>4</sup>

Over **168,000**  
registered exercise  
professionals



in the USREPS database



Employment of fitness trainers and  
instructors is projected to grow 19  
percent from 2021 to 2031, much faster  
than the average for all occupations.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://paamovewithus.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/2022-US-Report-Card-on-Physical-Activity-for-Children-and-Youth.pdf>  
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/resources/unfit-to-serve/index.html>  
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tfah.org/report-details/state-of-obesity-2022/>  
<sup>4</sup> <https://www.clubindustry.com/top-100>  
<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/Personal-Care-and-Service/Fitness-trainers-and-instructors.htm#tab-1>



# 2023 IMPACT

## INTER-ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STRENGTH COACHES FOR THE NCAA

In 2017, the NCAA Sports Science Institute sought out CREP to seek further clarification on the role of NCCA-accredited certification programs in certifying strength and conditioning coaches and their potential to enhance safety during conditioning programs for student athletes. CREP, the National Athletic Trainers Association's Intercollegiate Council on Sports Medicine (ICSM), and the US Council for Athlete Health (USCAH) worked collaboratively to

provide the Joint Recommendations, resources and education to ensure coaches and staff, who work with student-athletes, are properly educated and credentialed to competently prevent catastrophic events, exertional distress, and soft tissue and metabolic injury during training and conditioning for sport. Implementation of the inter-association recommendation for strength coaches by NCCA will begin June 2023.

## HEALTHY PEOPLE 2030 CHAMPION

CREP has been accepted as a Healthy People 2030 (HP2030) Champion by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP), a component of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). This prestigious recognition underscores CREP's commitment to advancing the HP2030 initiative and its vision of promoting health and well-being for all individuals across the lifespan.

CREP is honored to be recognized by the Department of Health and Human Services as a Healthy People 2030 Champion, as this designation reflects our dedication to making a meaningful impact on the health and well-being of individuals and communities.

As an accepted HP2030 Champion, CREP is considered a premier thought leader in efforts to improve public health outcomes and a critical stakeholder to address the nation's most pressing health challenges. This recognition extends to the member organizations' registered exercise professionals who are verified through USREPS as recognized for their qualifications for physical activity leadership. Through this partnership, CREP and the Department of Health and Human Services will work together toward a future where every person can reach their full potential for health and well-being.



## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AS A VITAL SIGN

A core value of the Coalition is collaboration, efforts to prioritize physical activity and advance the profession require critical mass and we are proud of our work in support of the *Physical Activity Alliance* (PAA), *It's Time to Move* Initiative. This initiative establishes a Health Level Seven (HL7) standard for inclusion of standardized physical activity measures to facilitate the collection of patient physical activity data as a vital sign in healthcare. HL7 facilitates the transfer of clinical and administrative data between disparate healthcare systems, enabling interoperability and seamless



communication between healthcare providers, institutions, and systems. The HL7 framework supports efficient and effective patient care and provides the mechanisms for patient referral to qualified exercise professionals and outcome-based physical activity and exercise programs. The US Registry of Exercise Professionals (USREPS) will be used to positively verify the exercise professionals as qualified and good standing and serve as the reference for registered exercise professionals who will receive referrals from healthcare.







## NATIONAL EXERCISE REFERRAL FRAMEWORK

CREP is actively engaged in developing a requirements document for a US-centric National Exercise Referral Framework (NERF) with like-minded organizations. The NERF is an interprofessional, multisectoral approach to improve the health and well-being of individuals with non-communicable diseases through increased physical activity. In combination with the HL7, this framework links the appropriately qualified exercise professionals (i.e., education, certification, experience, specialized training) with the necessary level of supervision of adjacent healthcare professionals (i.e., direct physician oversight, physician cleared, physician approved, physician recommended).

In 2007, the American Medical Association established a value-based care model called the “Triple Aim” to improve healthcare systems by improving patient experience, enhancing population health, and reducing healthcare costs. The NERF encourages healthcare providers to refer patients to exercise programs delivered by qualified exercise professionals to improve population health by promoting physical activity and reducing the prevalence of diseases associated with a sedentary lifestyle. Simultaneously, exercise programs are a cost-effective intervention with long-term benefits in reducing healthcare costs.





# LOOKING AHEAD

## HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE SAFETY

According to the Korey Stringer Institute, “nearly 90 percent of all sudden death in sports is caused by four conditions: sudden cardiac arrest, traumatic head injury, exertional heat stroke, and exertional sickling. Adopting evidence-based safety measures significantly reduces these risks.”<sup>2</sup>

In the backdrop of the NCAA’s adoption of CREP, ICSM, and USCAH’s recommendation for strength and conditioning coach education, certification, advanced training, and registration requirements, CREP seeks to expand its effort promoting athlete safety in high schools.

According to the National Federation of State High School Associations, nearly 8 million high school students participate in sports annually. However, high school athletes are at a greater risk of sports-related injuries than college and professional athletes due

to their still-developing bodies and limited access to qualified coaches at the high school level. CREP has begun work with USCAH to introduce their evidence-based best practices to high school athletic programs.

CREP and USCAH seek to shine a light on the need of properly trained and credentialed staff to prevent catastrophic events and other injuries during training and conditioning for sports. CREP and USCAH have developed and distributed a survey to athletic directors, strength and conditioning coaches, and parents to determine current personnel requirements for overseeing/implementing high school strength and conditioning programs, expected requirements to maintain a safe athlete training environment and sentiment of urgency to address the problem.





# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**FRANCIS NERIC**  
President

The Coalition has a volunteer Board of Directors composed of individuals representing qualifying member organizations. The Board and two non-voting Advisory Directors are elected to a specified term. The two Advisory Directors represent elected individuals from the Commission for the Accreditation of Exercise Science (CoAES), which accredits two-year, four-year and graduate-level programs in Exercise Science and the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), which works to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of the public through the accreditation of a variety of certification programs/ organizations that assess professional competence.



**BRIAN BIAGIOLI**  
Vice-President



**BRENT FELAND**  
Treasurer



**SHELBY WILLIAMSON**  
Secretary



**GRAHAM MELSTRAND**  
Past President



**CHAD BUCKENDAHL**  
Advisory Director



**BEN THOMPSON**  
Advisory Director



**WADE DELK**  
Director Government Affairs



**DANIELLE VITOGIANNES**  
Executive Officer

# COLLABORATORS

CREP would like to thank the CoAES, iCREPs, IDEA, Medical Fitness Association, Physical Activity Alliance, U.S. Council for Athletes' Health and World Active for their ongoing support and commitment to advancing the exercise profession, which is crucial to fulfilling CREP's mission. CREP's board members are in leadership positions at many of these vitally important institutions. Our collaborative efforts enhance the credibility of registered exercise professionals and provide opportunities to strengthen and extend CREP's mission of ensuring that exercise professionals meet the highest standards of competency and professionalism in the health and fitness industry.



**DAVID FLENCH, MBA, FMFA, FACHE, ACSM-EP**  
President & CEO  
Medical Fitness Association

"The Coalition for the Registration of Exercise Professionals fills an important role within the medical fitness industry to recognize the professionals in our field. The Medical Fitness Association provides industry standards that promote the use of highly qualified staffing, especially in those facilities that operate programming for chronic disease populations. CREP's registry (USREPS) helps ensure they meet those important guidelines."



**AMY BANTHAM, DRPH, MS, MPP**  
CEO/Founder, Move to Live® More  
President, Physical Activity Alliance

"As a certified group exercise instructor, personal trainer and health coach, I value the work that CREP does to raise the credibility of registered exercise professionals like me. Thanks to the registry, physicians, employers and clients are able to trust that I can help people safely and effectively achieve their health & fitness goals."



**AMY BOONE THOMPSON**  
IDEA Health & Fitness Association,  
Owner & CEO

"The fitness industry relies on the expertise of trained, certified professionals to help individuals achieve their health goals safely and effectively. CREP/USREPS is a key partner in this effort and is committed to ensuring that fitness professionals meet the highest standards of education and competency. Their commitment to excellence makes them an invaluable resource for our industry and the individuals we serve."







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