

Weight-loss school for youth opens in Brevard

by Dale Neal

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BREVARD - Academy of the Sierras North Carolina, the world's first school for weight loss outside of California, opened today in Brevard with a founding class of 11 students.

"We're excited to announce the opening of our second campus," said Phil Obbard, executive director of Academy of the Sierras California, the world's first school for weight loss. "With our California program near capacity with 100 students, and as families in the eastern and southern United States often prefer to keep their children closer to home, Academy of the Sierras North Carolina is well positioned to help thousands of overweight and obese children return to a normal weight and successfully control their weight through adolescence and adulthood."

The founding class at AOSNC consists of 11 students ages 11-16 from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, Maryland, Rhode Island and Germany. Students range from 40 lbs. overweight to as much as 200 lbs. overweight.

Located on a 220-acre campus near the town of Brevard, AOSNC offers activities as diverse as personal training, skateboarding, rock climbing, whitewater kayaking and tennis in addition to nutrition and culinary classes and a core curriculum of math, science, social studies and language arts for grades 6 through 10.

Starting today and continuing through AOSNC's first month, the founding class of students will participate in an orientation expedition that will take them through North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. This expedition will jump-start student weight loss and commitment to a new, healthy lifestyle.

Ryan Madamba, executive director of AOSNC, said he expects the same results in North Carolina as Academy of the Sierras has achieved on its California campus. Through a scientifically based program that combines diet and activity management, education, training and cognitive-behavioral therapy, AOS has helped hundreds of students return to a normal weight range and maintain their weight loss at home, Madamba said.