

## Tucson 10-Year-Old Brings America to its Feet

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**Haile Thomas speaks her mind about the need to act in the fight against childhood obesity—and earns a standing ovation in the process.**

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Perhaps numbers aren't a big deal when it comes to age, but they're a huge deal when it comes to weight. Alliance for a Healthier Generation works to address one of the nation's leading public health threat—childhood obesity. They are one of six founding organizations of the Partnership for a Healthier America (PHA). On Nov. 29, Southern Arizona's own Haile Thomas, member of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Youth Advisory Board, brought more than 700 private sector, government and non-profit leaders—including First Lady Michelle Obama—to their feet as she voiced the opinions of childhood obesity at the plenary session at the Partnership for a Healthier America's inaugural Building a Healthier Future Summit in Washington, D.C. She did not receive this standing ovation because she was merely talking about a child's perspective on the matter, but rather *from* a child's perspective. That's right, Haile Thomas is 10 years old and is a fifth grade student from Marana, just outside of Tucson.

"Kids have an important voice," Thomas explained in her remarks. "We have great ideas. We can help adults make positive changes in our world, and to do that we need healthy lunch programs, access to physical activities and proper nutrition education." Other Alliance members joined Thomas during the panel discussion on supporting healthy schools.

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In addition to Alliance representatives speaking at the conference, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation was the official moderator of the summit's schools track entitled, "The Private Sector Goes to School—Helping Students Become Healthy Future Workers."

For more information about the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and what others are doing about their future in health, visit [www.healthiergeneration.org](http://www.healthiergeneration.org).