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Measure Up Marion Partners Successfully for Healthier Menu, Foods with LaHacienda Restaurant, Corner Store, Bubbles Laundry

In its ongoing commitment to improving access to healthier foods, and improving the lives and health of Marion County residents, Measure Up Marion and its partner Marion County Children's Alliance, have partnered with LaHacienda restaurant and corner store, and Bubbles Laundry on Highway 40, west of I-95. LaHacienda now is offering healthier menu options, better labelling for healthier foods on its shelves, and healthier concessions in its laundry. The businesses are located at 4185 W Highway 40, online at Lahaciendaocala.com.

"LaHacienda and its owners, Reina and Steve Mendez, jumped at the opportunity to make an important difference in their community by partnering with Measure Up Marion," said Maclyn Walker, project director of the coalition. "They have been enthusiastic, cooperative and rapid in implementing these changes for their patrons."

Last month, LaHacienda and Measure Up Marion worked together to offer healthier menu choices, label healthier choices throughout the store (which offers fresh and local meat, fruit and vegetables, handmade Hispanic foods and concessions) and change its offerings in the laundromat to healthier food and drink. The property also supports a tobacco-free environment.

"The Mendez' are such great examples to their community, both in their offerings and in their desire to improve all of our lives," said Brianna Liles, community health advocate at Marion



County Children’s Alliance, partner with Measure Up Marion in the healthier food objective. “They wanted to show that, even with our wide variety of diets and cultural norms, we can adopt a lifestyle that supports healthy choices in our daily lives.”

To work with Measure Up Marion on making your corner store or restaurant a “first stop” for healthier foods and tobacco-free visits, contact **Brianna Liles at 352.438.5996** or at **BriannaLiles@mcchildrensalliance.org**. For tobacco-free, contact Lauren Walter at **lwalter@QuitDoc.com** or **352.359.5383**.

Measure Up Marion is a coalition of health advocates and organizations dedicated to improving the lives of their neighbors in Marion County. Through increased access to healthier food choices in corner stores, concession stands and vending; tobacco-free restaurants, housing and faith communities; EBT acceptance at farmers markets; and, assistance in avoiding and managing chronic diseases through community health workers, physician multi-disciplinary teams, and patient portal access through MyHealthStory, Measure Up Marion and its partners work for improvement through funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, as part of its Partners In Community Health (PICH) award.

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