

2009
wealth
— OF —
health
AWARDS

In Pursuit of Wellness



*Firms champion
healthy eating
and exercise
among staff*

ROCHESTER BUSINESS JOURNAL
RBJ

Cover design by Jason Volinsky

Firms help staffers to embrace healthy living

Paid time off, big-ticket prizes and the use of company bicycles are some of the ways local organizations are rewarding employees for doing good things for their health.

Twelve employers will be recognized next month for promoting wellness and encouraging physical activity in the workplace. They will receive the Wealth of Health Award, presented by Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, Rochester Region, and the Rochester Business Journal.

Many local companies and non-profit organizations have programs to foster healthy habits among their employees. They are finding that the push improves morale, increases productivity and reduces insurance costs.

Wealth of Health Award nominees were judged on employee involvement in such health initiatives, the creativity of these activities to reach specific goals, ongoing promotion of healthy lifestyles and measurable results. The honorees were grouped by size, determined by the number of full-time and part-time employees.

The awards luncheon will be held from noon to 1:30 p.m. June 9 at the Hyatt Regency Rochester.

Following is a closer look at each honoree's commitment to healthy living:



Relph Benefit Advisors

A four-year relationship with the Mayo Clinic has helped Relph Benefit Advisors boost employee participation in company wellness programs to 95 percent.

Relph Benefit started partnering with the Mayo Clinic in 2005 for online assessments that track perceptions of health, medical conditions, medications, risk factors and stage of readiness to change.

"We've seen an increase in participation from less than 80 percent to 95 percent in the past three years," says Tesia Woodworth, who was hired last year as director of employee health and productivity.

Employees have access to the Mayo Clinic Embody Health Web portal, packed with medical information, podcasts and opportunities to ask questions of Mayo Clinic experts.

Relph Benefit Advisors is based in Pitts-

ford and does business across the state; 55 of its 75 employees work in the local market. A formal wellness task force, created about nine months ago, represents a cross-section of employees, and the message of health is supported and driven by company CEO Robert Relph.

To ensure that its health initiatives are sustainable, Relph Benefit Advisors puts the appropriate resources—both human capital and fiscal—into the organization's annual operating plan.

"SMART" goals—specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic and time-bound—are part of that operating plan. One goal is to have all the firm's locations and company-sponsored events tobacco-free by August.

Through the Mayo Clinic's Embody Health Web site, Relph Benefit Advisors can track quarterly program participation for risk categories including weight management, physical activity, stress and tobacco use.

Of employees who use tobacco, 42 percent say they are ready to make a lifestyle change to quit—up from 22 percent in 2008.

A spring walking program called Walk to Wellness is very popular among employees; a full 80 percent participate, Woodworth adds.

The percentage of employees who have five or more health risk factors fell in the last three years from 61 percent to 50 percent, she says. Health risk assessment and biometric screening data are gathered each year to identify employees' risks. Staff members also learn about medical and lifestyle risk factors.

"Our annual biometric screening and health risk assessment event generates the highest participation, at 95 percent," Woodworth says.

Employees who have the greatest health risk or are ready to make a change in health behavior receive guidance, Woodworth says. Companywide outcomes are evaluated regularly, and health initiatives are reviewed and adapted for continual improvement.

Staff members who rate their health status as very good or excellent increased from 45 percent in 2007 to 65 percent in 2008—proving, Woodworth says, that the company's focus on wellness is making a difference.

—Lynette Haaland



Relph Benefit Advisors president John Bartholf, left, and CEO Robert Relph see to it that the firm's annual operating plan includes appropriate resources for employee health initiatives.



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Organizers say a wellness focus in the office helps create better staff morale at Rochester Clinical Research.

Rochester Clinical Research

Walking on a treadmill while working is the chief way in which the CEO of Rochester Clinical Research sets a healthy tone for the company.

A morning news segment a few years ago inspired Patricia Larrabee to buy a desk that fits over a treadmill. She makes phone calls and works on her laptop a few hours a day while logging miles on the machine.

Larrabee founded RCR 15 years ago. As the company has grown, her role has become less active and more administrative. Movement is crucial to her health and energy level, she says.

"Even just standing burns more calories than sitting," says Larrabee, who notes that some company meetings are held standing up. "We've become so sedentary, we have to do things to mix things up a bit."

Larrabee's efforts to promote wellness extend into other areas.

"She really takes the leadership to get the staff to do different initiatives around lifestyle," says Michael Brennan, nurse practitioner. "The tone and culture that are created by the CEO is one of prioritizing wellness interventions and healthy lifestyle."

The company conducts clinical research into hypertension, diabetes, weight loss and other medical concerns. Most employees are health care professionals and support staffers with an awareness of health issues. But even the pros need prodding, says Vicky Fink, the company's registered dietitian.

People can be resistant to trying healthier lifestyle alternatives, she says, such as eating lower-fat dishes or unfamiliar foods. But Fink passes along samples of foods that are packed with nutrients and easy to eat—such as ground flax seed and dried blueberries—with tips on adding them to meals and snacks. Once people try them, they are more receptive, she says.

"One of the things I do is make things that are healthy and have them try stuff. They

don't necessarily have to know (that it is healthy). You have to make it fun," Fink says.

A surefire way to boost the fun factor is variety; without it, exercise and good eating can become dull—fast.

Fink has employees sampling a host of beginner movement classes that her weight-loss clients try—water aerobics, belly dancing, yoga and Pilates among them. The attraction is that no commitment is required; a staff member can see whether belly dancing is right for her without paying for and committing to an eight-week class.

"We just try to think of things that are new and different," Fink says.

Brennan led a dozen staffers through the Eat Well Live Well Challenge last fall; they celebrated at the end with a party.

"It just gives you a wellness focus in the office that helps create a better staff morale," he says.

Larrabee, who encourages employees to get outside and walk during the day, says it is challenging to keep people motivated. But the progress of her staff proves the effort is worth it.

"You can't throw up your hands and give up," she says. "Say, 'What worked best, and why did it work?'"

—Sally Parker

Symbolic Inc.

Anyone whose idea of a workout is aiming the remote at the TV likely does not work at Symbolic Inc.

The small marketing and communications firm in Fairport has 11 full-time employees, and every last one of them is active.

"Everyone is extremely healthy here," says account director Christie Gustafson. "There's an overall energy, I guess you could say."

Seven employees recently stepped up for a Greatest Loser competition. The goal: to lose the greatest percentage of body weight in a month and win a gift certificate. Six participants lost weight during the month, and all have maintained their weight loss. Each also has set a weight goal to accomplish over the next two months, and bi-weekly weigh-ins are tracking results.

The company also offers employees a healthy alternative to soft drinks, providing free bottled water.

Symbolic's biggest wellness effort is activity-oriented: Staff members embrace exercise.

A half-dozen employees participated in the Finger Lakes Triathlon last year, and five are on course to do it again in September. Others will enter the Pittsford Tri this summer, and several run in the Fleet Feet Sports Dirt Cheap Trail Race Series.

Participation in competitions rose when Symbolic started paying the entry fees. That is no small incentive, Gustafson says.

"That's a huge expense. It encouraged a lot of people who would never have done that before to start working out and training."

The company created Team Symbolic, which not only pays entry fees but provides free workout gear. What started off with a couple of employees quickly grew; Gustafson says the team atmosphere is a

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Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Every last employee at Symbolic is physically active. The firm pays race entry fees and provides free workout gear.

Continued from previous page

big attraction.

“Rather than everyone doing things individually, we realized, ‘Hey, let’s do these things together,’” Gustafson says.

Team Symbolic participants, competitors all, track race results and work to improve their times and distances. Over the course of a year, all employees who took part in triathlons, including those who had never participated in an athletic competition, completed the events. Some went on to train for longer or more demanding events.

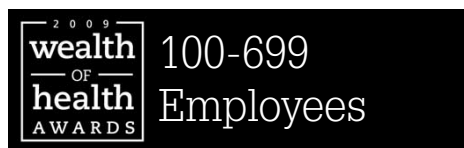
Gustafson and co-worker Matthew Romeika, a partner in the firm, will run the marathon in the Niagara Ultra in June. It will be Gustafson’s first 26-miler, Romei-

ka’s third.

Gustafson ran a half-marathon last year and says Team Symbolic gave her the drive and encouragement to push to the next level.

“I personally have more energy,” she says. “Everyone feeds off of each other.”

—Sally Parker



LiDestri Foods Inc.

The concept of “taking the stairs” as a wellness initiative has new meaning for employees at LiDestri Foods Inc.

in Fairport.

The formerly bland, two-flight stairway now has motivational posters on the walls, a trivia board with new questions posted daily and an MP3 player that blares tunes ranging from the theme from “Rocky” to “Stairway to Heaven” to “We Are the Champions.”

“People now love taking the stairs,” says Cynthia Reddeck-LiDestri M.D., medical director for the company’s wellness program, noting that opening day for the renovated stairway included Slinky races. “Our goal is to make wellness activities fun, and the work site is a great venue for getting across healthy messages.”

LiDestri Foods employs nearly 400 people at its Fairport headquarters, with 270 more at three other locations nationwide. The company produces 2 million jars of sauces, dips and salsas each day.

The stair-climbing campaign is just one of the firm’s healthy initiatives. In July 2006, it banned smoking at all of its properties and offered classes and support groups for smokers who wanted to quit. The company reimburses employees for over-the-counter nicotine replacement therapy products and for co-payments on prescription drugs for smoking cessation.

Fitness is a big part of the firm’s focus on wellness. Activities such as joining a fitness center, participating in benefit walks, losing weight, completing a health risk assessment on Excellus BlueCross BlueShield’s

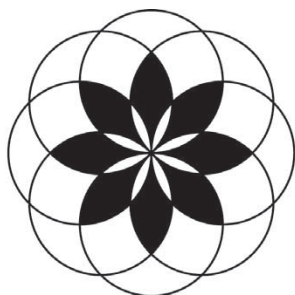
Web site, or attending a company-sponsored health fair can earn employees up to three days off per year or cash back as part of the Wellness Days Off program. In 2008, 914 days off were issued, up from 827 in 2007.

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Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Employee fitness is a big part of a focus on healthy living at LiDestri Foods. Getting up and moving around burns calories and boosts energy.



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WEALTH OF HEALTH

Continued from page 17

LiDestri's new on-site fitness center has two reclining bikes, an upright bike and a stepper for staff use. Birthday luncheons feature healthy food options, and vending machines are stocked with low-calorie, high-fiber choices.

The firm reaches out to employees' relatives too. The summer family picnic features a children's health tent with bicycle helmet giveaways and coloring books that deliver messages about healthy food choices.

These programs are working, Reddeck-LiDestri says. "To date, at least 30 employees at our Fairport plant have stopped smoking, and our weight-loss consultant reports that at least four employees have shown significant improvements in managing their diabetes," she says.

Wellness programs benefit both employees and the company, Reddeck-LiDestri says.

"Research has shown that 70 percent of chronic diseases in the U.S. are preventable through measures to end smoking and control weight," she says. "Moreover, companies that offer wellness programs will save on the bottom line. In the end, we hope to do our part to help our country return to healthy living."

—Debbie Waltzer

Fibertech Networks LLC

Employees of Fibertech Networks LLC can take a spin on a company bicycle when they want to stretch their legs.

Two-thirds of the workers in Fibertech's local office participate in the firm's new wellness program, which includes the use of six new company-owned bikes.

Fibertech's budget includes health-promotion activities. The company hired Workplace Vitality last year to design a wellness program focused on fostering a culture that promotes healthy behaviors, says Eva Bellis, a registered nurse and vice president of clinical operations at Workplace.

Now 81 of Fibertech's 123 local employees are taking part in various healthy pursuits.

The local company builds and operates fiber-optic networks in midsize cities in the eastern and central United States.

"Fibertech believes healthy employees are happy and more productive employees not only in the workplace but at home and in their communities," Bellis says.

Workplace Vitality, a Rochester firm, first did an employee interest survey and health risk assessments to create a list of approved wellness initiatives to implement.

An on-site wellness nurse provides coaching for eight hours a month. In eight months, the nurse met one-on-one with nearly 60 staff members.

"Employees meet to discuss their individual wellness report, based on results of their health risk assessments and screenings," Bellis says. They also can discuss personal health goals and medical issues pertaining to them or their family members.

Hot topics are nutrition, weight management and physical activity, stress management, smoking cessation, depression, diabetes management and hypertension.

Another part of the wellness program is the new central monitoring station at Fibertech's Rochester office. Employees can measure blood pressure, heart rate, oxygen saturation and weight anytime and keep a personal record.

An eight-member work-site wellness committee meets monthly. On the agenda now is helping employees integrate stress



A Fibertech Networks employee has blood drawn in a conference room dedicated to the firm's wellness initiatives. Two-thirds of the staff takes part in healthy pursuits.

Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

management techniques and humor into the work day.

The company has switched vending machines to those that offer 100-calorie snacks. Company lunch events provide employees with a healthy food choice. And Fibertech supplies free bottled water and fresh fruit daily, which is a big hit, Bellis says.

A health fair last October was well attended, and more than 30 employees received on-site flu vaccinations. Before the holidays, the American Heart Association presented a lunchtime seminar on stress.

At the Rochester headquarters along the Erie Canal towpath, the new bicycles are available to use during free time. And the company continues to participate in community fundraisers, such as the American Heart Association's Heart Walk, the Breast Cancer Walk and the JPMorgan Chase Corporate Challenge.

Health information is posted around the office and in a new monthly e-mail.

"The changes in the culture of the workplace have definitely increased employees' awareness in the value and impact of health and wellness," Bellis says.

—Lynette Haaland

Clark Patterson Lee

When a company has 11 locations up and down the Eastern Seaboard, interaction among staffers can be tricky.

Thanks to a companywide wellness program, that challenge has been bridged at Clark Patterson Lee, a Rochester-based, full-service architecture and engineering firm.

Early this year, company engineer Joseph Rausch sent out an e-mail encouraging his 200 co-workers to participate in an eight-week weight-loss challenge. Nearly 90 staffers responded and were placed on four-member teams with co-workers from different locations. Awards were presented midway through the challenge and at its conclusion to the teams that lost the largest percentage of weight.

"The weight challenge has been a terrific way to build camaraderie while helping all of us become healthier," says company President Todd Liebert, who is participating in the second phase of the challenge.

Employees could opt to get to know fellow teammates via e-mail or phone and could keep information about actual pounds lost to themselves. Some teams got caught up in the spirit of the event, creating team names ranging from "Wii Not Fit" to "Looking Fine in 2009" to "Thin to Win."

The results were impressive: Clark Patterson Lee employees lost a total of 856 pounds, or 4.75 percent of their total starting weight. Senior management surprised participants at the end of the challenge by donating one dollar for each pound lost to a children's health organization.

"It's been a great program, where folks from Charlotte, N.C., got to know co-workers in Binghamton while becoming healthier at the same time," Liebert notes. "The challenge really helped all of us become more connected."

The company's wellness program doesn't stop there. Weekly "lunch and learn" gatherings—during which employees learn about advances and new technologies in their respective fields—had featured high-calorie, high-fat cuisine such as pizza, Chinese food and cookies. Now staffers munch on more nutritious choices such as sandwiches, salads, fruit, diet sodas and water.

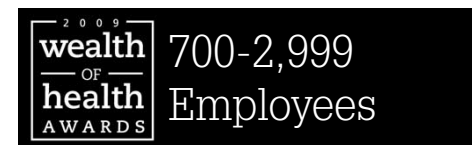
Other healthy activities include weekly basketball games, lunchtime walks with company-provided pedometers, golf and softball leagues and participation in fundraiser walks.

Wellness programs that emphasize proper diet and sufficient exercise are critical for good health, says Liebert, an 18-year veteran of Clark Patterson Lee.

"As a society, we've become so used to hopping in our cars to go out and grab a bite to eat, then (driving) back to the office, and it's been proven that losing weight becomes harder as we age," he says. "Wellness programs are extremely important because they promote both physical and mental health."

"At our firm, we've got a fairly young staff that wants to stay healthy, so being aware of diet and exercise needs can really help all of us improve our long-term health."

—Debbie Waltzer



Thompson Health

Thompson Health has found a way to honor employees who have made dramatic health improvements.

To Thompson, such employees are Health Heroes. Their stories include losing more than 100 pounds, successfully managing Type 2 diabetes, kicking the smoking habit and committing to diet and exercise. Their efforts have improved both their health and their outlook on life, says Randy Jacque, director of health.

Thirty more employees will join the ranks of Health Heroes this year and earn gift cards in the process. The employee newsletter will feature their inspirational stories. And a new conference room, with profiles of these honorees and resources on health topics, is in the works.

The conference room "will be a welcoming environment where employees can decompress," Jacque says.

Canandaigua-based Thompson Health is an integrated health care delivery system that began as a hospital more than a century ago. It recently stepped up its employee wellness program to create a positive and healthy work environment and to address an aging work force, Jacque says.

"At Thompson Health, like other organizations, we are experiencing dramatic increases in health care insurance premium costs, and we have a limited amount of new funding coming in to support the cost increases," he adds. "All these issues brought us to the point that an increased commitment to employee wellness was an essential strategy in these times."

Approximately 800 to 1,000 of the 1,362 employees have participated in health and wellness events in the last couple of years. The organization's first health fair was offered in 2008. Healthy Me provided blood pressure checks, cholesterol and glucose tests, depression screenings, flexibility testing, sleep evaluations, pulse oximeter readings, and proper posture and lifting evaluations.

More than 450 employees attended Healthy Me. More than 200 of them, who had problematic health-screening results, were counseled and directed to resources needed to improve their health.

Continued on next page



At Clark Patterson Lee, focusing on diet and exercise is helping young staffers fix good habits that will last a lifetime, wellness organizers say.

Photo by Kimberly McKinzie



Photo courtesy of Thompson Health

A lunchtime Zumba class gets Thompson Health staff members moving.

Continued from previous page

Companywide motivational interviewing and coaching are done one-on-one for such things as quitting smoking, losing weight and increasing physical activity.

Seventeen employees quit smoking after the company offered free smoking-cessation classes and nicotine replacement therapy.

When Eat Well/Live Well was offered last year for the first time, 573 employees took up the eight-week challenge and did so enthusiastically, Jacque says.

“They logged in more than 100,000 miles and reported eating some 88,000 cups of fruits and vegetables,” he says.

The organization this year started expanding healthy food options in the cafeteria, including providing a yogurt and fresh fruit bar, Jacque says.

Thompson Health last year began sponsoring 1.5-mile Hot Cider Walks at lunchtime during winter months. More than 100 employees participated at two campuses.

When the agency held the annual Better Life 5K + 1 in Victor last spring, more than 50 employees participated. Later in the year, a team of 20 took part in the JP-Morgan Chase Corporate Challenge and 25 employees participated in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk.

—Lynette Haaland

St. Ann's Community

Good health is a team effort at St. Ann's Community. The organization's 1,100 staff members—who ad-

dress the needs of aging residents—have learned that their own health and well-being are as important as their patients'.

Team Wellness, St. Ann's healthy program committee, organizes healthy initiatives, including smoking cessation programs, recipe contests, walking and stair-climbing programs and health screenings.

An employee-health nurse meets once a year with every staffer to update health histories and to recommend lifestyle changes such as weight loss, better workstation ergonomics and flu shots.

Team Wellness makes sure healthy food choices are available in the cafeteria. Options include a salad bar, whole wheat bread and plenty of fruit and vegetables. Every staff member can obtain a “Strive for Five” card; when they purchase four servings of fruits or vegetables, the fifth serving is free.

In the cafeteria and online, Team Wellness posts tips on food portion sizes, strategies to reduce calories, exercise opportunities and community resources for those experiencing physical or emotional abuse. Employees are encouraged to submit health questions to the team as well.

Nearly 50 people registered to participate in Healthy Rewards during the program's first month of operation. The online program

run by Excellus BlueCross BlueShield suggests exercise programs and lifestyle changes that staffers can make while earning cash back.

Participation rates in all of these initiatives are encouraging, says Betty Mullin-DiProsa, president and CEO of St. Ann's



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Spiritual health is a part of employee wellness at St. Ann's Community. The chapel is open to all staff members and residents.

Community. This year, about 700 employees received on-site flu shots and 200 are participating in Team Wellness nutrition and exercise programs. Moreover, several hundred nurses have participated in educational sessions on proper patient-lifting techniques, and 200 employees requested “Strive for Five” cards.

In addition, St. Ann's provides up to five free confidential therapy sessions per year for benefits-eligible staff members to support their mental, psychological and spiritual health. St. Ann's Chapel, with daily Mass or ecumenical services, is open to everyone who lives or works at St. Ann's.

“Employee wellness is critical, because if our people are healthy, then they are happier in their jobs,” says Mullin-DiProsa. “We're a team and we're all in this together, whether we are trying to increase our daily exercise activities or make healthier food choices. The bottom line is that we want to invest in our employees because they are our most important asset.”

—Debbie Waltzer

Seneca Foods Corp.

Employees of Seneca Foods Corp. like a little friendly competition.

Staff members nationwide covered more than 325,000 miles last year in the Step Up program, which encourages more exercise and healthier eating. They recorded more than 731 million steps and ate 238,115 servings of fruits and vegetables.

The Marion-based food processor launched the Step Up program through Excellus BlueCross BlueShield last year, and it has become the company's most popular wellness initiative, says Amanda Marciano, benefits and training administrator and corporate wellness coordinator.

Thirty-four percent of employees, or 955, took part in the first Step Up competition. More than 400 of the participants work in the Rochester area. Results were good, Marciano says: 71 percent of the teams reached or exceeded their goals.

“We received much feedback, and I still hear from employees on how the competition helped them improve their lifestyle,” Marciano says.

“I found a new way of thinking about food because of this,” one employee wrote. “I no longer say to myself, ‘I cannot have this’ but instead, ‘I do not want this.’ This way I do not feel that I am depriving myself of something but rather that I am making a healthy choice and am in control of what I eat.”

Employees enjoyed the competitive nature of the program, Marciano says. It didn't hurt that the top prizes were a Wii, Wii Fit and flat-screen TV.

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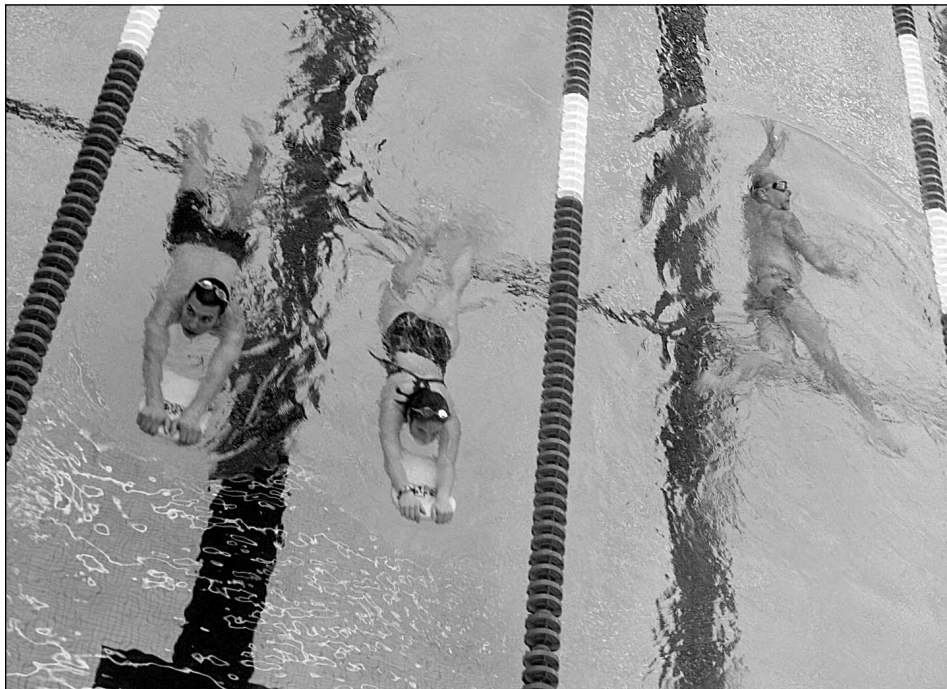


Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Students and faculty use the Gordon Field House Aquatics Center throughout the day and evening.

WEALTH OF HEALTH

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Weight loss is another facet of the firm's emphasis on health. During a Holiday Weight Loss Challenge, held at the end of last year, 213 employees either maintained their weight or shed five pounds or more. Participants lost a total of 575 pounds.

Seneca Foods issues healthy guidelines for meetings and vending machines and participates in charity walks at its 26 locations across the country. A quarterly wellness newsletter contains articles about nutrition, exercise and mental health.

HealthyBlue, an initiative that will be

launched on July 1, will use incentives to encourage members to take a more active role in managing their health, Marciano says.

Members who have the HealthyBlue health insurance plan can earn up to \$500 for healthy behavior. The program offers dividends—one dividend equals \$1—when employees participate and report their progress on activities such as eating better, exercising more and getting routine checkups.

"Seneca Foods is looking to increase our employees' opportunity to take control of their own health and make changes to improve their lifestyle," Marciano says. "We are looking toward decreased workers' compensation costs and a decrease in future medical costs. By achieving these items, we will not only save our employees money but also improve their way of life."

—Lynette Haaland



Rochester Institute of Technology

Rochester Institute of Technology wants not only to have a health-minded staff but to model healthy living for students with its wellness program.

"Our faculty and staff strive to be excellent role models for our students, and modeling healthy behaviors is a way to contribute to their adoption of a healthy lifestyle," says Margaret Berfield, RIT's manager of employee health and wellness.

The Better Me program, introduced in the fall of 2007, focuses on the social and physical aspects of wellness. These include workplace culture, organizational support and individual factors such as needs, interests, motivators and barriers that contribute to healthy behavior.

"Although the prime focus is employees, the wellness committee's vision is to create a campuswide culture of health and wellness," Berfield says.

One of the university's most popular initiatives is fitness classes. Eighteen fee-based classes are offered, and about 220 faculty and staff members take them.

"Over the past year we have seen a 400 percent increase in class registration," Berfield says.

Of RIT's 3,130-plus employees, more

than 600 registered for the 2009 Eat Well Live Well Challenge.

For those who filled out the evaluations last year, 70 percent reported a permanent lifestyle change. And 25 percent reported a weight loss—translating into a potential saving, in annual medical and pharmaceutical costs for RIT, of \$11,312, Berfield says.

One RIT employee reported becoming more active, gaining energy and losing 11 pounds as a result of the Eat Well Live Well Challenge. Another employee said: "Being active has given me more energy and a much better outlook on life than I had before."

When another employee returned to work after back surgery, she started a fitness strengthening program and began working with a personal trainer. Apprehensive at first, she later reported that it was one of the best things she had ever accomplished, Berfield says.

A quarter of the faculty and staff use RIT's fitness center, and more than 30 employees work with personal trainers.

More than 40 employees are participating in Weight Watchers At Work sessions, and several have achieved and maintained their weight-loss goals.

Other wellness changes implemented at RIT include: healthy menu options at events, meetings and selected dining locations; the cultural acceptance of being active during lunch breaks; initiation of payroll deduction as a payment method for Weight Watchers At Work sessions; and a similar payment method for personal training sessions.

"It's important to have a supportive environment to facilitate permanent behavior change," Berfield says.

Perhaps because RIT is an educational institution, organizers put a high premium on having a results-oriented wellness program that is strongly linked to evaluation. An annual online assessment

sent to all employees gathers information about needs, interests, barriers to participation, program satisfaction and behavior change.

"We observe employees becoming and staying active and aware of what and how they eat—the cornerstones of health," Berfield says.

—Lynette Haaland

Stantec Consulting Services Inc.

As architectural and engineering consultants, Stantec Inc.'s 140 local employees are committed to helping preserve the environment. They also strive to improve their own health and well-being.

As a result, dozens of local staff members participate in a Bike-to-Work challenge, says James Hofmann, principal and office leader at Stantec's Rochester branch. (The global company of 10,000 employees is based in Edmonton, Canada.)

"Each year, we track participation in the Bike-to-Work challenge and the pounds of carbon emissions saved by biking rather than driving," Hofmann says. "In 2008, Rochester employees biked a total of 893.6 miles, which equates to preventing nearly 983 pounds of greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere. Through this program, we're helping to sustain the environment and reduce carbon emissions."

Employees also are trimming their waistlines, reducing their stress levels and improving their overall health through this initiative and others, Hofmann adds.

For example, numerous staffers participate in a voluntary Wellness for Life program. They first complete a health appraisal and an on-site biometrics test to measure various data, such as weight, body mass index and cholesterol levels.

Then participants can elect to wear a kinetic activity monitor, which measures daily activity levels.

Staff members earn points for various activities, such as exercise and healthy eating. The points are then downloaded from a docking station to a personal Web page and later converted into savings on the employee's insurance premium for the following year.

Evidence that the program works is in the numbers: In 2006, Stantec's global operation saved more than \$2.2 million in health insurance claims, and that figure rose to \$2.5 million in 2007.

Locally, several staff members walk or run together daily during their lunch hour, and the company sponsors bowling and golf leagues. Employees also can easily adjust their work schedules to fulfill coaching or officiating obligations that they have in the community.

Dozens of employees take part in the American Heart Association Heart Walk and JPMorgan Chase Corporate Challenge 5K.

"Our wellness program gets better and better every year," Hofmann says. "As a company, we're committed to improving our eating habits and increasing our activity and exercise levels, and in the pro-

Continued on page 22



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Students, faculty and staff, including women's basketball coach Amy Reed, use RIT's state-of-the-art fitness center.



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Come to the Wealth of Health Awards Luncheon.

Join us on June 9 for the 2009 Wealth of Health Awards.

This is your opportunity to learn what local organizations are doing to be healthier, and experience the benefits of their initiatives firsthand. Take the first step toward building a healthier workforce by joining us for a keynote presentation by 2007 and 2008 honoree Harris RF Communications Division. Reserve your tickets today.

2009 Wealth of Health Awards Luncheon

Reservations:
\$50 per person;
\$500 per table of 10

Please make ____ reservations for the June 9 Wealth of Health Awards Program. The luncheon will take place at 12:00 noon at the Hyatt Regency.

- Enclosed is a check, payable to **Rochester Business Journal**
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You may also purchase tickets online at www.rbjdaily.com

Honorees

The Wealth of Health Awards honor innovative organizations that promote workplace wellness, improving both their bottom line and the overall health of our community.

1-99 employees

- Relph Benefit Advisors
- Rochester Clinical Research Inc.
- Symbolic, Inc.

100-699 employees

- LiDestri Foods, Inc.
- Fibertech Networks, LLC
- Clark Patterson Lee

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- St. Ann's Community
- Seneca Foods Corporation

3,000+ employees

- Rochester Institute of Technology
- Stantec Consulting Services, Inc.
- Unity Health System

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Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Employee participation in wellness programs at Stantec Consulting Services grows every year—both in numbers and enthusiasm.

WEALTH OF HEALTH

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cess we're realizing significant reductions in our health insurance rates as well.

"Best of all, employees are taking these wellness initiatives home to their families and sharing healthy choices with their loved ones. We're thrilled, because our employees and their families are the foundations of our company."

—Debbie Waltzer

Unity Health System

Unity Health System's 4,200 employees have one mission: to provide top-quality health care to the Greater

Rochester community.

But the health of employees themselves deserves attention too, says Pattie Nowak, director of benefits and employee health services.

"Our culture is such that we also need to be in the business of meeting the wellness needs of our employees and their families as well. After all, health care doesn't stop with our work force; the well-being of their loved ones is important to us too."

Unity operates 50 sites, including Unity Hospital and Unity St. Mary's Campus. Since 2007, when President and CEO Timothy McCormick introduced the Eat Well Live Well Challenge to the staff, numerous additional initiatives have been rolled out.

Today, a 14-member employee wellness promotion committee oversees a broad

array of programs to help employees address their own health care needs. The team comprises dietitians, nurses, behavioral health therapists, physical therapists and specialists from information technology, finance and human resources.

Health fairs, held routinely at Unity's various sites, feature blood pressure checks, measurements of pulmonary output, fitness/step tests, body mass index measurements, and cholesterol and glucose screenings. In addition, employees can receive information on how to quit smoking, control stress and improve nutrition.

Unity Hospital's cafeteria also is on board with the system's wellness plan. Food service staff members post the nutritional value and Weight Watchers points of food selections. Healthy, low-fat and low-calorie offerings are emphasized in the cafeteria, and National Nutrition Month is celebrated in May with informational posters and contests.

To encourage preventive care, health screenings and disease management, Unity offers an employee discount for staff members and their dependents. About 2,900 employees and their families used the program in 2008; their co-payments and deductibles were waived when they received services within the Unity Health System.

Staff members also receive a \$300 reimbursement for gym memberships, along with free pedometers, flu vaccines, blood



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Seven hundred staff members took part in the 2008 Eat Well Live Well Challenge at Unity Health System, led by Joanie Szczupakowski and Anne Fagioli.

tests and an employee assistance program, which is open to staff members' loved ones as well. During the holidays, employees receive a wellness wall calendar and a wallet card for recording health statistics such as blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose levels.

Participation in Unity's wellness initiatives during 2008 was impressive, Nowak notes. Seven hundred staff members participated in the Eat Well Live Well Challenge, 2,150 obtained flu vaccines, and 525 visited an on-site physician. Moreover, 200 members of the Unity community participated in the Chase Corporate Challenge, and 220 employees and their family members used services available through the employee assistance program.

Health care providers are most effective at helping people in need when they take the time to take care of their own, Nowak says.

"Through the commitment of our administration and the members of our wellness promotion committee, our employees are assured that Unity cares deeply about their wellness and emotional well-being," she says.

—Debbie Waltzer

Congratulations to our Wellness Committee

Recipient of the 2009 Wealth of Health Award

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