

2014
wealth
 OF
health
 AWARDS

HEALTHY
Ways

From cooking lessons to fitness classes, Rochester employers are getting creative about nurturing a culture of health.

The variety of health-promotion tools used by local companies is wide-ranging. Some have fully equipped on-site fitness facilities; others are holding financial seminars to help reduce stress.

Sixteen local employers will be honored for focusing on employee health. Twelve are finalists for the 2014 Wealth of Health Awards, presented by Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, Rochester Region, and the Rochester Business Journal. Past winners that continue to improve their wellness programs in creative ways are being honored in a new laureate category this year.

The awards now are in their eighth year. Finalists were judged on employee involvement in health initiatives, the creativity of these activities to reach specific targets, sustainability of programs and measurable outcomes. They were grouped by size, determined by the number of full-time and part-time employees.

The Wealth of Health Awards luncheon is scheduled for noon to 1:30 p.m. June 12 at the Hyatt Regency Rochester. Paul Speranza Jr., vice chairman, general counsel and secretary of Wegmans Food Markets Inc., will speak. He leads the High Blood Pressure Collaborative, an initiative to reduce blood pressure in the community. Rochester Business Alliance and the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency are leading the effort.

Inside is a closer look at each honoree's commitment to fostering health.

Profiles by Mike Costanza



Creating a culture of healthy living at work

By MIKE COSTANZA



Allen-Bailey Tag & Label Inc.

Allen-Bailey Tag & Label Inc. has a message for its employees: “Tag, You’re Fit.” “(Our) mission is to promote and encourage healthy lifestyles amongst Allen-Bailey employees,” says Colleen Knopeck, a marketing assistant for the firm.

Since Allen-Bailey started the program nearly two years ago, Tag, You’re Fit has spurred employees to exercise more regularly, improve their diets and in other ways take better care of themselves. The company, a maker of custom tags and labels for a wide range of industries and products, employs nearly 100 people, almost all of them at its plant in Caledonia, Livingston County.

Tag, You’re Fit kicked off with a health fair “to get information out to employees on all different (health) aspects,” says Knopeck, who has led the seven-person wellness team in charge of the program since last June.

About 10 vendors were available to talk about health-oriented issues. A table manned by Excellus BlueCross BlueShield representatives addressed portion control with plates showing healthy and unhealthy portion sizes. Employees also could have their blood pressure checked and make squeezable stress balls out of balloons and sand.



Allen-Bailey Tag & Label Inc. employees have participated in health initiatives, including the 2013 Making Strides Against Cancer fundraiser walk on behalf of a fellow employee diagnosed with cancer.

Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Employees also taught each other. During the buildup to the fair, they were encouraged to submit recipes for healthy meals. The recipes were collected in a cookbook given to everyone at the health fair.

From there, the Tag, You’re Fit team went on to organize two weight loss challenges, Knopeck says. In the first, 42 employees strove to drop the pounds from March to June 2013, guided in part by tips they heard in company lunch-and-learn

seminars and weekly newsletters on exercise, healthy cooking and other health-oriented subjects. Allen-Bailey sweetened the pot with cash prizes.

The winner, who shed 19 percent of body weight, walked away with \$250, with the promise of another \$250 if the weight stayed off for six months.

The second challenge ran from last October to January, prompting 34 employees to work as individuals or in teams to lose

the most weight. Held during the holidays, it was a tougher battle, Knopeck says.

Still, the top individual loser dropped 24 pounds and picked up a cash prize of \$150.

Allen-Bailey’s latest effort was the walking challenge, which started April 1. Thirty employees measured how much they regularly walk. When the contest ended June 1, the person who logged the most steps overall took home a \$100 credit toward the purchase of a new pair of sneakers.

“Each person is given a pedometer, and they’re asked to track their steps every day for a week,” Knopeck explains. “Every week, they check in with me to give me their numbers.”

Some health initiatives are grassroots efforts.

After an employee had surgery for breast cancer, her co-workers gathered money for cancer research, some of which they raised through walking in the 2013 Making Strides Against Cancer fundraiser. All together, they raised over \$1,500 for the American Cancer Society, Knopeck says.

While many of Allen-Bailey’s efforts have sought to help employees improve their physical health, the company also has held lunch seminars on mental health issues. The talks—on depression, stress and related subjects—were held monthly until the pace of business became too demanding.

“We do hope, once we get in a stable place, that we will get back to monthly,” Knopeck says.

BonaDent Dental Laboratories

For BonaDent Dental Laboratories, employee health and productivity go together.

“BonaDent believes that the healthier employees are, the happier they will be, which will directly affect how productive they will be at work,” says Michelle Grillone, BonaDent’s wellness and human resources coordinator.

Grillone, a certified personal trainer, joined BonaDent in part to design a wellness program for the dental restoration manufacturer. The company’s wellness program, called BonaFit, rolled out in early 2012. Most of the employees—there are about 235—work at its corporate headquarters and plant in Seneca Falls.

“The goal of the BonaFit program is to encourage employees to create a healthy lifestyle for themselves and their family and friends by making healthy choices and physical fitness part of their daily routine,” Grillone explains.

The program rewards employees with points for healthy physical activities and choices. Those wanting to raise their scores by exercising could start by pumping iron, riding the stationary bikes or building up a sweat by other means in the firm’s fitness facility at headquarters. It is a state-of-the-art, 1,280-square-foot facility with showers and locker rooms. Those who need exercise pointers can turn to Grillone, who will meet with them in the gym to provide professional advice.

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Finalists

Winners announced
June 12th

1-299 Employees

- Allen-Bailey Tag & Label, Inc.
- BonaDent Dental Laboratories
- Monroe Plan for Medical Care

300-699 Employees

- American Packaging Corporation
- Canandaigua National Bank & Trust
- CDS Monarch

700-3,999 Employees

- The Gunlocke Company
- Heritage Christian Services
- Livingston County

4000+ Employees

- Constellation Brands
- Finger Lakes Area School Health Plan
- Tops Markets LLC

Laureates

Returning honorees

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Photo courtesy of BonaDent

The encouragement of healthy lifestyles at BonaDent Dental Laboratories extends beyond employees to their families.

WEALTH OF HEALTH

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“Part of the program is that each employee gets a half-hour session with me,” she explains.

Grillone is also available to answer questions on health-oriented issues as part of the regular workday. Employees who don’t want to use the gym can raise their scores by kayaking, walking, golfing or engaging in many other activities—for example, yoga and Zumba classes on-site. Even gar-

dening and other non-sport activities count.

“We actually give points to people to do yard work,” Grillone says.

Points also are earned by choosing from the Health Choices menu at Angelo’s Cafe, BonaDent’s full-service cafeteria. In addition to serving meals, the facility also provides take-out dinners. Employees can also accrue points by quitting smoking, participating in weight loss programs and getting physical exams.

Employees log their activities in a website. At the end of each month, the program totals up the points and awards prizes. Most

are fitness-related—running shirts, pedometers, hydration backpacks and the like—and require as few as 120 points to win.

“We’re trying to motivate as much as we can,” Grillone says.

Those employed at BonaDent’s South Carolina and Florida facilities can also log in and vie for prizes.

Participation in BonaFit in Seneca Falls ranges from about 30 to 50 percent of employees, depending on the season, Grillone says. Though unable to say whether the program has or will affect the firm’s bottom line in terms of health insurance rates, she says it has definitely benefited employees.

“We feel that people are more in charge of their health right now,” she says.

Monroe Plan for Medical Care

Good employee health is essential to the organizational goals of Monroe Plan for Medical Care.

“We work to have our employees live healthy lifestyles because we are out in the community

serving our members to help them gain healthy lifestyles,” says project specialist Andrea Indiano.

Striving for Health and Personal Excellence is Monroe Plan’s answer.

“The purpose of the program is to have a healthy workplace for our employees, but also to create a culture of health,” says Indiano, who helps guide SHAPE as co-leader of Monroe Plan’s wellness team.

Monroe Plan is a health care services organization that supports individuals and their families who are enrolled in government programs. The non-profit has about 172 people on its payroll, most of whom work at its Pittsford offices.

SHAPE has helped Monroe Plan’s employees drop unneeded pounds, quit smoking and improve their health in other ways since it rolled out in 2010. As part of those efforts, during 2013 the non-profit worked with the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency on Creating Healthy Places to Live, Work and Play, a state program that seeks to prevent obesity and Type 2 diabetes. The partnership, financed by a state grant, gave Monroe Plan’s employees access to professional assistance to improve their diets and develop or enhance their exercise regimens.

“We were able to offer personal training sessions and nutritionist sessions for all our employees,” Indiano explains. “We (also) had educational seminars they could attend.”

Sixty-two Monroe Plan employees met with the nutritionist alone, and 75, or close to 47 percent of the organization’s payroll, met with the personal trainer. Though the partnership ended in 2013 when the grant ran out, Monroe Plan has continued to provide yoga and other exercise programs for employees.

“We have a gym on site,” Indiano says. “Our instruction comes in twice a week during the lunch hour.”

Monroe Plan has also encouraged its employees to participate in walking and weight loss with noticeable results. From 2011 to 2013, the 30 employees who participated in Weight Watchers dropped almost 2,000 pounds, Indiano says.

During the same period, six employees—about 20 percent of those who smoke—managed to quit with the assistance of Quit for the Love of Your Life, the non-profit’s cessation program. The program reimburses employees for the prescription and non-prescription items they use to quit smoking and provides monetary incentives for those who do.

Annual biometric screenings help the organization monitor the health of its employees. Participating employees sit down to have their blood pressure, cholesterol levels and other important physical indicators measured in return for reductions of as much as \$400 a year in their medical insurance premiums. About 93 percent of the non-profit’s employees have participated in the screenings.

It is “tough to say” how SHAPE has helped Monroe Plan’s bottom line, if at all, but some indicators are positive, Indiano says.

“We do know for the last three years our health insurance premiums have been significantly lower than the previous three years,” she says.



American Packaging Corp.

When it comes to health awareness among its employees, American Packaging Corp. is changing the conversation.


“Our purpose is to provide safety and wellness awareness inside and outside of the workplace,” says Rene Daugherty, who heads the safety and wellness awareness team at the corporation’s Rochester plant on Driving Park Avenue.

American Packaging also has facilities in Iowa and Wisconsin. The 165 local employees make use of company-sponsored opportunities to take care of their physical health.

“We usually do a weight-loss incentives program once a year,” says Daugherty, who is the receptionist at the Rochester plant.

This year’s program was focused on the Eat Well, Live Well Challenge, an eight-week competition launched by Wegmans Food Markets Inc. for local companies. Wegmans holds the competition three times a year to encourage people to increase their activity levels with more walking and greater fruit and vegetable consumption. Participants wear pedometers

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Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Yoga is one of the exercise classes offered during the lunch hour at Monroe Plan for Medical Care as part of the SHAPE program.



Photo courtesy of American Packaging

Running and walking have been a significant part of American Packaging Corp.'s health awareness. Employees participate in 5K races the company sponsors.

Continued from previous page

to count the steps they've walked. They also track how many servings of fruit and vegetables they eat.

Daugherty and her team kicked off the program with a health fair that drew employees together for a few health-oriented competitions.

"We had challenges for people to participate in, such as hula hooping," she says.

The organizers also handed out pedometers that participants could use to count their steps and tape measures they could use to measure the inches they lost from their waists while they walked. Those in the program could also vie for prizes at weekly contests.

"We had a fruit- and vegetable-tasting challenge," Daugherty says.

They could also challenge each other in exercise contests. The winners took home prizes, such as \$10 Wegmans gift cards. Of APC's Rochester workforce, 35 participated in the plant's last weight loss program. Daugherty said one employee lost 15 pounds by the time the program ended.

In addition to weight loss programs, Daugherty and her team organize a wellness week in the fall. Employees who attend the affair can sit down with a nurse to have their cholesterol and other biometrics checked, discuss exercise programs with a representative of the local YMCA and get free flu shots. Those hoping to learn how to improve their diets can attend lunch-and-learn sessions with an Excellus BlueCross BlueShield representative and relax for a chair massage.

APC has a blood pressure monitor on-site for regular checks.

APC employees can join co-workers in one of the 5K races the Rochester plant sponsors annually. Teams plan to enter three races this year, including the J.P. Morgan Chase Corporate Challenge. Daugherty estimates as many as 40 APC employees could don their running shoes for each race.

Daugherty is unable to say whether APC's efforts to improve employee health are working, but some evidence suggests they've made a difference.

"There's definitely more conversation about eating well," she says.

Canandaigua National Bank & Trust Co.

Offering employees free flu shots, opportunities to exercise and other ways to become healthier wasn't enough for the Canandaigua National Bank & Trust Co. Last July, the bank decided to kick its health efforts up a notch.

"Our employees are struggling with the big things that hit people in general these days: obesity, diabetes and (high) blood pressure," says Michelle Pedzich, CNB's senior vice president for human resources. "We wanted to boost things up a little bit more to get more participation."

Health \$ense, a program that offers a wealth of ways to attack or prevent physical and mental health problems, was born. The program has features that transcend those CNB has offered to employees in the past and presents those features as part of a more formal effort to help them be healthier.

"We're trying to take a very holistic approach to thinking about wellness as physi-

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Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Canandaigua National Bank & Trust Co. launched Health \$ense as a formal initiative to get employees off their feet and combat mental and physical health problems.

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WEALTH OF HEALTH

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cal, mental, emotional, financial—all of those different components,” Pedzich says.

CNB employs about 500 people in offices and branches in Ontario and Monroe counties. Pedzich helped to create Health Sense and leads the 20-person wellness committee that runs the program, which gained its moniker through a naming contest for employees. As its name implies, the program is also geared to give CNB’s bottom line a healthier glow.

“The actual health of our employees and their family members that are on our (insurance) plan really impacts our health insurance rate,” Pedzich says.

Some Health Sense measures, such as the bank’s walking programs and “biggest loser” weight loss contests, are found at other businesses, but others may be unique. In March, 65 CNB employees signed up for the Twelve Weeks of Health fitness challenge, a contest encouraging participants to lose excess weight, drop unhealthy body mass or increase muscle mass. After health screeners measured each person’s weight, body mass, blood pressure, cholesterol level and other biometrics, contestants set out to lose or gain, depending upon their aims. When the contest ended at the end of May, CNB gave the winners an additional vacation day.

Some CNB employees might have tried to boost their chances of winning the challenge by training for another kind of contest—the J.P. Morgan Chase Corporate Challenge in Rochester. The bank paid part of the entrance fee for the 3.5-mile race on May 29. In 2013, 55 staffers donned running shoes for the race, Pedzich says, and the bank hoped to put 75 on the starting line this year.

Whether walking during lunch, running in races or developing better eating habits, all CNB employees can pick up information on healthier living from the bank’s website or weekly emails on the subject, Pedzich says. The bank also hosts lunch programs on subjects ranging from dealing with stress to planning for retirement.

“Financial challenges really stress people out, and stress leads to high blood pressure and all kinds of other things,” Pedzich explains.

The bank has blood pressure monitors for use by employees at two of its locations and will extend that service to its other offices on a rotating basis through a partnership with the Rochester Business Alliance.

“We’re circulating a mobile wellness display, which will have a blood pressure monitor and information,” Pedzich says.

CNB helps cover the costs of some of its health-oriented programs, completely covers the cost of smoking cessation programs and does what it can to draw employees’



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

CDS Monarch employees receive a \$200 reimbursement they can use toward gym memberships, exercise equipment and weight-management programs.

family members into healthier habits. Though Pedzich admits it is too early to tell how successful Health Sense is, some CNB employees already have benefited from the health screenings in March.

“There are people who didn’t realize that their cholesterol was really high, and they’re following up with their own physicians to get some additional support,” she says.

At least one CNB employee has definitely benefited from Health Sense. Since she began working on the program, Pedzich herself has dropped 70 pounds.

CDS Monarch

CDS Monarch has long sought to help its employees stay healthy.

“We’ve had some type of wellness program in place at least since 2008,” says Sarah Norton, human resource manager for health and safety. “Through the years, it’s continued to grow.”

Webster-based CDS has provided services to meet the needs of disabled people since it opened its doors in 1977.

“We work with people with developmental and emotional disabilities, as well as veterans who have experienced either post-traumatic stress disorders or traumatic brain injuries,” Norton says.

CDS provides a variety of programs for those it serves, from day programs that allow them to express themselves through drama and music to employment training. It employs about 575 people.

CDS uses a variety of ways to nudge employees toward healthy choices. In biometric clinics, held during health insurance open en-

rollment periods, employees have their blood pressure and cholesterol levels measured and fill out a health risk assessment. Those at risk for medical problems are given information on ways they can deal with the risks.

“If somebody is a tobacco user, we will provide the information for tobacco cessation,” says Norton, who leads the agency’s 25-person wellness committee.

CDS will also cover the cost of the tobacco cessation program. Employees who pass the assessments receive discounts on their health insurance premiums; an individual can save close to \$24 per pay period.

For those interested in becoming healthier, Norton’s committee offers a different program each quarter. About 170 CDS employees and members of their families gathered in teams last April and signed up for the Eat Well, Live Well Challenge. Top scorers take home prizes.

“The team with the most steps gets the thumbs-up trophy,” Norton says.

When the competition ends on June 22, the overall winners will be given more substantial prizes, she says.

Other programs include the I Heart My Heart challenge, which encouraged employees to take small steps

toward better heart health, and a “biggest loser” competition.

CDS employees seeking more strenuous exercise than they might get through walking can head over to the non-profit’s gym at its main offices. Staff members working in group homes can join in the exercise programs the non-profit arranges for the people it serves; there’s even one that uses hula hoops. The organization also supports employees who want to exercise on their own.

“We have an annual \$200 reimbursement that they can utilize towards gym memberships, exercise equipment (and) weight management programs,” Norton explains.



Gunlocke Co.

Gunlocke Co. employees can take a healthy hike without leaving work.

“We have established an indoor and two outdoor marked walking trails,” says senior community relations specialist Pat Lander.

Employees (called members at Gunlocke) use the trails on breaks and after work. Each trail is about a mile long; the firm added them as part of its overall effort to help members become and stay healthy.

“Our objective is to create culture change by raising our members’ awareness of healthy lifestyles, with the intent to help our people make better choices of

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Photo courtesy of Gunlocke

Members at Gunlocke Co. participate in activities and exercise to reduce their risk of developing heart disease and diabetes.



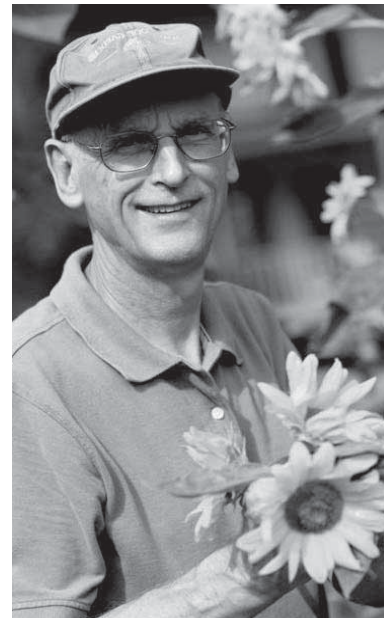
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the foods they eat, activities and exercises, and tobacco use,” Lander explains.

Gunlocke, part of HNI Corp. of Muscatine, Iowa, manufactures high-end office furniture. The 2014 Wealth of Health honoree employs 770 people, the majority of them at its plant in Wayland, Steuben County.

Guided by an eight-member wellness committee that Lander leads, Gunlocke has taken several steps to help its members become healthier or stay healthy. To begin with, the firm offers annual screenings at which members and spouses are tested for five risk factors, including high cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar levels. “If you have three of the five, it’s been proven your risk of diabetes and heart disease multiplies, along with other diseases,” Lander says.

Those who opt for the screenings are also asked to fill out a health risk assessment that reveals other health concerns, such as tobacco use. Free flu shots are available, as well.

Gunlocke also has on-site blood pressure monitors that members use, Lander says. And by mid-May, 175 members had taken part in a community blood pressure competition set up to raise awareness of blood pressure checks.

Members and spouses who pass their health screenings—and don’t use tobacco—receive a \$500 reduction in their company health insurance premiums for the year, Lander says. Those who don’t pass can earn reductions by attending to the health-oriented problems that have come to light. From January to April, the firm encouraged members to make use of Naturally Slim, a 10-week online weight reduction program. Members without computers at home could watch Naturally Slim video sessions at the plant.

Nearly 100 pedometers were handed out to members during the spring Eat Well, Live Well Challenge.

“The challenge is to try to walk 10,000 steps daily, strive for five cups of fruits and vegetables a day, and have at least one-half plate daily of fruits, vegetables or salads,” Lander explains.

Winners took home prizes; the top team received a Gunlocke water bottle and a trophy.

Gunlocke also offers free tobacco cessation programs, Lander says.

Such measures appear to have had a positive effect in Wayland.

“People are much more aware and thinking about their health to a much greater degree than they ever have,” Lander says.

Heritage Christian Services

With every new hire, Heritage Christian Services is building a culture of health and wellness, says Andrew Little, director of

the Pieters Family Life Center.

Heritage provides day programs, employment assistance, housing and other services for individuals who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. About 1,600 work for the agency at more than 100 sites. The Pieters Family Life Center provides recreational and wellness programs to those whom Heritage serves and also is available for use by the community.

A 16-member wellness team jointly led by Little and wellness coordinator Barbara Cacia guides Heritage’s efforts to help the people on its payroll become or stay healthy. Those efforts begin soon after an employee joins the non-profit.

“Our wellness coordinator spends time with new employees as part of their new employee orientation, discussing health and wellness,” Little says.

The discussions cover good nutrition, stress management and other important subjects—including the importance of getting enough sleep, which is especially important for employees who work a variety of shifts.

Heritage continues the instruction through in-service training on important subjects, such as the need to exercise.

“We’re talking about how to be physically active and how to work that into your routine in your life,” Little says. “What are you doing? How do you do a little more of it? How do you fit it into your lifestyle?”

The non-profit regularly runs health-oriented contests. People who signed up for the Medical Fitness Walking Challenge, which began April 28, noted how far they had walked during the weeklong national competition on the challenge website.

“They had to just count their steps,” Cacia says. “They tallied their steps up and sent in the number ... at the end of the seven days.”

The winner took home a \$25 gift card from a local sporting goods store. Meanwhile Heritage had already begun a second effort to improve employee health through the Community Blood Pressure Challenge.

To participate in the challenge, employees entered their blood pressure on Wegmans Food Markets’ website in May. Companies vied to have the highest numbers of employees check and note their blood pressure. At Heritage, nurses volunteered to check blood pressures all month. Some people on the agency’s roster participated in both challenges when they overlapped at the beginning of May.

“They were standing in line waiting to get their blood pressure taken, and they were marching so they could get their steps up,” Cacia says.

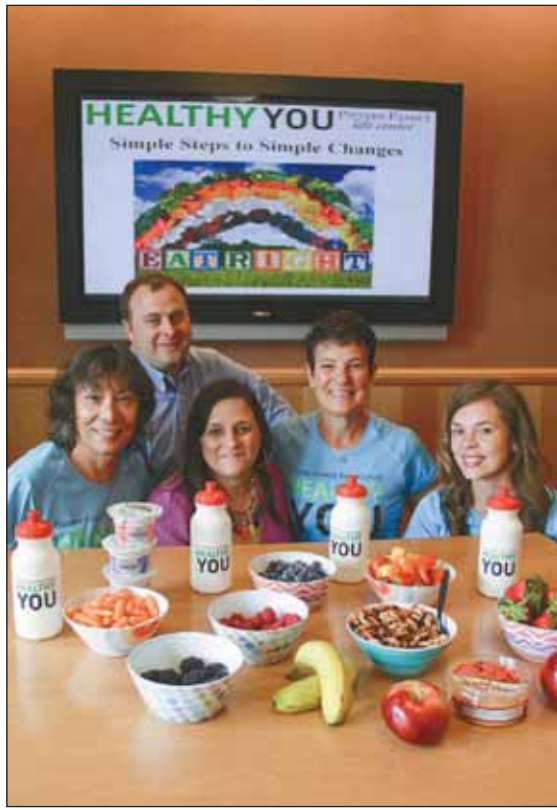


Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Wellness is a part of the culture at Heritage Christian Services, from employee orientation to in-service training.

Their enthusiasm has borne fruit in the past—and could again. Heritage came in second in the large-employer class in the 2013 Community Blood Pressure Challenge, Little says, and was the frontrunner in the 2014 challenge as of late May. The non-profit also checks employees’ blood pressure and measures other important physical characteristics during free annual biometric screenings, while simultaneously assessing their physical health in other ways.

Heritage is making it easier for employees to find fresh, locally grown and often organ-

ic produce through a regional food collective. During the growing season, employees who are members of the collective can pick up their produce at one of three Heritage sites in Monroe County, Little says.

Livingston County

For one week last April, Livingston County’s employees spent part of each day dancing—on the job.

“We were asking people to participate for 15 minutes a day of exercise or physical activity in the workday,” says Jennifer Rodriguez, the county’s public health director and director of community services. “The Department of Social Services had a dance activity, so they played music throughout the entire building, and everyone got up and danced.”

Livingston County’s employees danced behind their desks—or in the aisles—that week during “Move It 4 Your Health,” a county-sponsored initiative to encourage them to exercise during the workday. The initiative was part of the Supportive Health Awareness Program for Employees, the county’s wellness program.

“It’s ... a way to afford employees ways to participate in wellness activities either in their workday or outside their work hours,” Rodriguez says. “It’s really to empower them to make better lifestyle choices.”

Rodriguez and County Administrator Ian Coyle co-lead the 11-person steering committee that oversees SHAPE. In addition to benefiting county employees, the wellness program strengthens county finances.

“Through increased wellness initiatives, we aim to reduce absenteeism and increase productivity,” she explains.

The effort to improve employees’ lifestyles starts with the food choices they make while on the county’s clock. After an

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Photo courtesy of Livingston County

Livingston County employees have received healthier food options in the workplace and are given chances to exercise in various ways in and out of the office.

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employee survey revealed that they wanted access to healthier food choices at work meetings, the SHAPE steering committee formulated the Healthy Meeting Initiative.

“We created a county policy that requires there to be healthy options at any official meeting where food or drink is prepared,” Rodriguez explains. “You can get doughnuts, but you can (also) get oranges or apples.”

The changes extended to the vending machines in county office buildings. Under a pilot program, employees now have more to choose from when they put in their coins.

“You can get a candy bar, but you can also get a granola bar,” Rodriguez says.

In addition to encouraging its employees to eat healthier during work hours, Livingston County gives them chances to

sweat off the pounds outside work in ways that don’t require them to stick to a beat.

“It’s important for employees to recognize a healthy work/life balance,” Rodriguez says.

Those interested in putting on the kilometers have headed down the road at their own pace in the annual SHAPE 5K. The event drew 155 runners in 2013; this year’s race was held May 31.

Participation in the Livingston County SHAPE Golf Tournament rose from six teams in 2012 to eight in 2013; the next one happens in September.

County workers can take Zumba, Cross-Fit and other exercise classes on-site, and some departments have small fitness centers. The SHAPE committee produces a quarterly newsletter on health topics.

In a 2013 survey of county employees, 39 percent of the 111 respondents said they had participated in SHAPE events. Fifty percent said they exercise more as a result of the program, and 66 percent said SHAPE has helped them eat healthier.

Constellation Brands Inc.

Employees are earning points toward lower health insurance premiums through Building a Better You, the new wellness plan at Constellation Brands Inc.

“We hope to remove the barriers people have from leading a healthy life and help change existing behaviors by adopting new healthy habits at a comfortable pace,” says health and wellness manager Anne Dobbertin, who heads the firm’s two-person wellness team.

Constellation is hoping to reduce absenteeism and medical insurance costs through the program.

Constellation is the No. 1 producer and marketer of beer, wine and spirits in the world. The firm has approximately 3,000 U.S. employees; 650 work in its Victor corporate offices and three locations in Canandaigua. Building a Better You asks employees and their spouses to adopt healthy diet and exercise routines.

Here’s how it works. From January to July, employees can earn points participating in a variety of health-oriented activities. Doing the free biometric health screening that the company offers earns two points, for example, and avoiding tobacco use earns another two.

Joining companywide challenges can earn up to six points. In May and June, some 800 Constellation employees took part in one of two challenges—one involving exercise and the other nutrition. Exercise participants logged at least 150 minutes of activity a week, entering their results on the company’s website.

“Walking, exercise classes, gardening—whatever activity they’re doing, they log that activity,” Dobbertin says.

Employees complete the wellness program for the year if they earn at least 10 points by the end of July. Those who do can receive a maximum discount of \$600 on their health insurance premiums. Couples can save \$960.

Constellation offers other health-oriented programs and services throughout the year. During the holiday season, when food and drinks abound, the Maintain Don’t Gain challenge helps employees keep up with exercise and nutrition.

“We educate employees on how to eat more efficiently during the holiday season, concentrate more on fruits and veggies,” Dobbertin says.

Continued on next page

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Other innovative services are also available throughout the year. Employees need only pick up the telephone to contact company-provided health coaches. The specialists give guidance on nutrition, exercise and related subjects.

“We have quite a few employees taking advantage of it,” Dobbertin says. “If they wanted to quit smoking, it would be a smoking-cessation health coach.”

From there, an employee might head off to a cessation program. Constellation pays for the programs, along with the nicotine patches and other products that can help tobacco users kick the habit.

People who want to work up a sweat on the job can take exercise classes at all of Constellation’s sites or pump some iron at its fitness center in Victor. Two full-time personal trainers there hold exercise classes and work individually with employees.

About 50 percent of employees who participated in the wellness program in 2013 completed it.

Dobbertin says it is too early to tell what effects Building a Better You will have on Constellation’s bottom line, but management and employees have responded positively to the program so far.

“We have numerous emails from employees reaching out, thanking us for the program,” Dobbertin says.

Finger Lakes Area School Health Plan

Members of the Finger Lakes Area School Health Plan consortium come together to develop programs and activities that can help their employees—and their finances.

“We established this consortium ... to be able to assist with our costs and to be able to facilitate bringing better plans and services to our members,” says Howard Forsythe, president of the board of directors.

The FLASHP consortium consists of 37 organizations in five Finger Lakes counties: 34 school districts, Finger Lakes Community College, Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES and the town of Lyons. Roughly 17,000 people work for the members of the consortium, says Forsythe, who is business man-



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

At headquarters in Victor, Constellation Brands offers classes led by full-time personal trainers in an onsite workout facility.

ager for the York Central School District.

The wellness coordinators of member organizations compose FLASHP’s Wellness Is Now Committee, which meets quarterly.

“Our mission is to provide wellness opportunities and programs,” says Jolene Caselli, who co-chairs the WIN Committee and is the North Rose-Wolcott School District’s health teacher. Committee members share their ideas for programs or activities and learn from each other—“everything from A to Z that has to do with promoting health and wellness in our consortium,” says Richard Amundson, an Excellus wellness consultant who is assigned to the committee.

Some school districts are too small to afford to pay wellness coordinators. The part-time position comes with a \$1,000 stipend. If an idea appears to have merit but will cost to implement, the committee member can request funding from Excellus. The insurance carrier gives each entity up to \$2,000 a year to fund wellness programs.

“I approve the requests that they have and work with them to implement those things,” Amundson explains.

FLASHP also helps fund the districts’ wellness efforts, Forsythe says.

Coordinators go back to their districts and work with their wellness committees to turn their ideas into activities. Last year, 70 North Rose-Wolcott employees from

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Photo courtesy of Finger Lakes Area School Plan

No money, no problem. Excellus helps fund wellness programs for members of the Finger Lakes Area School Health Plan consortium.

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WEALTH OF HEALTH

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the district's three schools participated in Challenge Step It Up, a walking contest that Caselli and her six-person wellness committee organized. Using pedometers, school teams worked at walking at least 10,000 steps a day in an inter-school competition.

After five weeks, members of the North Rose-Wolcott team that had the greatest total number of steps took home \$25 gift cards. And some who entered the competition kept counting their steps after it ended.

"I have people ... for months later saying, 'I'm still getting my 10,000 steps in a day,'" Caselli says.

FLASHP members have promoted good health in other ways, including screenings, weight loss programs, flu shots, tobacco cessation programs, and Zumba and yoga exercise classes.

"The bottom line is to help us manage our costs," Forsythe says. "In the long run, if you have a healthy employee, your costs are somewhat controlled."

Tops Markets LLC

At Tops Markets LLC, good employee health is just good business.

"If the associates are healthier, they're happier," says Gail Marchese, the supermarket chain's leave and wellness coordinator. "It just makes a better workplace environment."

Tops employs about 16,000 people in New York, Pennsylvania and Vermont. Marchese, who leads the chain's 19-member wellness team, has developed programs to encourage associates to be fit and healthy.

As part of efforts to help associates to adopt healthier diets, Tops encourages those who participate in its wellness challenges to make use of its NuVal program.

"It's a program based upon how healthy a food is," she says.

The NuVal Nutritional Scoring System summarizes the nutritional values of foods on the chain's shelves, ranking them on a scale of 1 to 100. Customers and the associates who serve them are encouraged to make use of the ratings when selecting foods.

"We incorporate (NuVal) into all of our wellness challenges," Marchese explains.

The chain kicked off its annual walking exercise program for a third time April 27. Using pedometers, more than 1,140 of the chain's associates—up from 851 in 2013—gathered in teams and began trying to boost the numbers of steps they walked every day. When the eight-week program ends June 21, the company will hand out prizes to three individuals and three teams that have logged the most steps. Top teams will take home trophies and \$50 gift certificates to sporting goods stores, Marchese says.

Associates work up a sweat in other ways as well. From 2011 to 2013, participation in the J.P. Morgan Chase Corporate Challenge race rose 56 percent.

Tops associates who want to lose weight can participate in Lose to Win, an eight-week weight loss program in the fall. Along with other companies in the area, Tops has teams that vie to lose the most weight as a percentage of total body weight. The company gives them exercise tips and healthy recipes. In 2013, 503 associates dropped 3,491 pounds—and won the competition.

Tops also covers the full cost of a smoking cessation program, and associates can save 10 percent on their medical insurance premiums by participating in free annual biometric



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Tops Markets LLC encourages wellness in employees with exercise incentives, weight loss and smoking cessation programs, and a scoring system that ranks foods based on healthfulness.

screenings and health assessments. About 47 percent of those on the firm's payroll have participated in the screenings.

Marchese believes health promotion efforts are having an effect on employee health.

"From the review of the health claims, we can see that associates are going to the doctors and getting any health problems checked more frequently," she says.

They also seem to be helping the company curb costs.

"Our insurance rates for 2014 did not increase, which is unusual in this area," she says.



CooperVision

To keep its wellness program fresh, CooperVision changed things up this year with its 5-2-1-0 Challenge.

"Our employees are happier and healthier, and wellness is ... becoming a thread

through every part of our business," says Brian Quinn, the soft contact lens company's fitness trainer.

CooperVision, which has corporate offices in Fairport, a plant in Scottsville and a distribution center in Henrietta, employs about 1,100 people, some of whom work evening and night shifts. Quinn co-leads the company's 50-person wellness team.

The 5-2-1-0 Challenge is patterned after the Greater Rochester Health Foundation's Be a Healthy Hero Initiative. Each day, participants aim to eat five servings of fruits and vegetables, spend no more than two hours before a television or computer screen, exercise for at least one hour and drink no sugar-sweetened beverages.

CooperVision typically conducts such programs over four to six weeks, Quinn says. This time around, it spanned the year.

Starting in January, Quinn made monthly visits to CooperVision facilities during lunch hours, coming day or night as needed. Participants weighed in and Quinn took body fat measurements, sharing tips on how to reach the program's four goals. He also brought fresh fruits, vegetables and other

healthy foods that employees could try.

"We decided to go for a yearlong challenge to either maintain your body weight or lose body weight and be educated about your body fat," Quinn explains. "The goal of this was to see if we could get people to make habits over the year, instead of just during a four-week time period."

The program caught on. Of the 405 people who signed up, 72 percent completed it, losing nearly 6 percent of body fat on average and 4,000 total pounds. What's more, participants are keeping the weight off, Quinn says.

CooperVision kicked off a second 5-2-1-0 Challenge this year.

While encouraging its employees to become healthier, CooperVision provides free annual biometric screenings that cover blood pressure, cholesterol levels and other important measures of good health. When screenings found that some on its roster had higher blood pressure than normal, the company surveyed its workforce to determine what might be wrong.

"They complained of stress," Quinn says. "They wanted someone to help them deal with stress."

To attack the problem, he gave a series of talks on stress management that employees could attend without pay.

"It got really rave reviews," Quinn says.

CooperVision has other means to help its employees stay healthy: a quarter-mile track outside its plant, a gym, at-work stretching exercises and an annual health and wellness fair. Seventy percent of employees used the gym in 2013.

Efforts to improve employee health also appear to be helping the bottom line. The number of health insurance claims made by employees decreased 18.8 percent in 2013, Quinn says—prompting an insurance rebate of \$1.03 million.



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

CooperVision works to keep healthy living on employees' minds daily with its 5-2-1-0 Challenge and yearlong body weight challenges.

ESL Federal Credit Union

The ESL Federal Credit Union continues to use innovative ways to help its employees stay healthy—and to trim health care costs.

"The mission of our wellness program is to help improve our employees' overall health through an emphasis on healthy habits and wellness, including exercise, nutrition and education," says total re-

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Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

A fully equipped fitness center is available on-site for ESL Federal Credit Union employees who want to exercise during the day, as well as blood pressure checks and fresh produce.

WEALTH OF HEALTH

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wards manager Lisa McLaughlin, who heads ESL's 22-member wellness team.

Based downtown, ESL has about 670 people on its payroll. Be Well @ ESL, the firm's wellness program, has earned Wealth of Health awards for three years running and took home Best in Show in 2012. In that year alone, the credit union mapped out walking routes through Rochester neighborhoods, encouraging employees to use them on their lunch hours, and gave employees use of a local YMCA for an evening of exercise classes, swimming, wall climbing and other activities.

For the fourth year in a row, the financial institution is involved in Excellus BlueCross BlueShield's Step Up program. So far this year, 270 employees have participated.

"You form a team, and the goal is to walk 10,000 steps ... and eat five servings of fruit or vegetables in a day," McLaughlin says.

ESL also has a fully equipped on-site fitness center for employees who want to work up a sweat.

Diet is another facet of ESL's wellness program. Those at the 2013 Soup, Stew and Chili Fest offered their own healthy homemade dishes and paid a small amount to sample others. The event raised \$1,250, including a donation from the company, that went to the non-profit Center for Youth.

Employees can also buy shares in a local farm cooperative at reduced rates. Deliveries of fresh produce come right to company sites throughout the summer.

ESL makes it easier for employees to monitor their physical condition. For the second year in a row, the company is participating in the Rochester/Finger Lakes Community Blood Pressure Challenge.

"What they're really trying to do is have people be more aware of what their blood pressures are," McLaughlin explains. "That can prevent a lot of issues in the long run."

ESL provides an incentive for each blood pressure check at work: a \$5 Wegmans gift card.

Staffers who want to learn more have access to free biometric screenings that include a comprehensive blood test and a health risk assessment. Though the company

rewards people who are screened with gym bags and other gifts, they can go on to earn monetary rewards by engaging in healthy behaviors in the following year.

Here's how it works. Under ESL's medical plans, each time those who have been screened exercise, maintain a proper diet or engage in other healthy behavior, they earn points for which they are reimbursed by the company's health insurer. At the end of a year, individuals can take home \$500 and couples can get \$1,000.

Disincentives also are in effect. Those who are not screened incur a 5 percent increase in their portion of the health insurance premiums.

McLaughlin says its wellness program has helped her company keep its health insurance costs down in 2014.

"We've had a zero percent increase, which is not normally heard of," she says.

SMP Corp.

SMP hasn't rested since winning a 2013 Wealth of Health Award.

"We offered a lot more services," says Nikki Reynolds, health, wellness and fitness coordinator.

SMP, an information technology firm whose full name is Systems Management Planning Inc., employs 65 people at its offices in Henrietta. Last year, the well-

Continued on next page



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

SMP Corp. has a vegetable garden, cooking classes, fitness facility and other amenities to help employees who want to be healthy.

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ness program expanded from the ground up—literally.

After the firm moved to its John Street location in April 2013, Reynolds planted a garden on the site. Employees took home fresh vegetables and herbs all summer.

“Right now we have lettuce, arugula and spinach starting. Once we have the produce, we share it with the employees here but also do healthy cooking sessions,” says Reynolds, who has a master’s degree in health promotion management and a graduate certificate in nutrition education.

In addition to cooking lessons, Reynolds provides seminars and lunch-and-learn sessions on topics like local food sources, genetically modified foods and heart health.

SMP’s gymnasium is equipped with dumbbells, free weights, stationary bikes and other equipment, Reynolds says. Yoga, kickboxing, stretching and relaxation, and other exercise classes are held at the gym before and after work and during the lunch hour.

Employees who want to get outside during the day can walk or run on three paths that SMP has mapped out on the sidewalks outside its building.

“It’s broken down by options for folks to do one mile, one and a half miles and a little over three miles,” Reynolds says.

SMP sponsored the 2013 Wegmans East Avenue Grocery Run, which was organized to help reduce hunger in the Rochester region, and last October’s third annual Breast Cancer Ride and Run.

“We expanded our community service activities,” Reynolds explains.

SMP helped fund the events while employees teamed up and ran the races. SMP teams also planned to participate in the J.P. Morgan Chase Corporate Challenge at the end of May and in the Tour de Cure, an American Diabetes Association fundraiser slated for June.

With company encouragement, a group of SMP employees also volunteered for Foodlink’s Backpack Program in 2013, which provides food for students who might go hungry without it.

“It was to help kids who were very food-insecure on the weekend,” Reynolds explains. “What we did was sort food donations and put them in these bags that would be distributed to students in local schools.”

SMP’s efforts appear to have caught on with its employees. Of 34 who responded to a survey at the end of 2013—more than half of its staff—71 percent rated its wellness program as excellent. Reynolds says a new employee called it “a very good program and part of the reason I chose to join SMP.”

Thompson Health

People who work at Thompson Health dropped excess weight, boosted their exercise regimens and cut their medical insurance costs in 2013.

Thompson Health, an affiliate of the University of Rochester Medical Center, oversees five affiliate health care organizations in Ontario and Livingston counties, including F.F. Thompson Hospital. About 1,400 employees, called associates, work for the Canandaigua-based organization at its main facilities and 15 other locations.

Thompson’s wellness program was a Wealth of Health honoree in 2009 and 2011. The nutrition and exercise programs it developed continue to evolve to meet the needs of employees.

The Traffic Light Eating program, launched last spring, guides associates away from unhealthy food choices at work.

“We have really tried to focus on improving the access to healthy food options for our associates and providing additional information so that people can have the



Photo courtesy of Thompson Health
The Traffic Light Eating program at Thompson Health places foods into three categories—red, yellow and green—to encourage healthy eating in the workplace.

right information to make good food decisions,” says Randy Jacque, Thompson’s director of health. He heads a 17-member wellness committee.

Traffic Light Eating groups the foods in Thompson’s cafeteria into three color-coded categories—green, yellow and

red. Each represents a different set of nutritional benefits and risks. The program encourages lower consumption of red-labeled foods, such as steak, in favor of others, especially foods marked green, such as romaine lettuce, carrots and tomatoes. Associates are eating more of the healthy

options, Jacque says.

Thompson presents employees with healthy options for dealing with workday stress. An initiative called Self-Care helps associates manage tension with poster reminders to stretch, take a deep breath and the like. Each employee selects a self-care tip to follow routinely at work.

Those interested in blowing off steam more energetically had several options in 2013. Just over 400 associates participated in Step Up, aiming to walk 10,000 steps and consume at least five cups of fruit and vegetables each day. Associates looking to exercise in other ways could sign up for the Thompson in Motion club.

“They get updated information on all the available walking and running and biking activities that are happening in the community,” Jacque explains.

To help employees keep an eye on the numbers, Thompson offers free biometric screenings during its annual Healthy Me health fairs. The organization also is part of the Rochester/Finger Lakes Community Blood Pressure Challenge. Thirty-six percent of Thompson’s workforce had blood pressure checks during the competition.

Thompson held a softball tournament in July and a day of outdoor winter activities at Cumming Nature Center in Naples.

Good health presents its own benefits, but associates who maintain or improve their health earned reimbursements through the Healthy Rewards program by Excellus. In 2013, 619 associates were paid a total of \$200,913.

Thompson’s health promotion program aims for an even wider effect. For example, participation nearly tripled in on-site fitness classes from 2012 to 2013. Between 2009 and 2013, the portion of associates who exercise at least three times a week rose to 63 percent from 48 percent.

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