

December Well Aware eNews

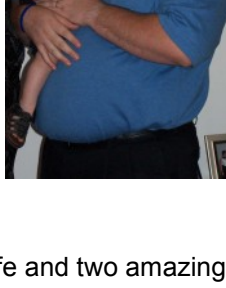
Welcome to the December issue of the Well Aware eNews! Read on to learn about—

- this month's wellness champion who lost more than 100 pounds and has kept it off;
- a challenge to help you get a jump start on your New Year's resolutions;
- when and where the Just 10 challenge winners will be announced;
- an initiative to create sweet-free zones in schools and offices; and
- more!

Wellness Champion's Weight Loss Success Story Inspires Others

James P. Collins, math and computer science teacher, Winston Churchill High School

After realizing his weight was out of control and a disconcerting visit to the doctor, Mr. James P. Collins, math and computer science teacher at Winston Churchill High School, decided to change his life. Then he did by losing 125 pounds and keeping it off!



"I have a great wife and two amazing kids," James said. "At a wedding once, I saw the father of the bride wheeled out in a wheelchair for the father/daughter dance. I remember telling myself that day that, 'I will dance at my daughter's wedding, and I will be the fittest guy in the room.' "

James devoted himself to the Beachbody line of products including *P90x* and *Insanity* to jumpstart his weight loss. He also touts the Well Aware challenges for providing him with encouragement, support, and a way to keep track of his activity.

"Support is a big part of staying on track," James said. "Being part of a group helps you keep on track since you do not want to let your team members down. It also provides a common goal to work towards."

In his journey to lose pounds and keep them off, James remembers that small steps led him to success.

"Most people think you need to make drastic changes to see results," James said. "The truth is that if you can change a lot of little things, then you can make big improvements. Little things like drinking more water, taking more steps every day, taking the stairs, parking far away—these really do add up."

James also believes that having a role model and, in turn, being a role model, are key to getting and staying fit.

"I work closely with a friend at work, Gary Rogers, who does all he can to be a healthy and fit dad," James said. "He is an excellent role model."

Also, James was given the chance to teach health during summer school this year and was pleased to see that his students gained a lot from his life experience. Winston Churchill staff also have benefited from his weight-loss experience.

"Fellow staff members have come to me in the past to ask me to share my story and what has worked for me," James said.

Out of thousands of entries, James was selected as the Beachbody transformation for September and now is in the running to be the quarterly winner. Congratulations to James on all of his success and for helping to encourage the staff and students at Winston Churchill High School!



Resolve to Get Healthy in 2014

Are you looking to get a jump start on your New Year's resolutions? Beginning in January, Well Aware and CareFirst will hold a six-week, onsite, motivational challenge to encourage you to take the necessary steps to become active and healthy. Join us for weekly weigh-ins at the location of your choice as follows:

Neelsville Middle School
11700 Neelsville Church Road
Germantown, Maryland 20876
Mondays at 3:15 p.m.
Starting January 13

Winston Churchill High School
11300 Gainsborough Road
Potomac, Maryland 20854
Thursdays at 2:15 p.m.
Starting January 16

A Mario Loiederman Middle School
12701 Goodhill Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20906
11:00 a.m.–12:40 p.m.
Wednesday, January 22
Tuesday, January 28
Monday, February 3
Thursday, February 13
Thursday, February 20
Wednesday, February 26

Central Services
45 West Gude Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850
Aspen Conference Room
Thursdays from 4:00–5:00 p.m.
Starting January 16

To participate, you must RSVP for all six weigh-ins at the location of your choice by e-mailing Well Aware.

There's Still Time to do JUST 10!

Challenge Ends December 16

Are you moving, losing, or maintaining?

Since October 7, 2013, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) employees have been increasing their activity, decreasing their body mass index, or maintaining their healthy lifestyle as participants in the Just 10 Challenge.*



Across MCPS, employees are experiencing better health and morale because of their involvement, whether they participated as individuals or as members of a team. There is still time to join the challenge and win prizes! Your activity and weight loss updates need to be entered in the [Well Aware Fitness Log](#) by Monday, December 16, 2013, before 12 noon.

Stay Tuned

Grand prize winners will be announced in the December 17 issue of *The Bulletin!*

Winners: Zumba Your Way to the Awards Ceremony

All Just 10 Challenge winners will be invited to participate in a wellness celebration on Thursday, January 16, 2013, at Julius West Middle School from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Get ready to celebrate your success with a fun-filled Zumba lesson and yoga cool down. Once you have received your invitation, don't forget to RSVP. E-mail [Well Aware](#) if you plan to attend.

Don't stop now!

Maintain your active lifestyle and look for information in a future issue of the Well Aware eNews about the next physical activity challenge—coming this spring!

*For more information on the Just 10 Challenge, please visit the [Just 10 web page](#).

Find Your Sweet-free Zone

The holidays will be here soon. Are you ready to move through them in a healthier way? Maybe you are determined to cut back on the amount of sweets you consume while celebrating with family, friends, and coworkers.

Well Aware has a plan to help you do just that. This holiday season, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) employees can avoid the holiday bulge by taking the sweet-free challenge! Designate an area in your school or office as a sweet-free zone by posting [this flyer](#) on the staff lounge, break room, or kitchen door!

Do you need to eliminate ALL of the sweets from your holiday celebrations? Take [this quiz](#) to find out.

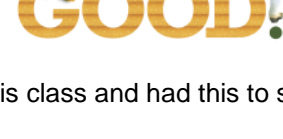
Outside the sweet-free zone, you can follow these healthy habits and practices to avoid overindulging in too many sweets during the holidays—

- Stay active on a daily basis.
- Drink water to stay hydrated and decrease hunger.
- Get an adequate amount of sleep to help decrease cravings.
- Eat foods rich in natural sugars as opposed to those rich in processed sugars.
- Enjoy your favorite holiday treats—just limit the portion size.

If you are a school employee, share these ideas with your Parent Teacher Association to promote a culture of wellness during the holiday season. Office employees can post them or share them in staff meetings. Then, e-mail [Well Aware](#) to let us know how your sweet-free zone and these wellness tips are helping staff to celebrate the holiday season in a healthy way.

Quit For Good Classes Now Forming for 2014

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 70 percent of all current smokers want to quit. Are you among them? If so, take advantage of the Quit for Good program offered by Well Aware.



A number of your coworkers already have taken advantage of this class and had this to say about it:

- "I feel so appreciative of this class; kudos to MCPS and Kaiser for providing this life changing opportunity."
- "The class played a major role in my quitting for good and staying quit, one day at a time."
- "I felt very cared about and very cared for. My success was celebrated and that REALLY helped me continue my success."
- "Not only did I quit, but I encouraged my husband (who was overseas at the time) to do the same with all of the information and support from the class. Now we have a smoke free home!"

2014 classes are now forming! For more information on the Quit for Good tobacco cessation program, visit the [Well Aware website](#).

The employee wellness newsletter is brought to you by the Employee and Retiree Service Center (ERSC). To learn more about employee wellness, visit our [website](#). To view this e-mail newsletter as a .pdf document, click [here](#).

Questions or comments about your employee wellness program? Contact ERSC at 301-517-8100 or wellness@mcpsmd.org.