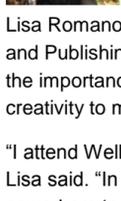


## December Well Aware eNews

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

- this month's wellness champion—a central services employee who uses her creativity to motivate and recognize coworkers who adopt healthy lifestyles;
- a webinar from Cigna where you can learn healthy coping skills for managing stress;
- how you can take part in an interactive hour of stress reduction;
- the MCPS Wellness Initiatives program and related biometric health screenings;
- simple tricks to turn your traditional holiday recipe into a lower-calorie, yet still delicious, health food; and
- more!

## Wellness Champion Maintains a Healthy Lifestyle; Creates Visuals to Motivate Her Coworkers



**Lisa A. Romano, graphic designer, Editorial, Graphics and Publishing Services**

Whether participating in a Well Aware seminar, class, or physical activity challenge, Lisa Romano, graphic designer with Editorial Graphics and Publishing Services (EGPS), is a regular. She knows the importance of maintaining her health and uses her creativity to motivate her coworkers to do the same.

"I attend Well Aware seminars and classes and make sure I fit exercise into my daily routine," Lisa said. "In fact, when I don't exercise, I am not a happy person! I also encourage my coworkers to attend wellness activities with me."

Lisa values the time she spends outside moving and takes advantage of every opportunity. She can be found during her lunch breaks walking from the Carver Educational Service Center (CESC), where she works, to the Rockville Town Center. Once there, she will visit the bank, peruse Dawson's Market, or check out books on CD at the library.

Lisa further demonstrates her wellness champion status through her creativity. She designs all of Well Aware's promotional materials, including posters, flyers, and logos. Without a doubt, her original and imaginative ideas encourage MCPS employees to pursue healthy lifestyles.

"Lisa maintains an excellent standard of performance in her work and still takes the time to promote MCPS wellness activities," Carole Thompson, EGPS graphic artist, said. "She hangs her flyers in our office so we know where and when to go!"

Her efforts definitely serve to motivate her coworkers. Whether it's inviting them to join a team, take a tai chi or yoga class, or accompany her on her lunchtime walks, she empowers her teammates to take charge of their health. Once they've done so, she honors their achievements by designing and presenting them with eye-catching certificates and other printed forms of recognition.

And Lisa's EGPS coworkers clearly deserve the recognition.

Many Central Services staff members have heard of Charles I. "Buzz" Lee, printing supervisor and February 2014 wellness champion, and his health regimen. There also is Kathleen H. Williams, publications supervisor, who has attended an exercise program after work for years. Debbie Ashcom, fiscal assistant, and Betty Payne, administrative secretary, both completed Well Aware's Flights to Fitness. They walked the CESC stairwells daily and checked off their progress on the building printouts, which had been posted on the walls.

"My coworkers also inspire me," Lisa said. "Many of us at EGPS have started moving toward more exercise and other healthy habits."



## Don't Miss It

**This month's free webinar—Stressbusters**

Stress seems to be a fact of life. You probably can't eliminate it completely, but you can learn healthy coping skills for managing your stress level when under pressure.

**Thursday, December 18, 2014**

4:00–5:00 p.m.

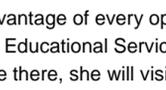
Webinar

Please register for the webinar by e-mailing [Well Aware](#) to request the log-in information.

You will receive a link to the webinar as well as an Outlook calendar reminder.

Spread the word with our [printable flyer](#). See the [Wellness Webinar Library](#).

Presented by:



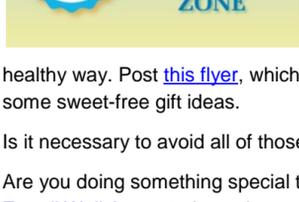
## Small Changes Big Results: Maintain Don't Gain Mini Challenge Continues!

Since October 6, MCPS employees have taken small steps to create healthy habits as part of the Small Changes, Big Results physical activity 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 participate and win prizes! Your activity and weight loss updates need to be entered into the online [Well Aware Fitness Log](#) by Monday December 15, 2014, before 12:00 noon.

The Maintain Don't Gain mini challenge continues! Review the [mini challenge calendar](#) daily to inspire ideas for adding small healthy changes to your life.

It is that time of year when you and your family are inspired to cook your favorite comfort foods or sweet treats. Often these high-calorie dishes add up to holiday love handles. Thankfully, there are few simple tricks to turn any traditional recipe into a lower-calorie health food that is still delicious. [This article](#) from Kaiser Permanente suggests ways to add a dose of healthy to every holiday helping. Make a promise to yourself this holiday to eat healthy, exercise, and maintain your weight during this holiday season!

Stay tuned—the Small Changes, Big Results grand prize winners will be announced in the December 16, 2014, issue of *The Bulletin!*



## Enter the Sweet-free Zone

This holiday season, Well Aware once again is challenging you to designate your school or office as a Sweet-free Zone. The designation means that you pledge to do your best to celebrate the holidays in a

healthy way. Post [this flyer](#), which offers healthy alternatives for staff celebrations and even some sweet-free gift ideas.

Is it necessary to avoid all of those tempting treats? Take [this holiday sweets and treats quiz!](#)

Are you doing something special to stop the influx of sweets and treats in your work location? [E-mail Well Aware](#) to let us know and be sure to include pictures!

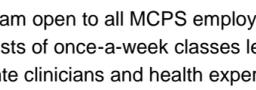
## Another Chance to Quit for Good

By now, most smokers know that smoking is bad for their health and harmful to the people around them. They know they should quit, but they also know it is going to be hard.

To help make it easier, Well Aware and Kaiser Permanente are teaming up again to bring you the Quit for Good tobacco cessation program.

Quit for Good is a free, course-based tobacco cessation program open to all MCPS employees and their spouses. The program is eight weeks long and consists of once-a-week classes led by a nurse practitioner, with assistance from Kaiser Permanente clinicians and health experts. Class size is limited to ensure the personal attention necessary to support you in your goal of quitting. Sessions are open to all MCPS employees and their spouses, regardless of whether or not you carry Kaiser Permanente health insurance.

The next session of Quit for Good begins on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, at 4:30 p.m. in the Maple Room at 45 West Gude Drive, Rockville. To register, [e-mail Well Aware](#). To learn more about the program, including the week-by-week course content, visit the [Well Aware website](#).



## Reduce Your 2016 Medical Insurance Costs:

## Complete a Health Risk Assessment and Schedule a Biometric Health Screening

As part of the new MCPS Wellness Initiatives program, you can learn more about your health and reduce your contributions to your medical insurance. Complete a health risk assessment and biometric health screenings yearly, and, if you smoke, consider quitting to take full advantage of these rate reductions.

If you complete a simple, online health risk assessment between October 13, 2014, and October 9, 2015—and yearly thereafter—you will be eligible for a 1 percent increase in MCPS contributions toward your medical coverage will be reduced by 1 percent if you complete the screening within the above timeframe. [Learn more and review instructions for completing your health risk assessment](#).

In addition to the health risk assessment, by completing a biometric health screening of your cholesterol, blood pressure, blood sugar, and body mass index within the same timeframe—and yearly thereafter—you will be eligible for an additional 1 percent increase in MCPS contributions toward your medical insurance, effective January 1, 2016. Your primary care physician may conduct the screenings or you can attend one of the free screenings Well Aware is offering to MCPS staff. If you choose the second option, please register for the screening associated with your insurance plan. Dates, times, and locations for the screenings this school year are:

### CAREFIRST\*:

#### Monday, December 29, 2014

11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Maple Room

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

#### Friday, March 27, 2015

12:00–4:00 p.m.

Maple Room

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

#### Friday, June 26, 2015

1:00–5:00 p.m.

Maple Room

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

### CIGNA:

#### Tuesday, December 16, 2014

12:00–6:00 p.m.

Carver Educational Services Center Auditorium

850 Hungerford Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

#### Tuesday, February 3, 2015

1:00–5:00 p.m.

Maple Room

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

#### Friday, April 10, 2015

12:00–4:00 p.m.

Maple Room

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

#### Monday, June 22, 2015

12:00–4:00 p.m.

Carver Educational Services Center Auditorium

850 Hungerford Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

### KAISER PERMANENTE:

#### Friday, April 10, 2015

12:00–4:00 p.m.

Maple Room

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

#### Monday, June 22, 2015

12:00–4:00 p.m.

Carver Educational Services Center Auditorium

850 Hungerford Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

To register for a biometric health screening, [e-mail Well Aware](#) with the date and time that you prefer.

[Learn more](#).

**Note to CareFirst BlueChoice plan members:** If you choose to have your primary care physician conduct your health risk screenings, you must complete the *CareFirst Biometric Screening Information* form, which is available [here](#) or on the [ERSC Forms web page](#). Be sure to bring the form to your physician for completion and signature. Then, follow the instructions on the form for sending it to CareFirst's wellness organization, Health Fitness Corporation (HealthFitness).

## Mind Your Wellness

Are the holidays stressing you out? Join Manifest Ra, tai chi instructor, for an interactive hour of stress reduction. You will learn deep breathing, tai chi, and other stress management techniques to practice anytime and anywhere.

#### Monday, December 15, 2014

4:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.

Café 45

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

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](mailto:wellness@mcpsmd.org).