

June Well Aware eNews

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

- this month's wellness champion and Ironman triathlete;
- a webinar to learn about keeping your back healthy;
- *Your Race, Your Pace* and virtual 5k training;
- Men's Health Month;
- ways to stay active this summer;
- wellness initiatives; and
- more!



Don't Miss It

**This month's free webinar—
 Back in Shape**

Join us for this webinar, in which participants will learn about the basic structures of the back, symptoms associated with back pain, and methods to manage it.

Tuesday, June 16, 2020
 4:00–5:00 p.m.
 Webinar

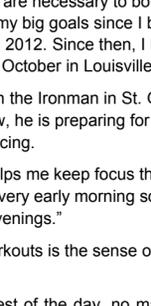
Please register for the webinar. After registering, you will receive a link to the webinar in your Outlook email as well as an Outlook calendar reminder.

Spread the word with our **printable flyer**. Visit the **Wellness Webinar Library**.

Presented by: Kaiser Permanente

This Month's Wellness Champion is an Ironman Triathlete

**Chuck McGee, director,
 Department of Infrastructure/Operations,
 Chief Technology Office**



Chuck McGee, director, Department of Infrastructure/Operations, spent most of April deploying more than 60,000 Chromebooks to MCPS students, all while training for an upcoming Ironman competition.

"I enjoy the variety of activities that are necessary to both prepare for and compete in a competition," Chuck said. "One of my big goals since I began was to complete an Ironman race, which I did for the first time in 2012. Since then, I have completed many others and am currently preparing for one this October in Louisville, Kentucky."

Chuck had planned to participate in the Ironman in St. George, Utah in May, but his plans changed due to the pandemic. Now, he is preparing for the October race at home, while practicing appropriate social distancing.

"For me, fitness is an outlet that helps me keep focus throughout the day," Chuck said. "I try to get my workouts done in the very early morning so they won't interfere with my workday or my family time in the evenings."

One of the other benefits to his workouts is the sense of accomplishment he feels afterwards.

"A workout sets the tone for the rest of the day, no matter how big or small the workout," Chuck said. "In my work, it is important to think clearly and have good energy throughout the day. Eating right and exercising every day make this possible for me."

From an early age, Chuck has been physically active. He played sports through his college years, when he learned the importance of making health and fitness part of his daily routine and mindset. This focus has helped him maintain good feelings about himself and the choices he makes. It also has set a good example for his children.

"As a parent, it is important to set a good example for my kids," Chuck said. "I have experienced what it is like to be overweight and limited by poor decisions. That fortifies the importance of fitness to me and for my kids."

Chuck also has participated in the Well Aware physical activity challenges for many years. They have helped him make a healthy connection between his daily exercise routine and his coworkers.

"Being a member of a team has provided a wonderful opportunity to not only share each other's accomplishments from the diligence of exercising and eating right every day, but also to motivate each other when life throws a curveball," Chuck said. "We work quite well together and share our successes as a team and as co-workers!"

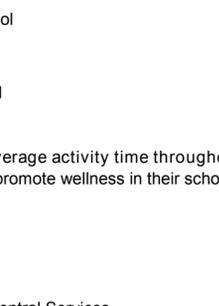
What are some of Chuck's suggestions for starting a health and wellness journey?

"For anyone who likes or knows baseball and has watched their team losing by more than four runs, I like to remind them that the game can't be tied with one swing of a bat," Chuck said. "It takes many hits in a row to make it happen. It's important to set reasonable goals and trust the process. If your goal is to lose weight or to complete a big event like a race, commit to doing something every day for a specific period of time. I know it's easier said than done, but don't get discouraged when you don't see results before that period of time has ended. Stick to your commitment and see how things look or feel at the end. I am certain that, no matter what, you will feel a sense of accomplishment!"

Good luck to Chuck on his Kentucky Ironman, and thanks for being a great champion for the staff wellness program.

Physical Activity Challenge

**The Superhero Challenge—Spring
 Winners Announced**



Nearly 6,000 Montgomery County Public Schools employees increased their physical activity during Well Aware's spring physical activity challenge: *Superhero Challenge*. They took part in a variety of physical activities to compete for prizes, and more importantly, to adopt or maintain healthy lifestyles. Each of the top 15 schools averaged at least 79 minutes of physical activity per employee per day. This is an increase of 1 minute over last year!

Congratulations to all those who improved their health by participating!

The following 4 **Overall Lifestyle Change Award** winners will receive a healthy cooking demonstration for their school or office for having the greatest decrease in Body Mass Index over the course of the challenge:

- Steve Lightman, Bayard Rustin Elementary School
- Justine Carr, Wyngate Elementary School
- Rachel Hickson, Central Services
- Krystle Hutton, Bayard Rustin Elementary School

Grand prize winners are as follows:

Team Grand Prize: The top 15 teams with the most average activity time throughout the 10-week challenge each will receive a \$500 grant to promote wellness in their schools, offices, or depots. They are:

- *Clean&Jerks*, Harmony Hills Elementary School
- *Hornet Walkers*, Damascus High School
- *The Home Team*, Central Services
- *Walloped Crab Cakes with #1 Nocheat Sauce*, Central Services
- *Panthers2*, Kingsview Middle School
- *Red Hot Chili Steppers*, Central Services
- *Moves like Jaguar*, Julius West Middle School
- *Fitzomatix Live 2020*, Harmony Hills Elementary School
- *Legs Miserable*, Julius West Middle School
- *Beall Dragons #1*, Beall Elementary School
- *DHS ADMIN SDT TEAM*, Damascus High School
- *Ridgeview PE*, Ridgeview Middle School
- *Kobe!*, Julius West Middle School
- *Mighty Rhinos*, Rosemary Hills Elementary School
- *Get Out of Our Weigh*, Beall Elementary School

Golden Sneaker Team Prize: In addition to a grant, the top team overall with the most average miles throughout the 10-week challenge has won the Golden Sneaker Trophy and bragging rights until the next challenge. The winner is:

- *Moves like Jaguar*, Julius West Middle School

School Grand Prize: Each of the top 15 schools with the most average activity time throughout the 10-week challenge will receive a \$500 grant to be used for physical education equipment or to support staff wellness. They are:

- Ritchie Park Elementary School
- Lathrop E. Smith Center
- A. Mario Loiederma Middle School
- Snowden Farm Elementary School
- Julius West Middle School
- Rosemary Hills Elementary School
- Harmony Hills Elementary School
- Sequoyah Elementary School
- Bayard Rustin Elementary School
- UpCounty Early Childhood Center
- Facilities Management DOM
- William H. Farquhar Middle School
- Jones Lane Elementary School
- Beall Elementary School
- Ridgeview Middle School

Although the *Superhero Challenge* has come to an end, your fitness journey is just beginning! Well Aware's next physical activity challenge will begin in the fall. Look for details in future issues of the *Well Aware eNews* and *The Bulletin* and on the **Well Aware website**. In the meantime, the **Well Aware Fitness Log** continues to provide a resource for you to track your physical activity and diet.

Spirit Award

Do you have a coworker who has gone above and beyond to help build a culture of wellness in your school or office? We are recognizing the MCPS employees who most encouraged others to live their healthiest lives. Ten Spirit Award winners will each receive a fall Zumba or yoga class at your school or office. To request a Spirit Award nomination form, **email Well Aware**. Nominations are due by Friday, June 12, 2020.

Instep with Diabetes: Online Class Starting

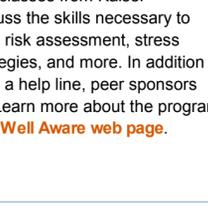
Diabetes affects more than 25 million adults in the United States. Are you or your spouse living with diabetes? Join Well Aware and Kaiser Permanente for a three-week web-based program to better understand diabetes and learn skills for healthy living including—

- Diabetes facts
- Nutrition and food choices
- Physical activity
- Testing your blood sugar
- Diabetes medicines
- Recommended care

A Kaiser Permanente health educator will discuss not only why healthy eating, physical activity, and blood sugar control are important for diabetes management, but also ways to incorporate these changes into your life. The facilitator will also share resources and travel tips to further support you. **Learn more.**

Quit for Good

Thinking about quitting smoking, or need support to stay tobacco free?



MCPS and Kaiser Permanente are teaming up again to bring you the Quit for Good tobacco cessation program. The free program is available to employees and their spouses, regardless of whether or not you participate in MCPS employee benefits or if you participate with Kaiser.

The program is course-based and consists of once-a-week classes from Kaiser Permanente clinicians and health experts. Classes will discuss the skills necessary to successfully live tobacco-free. Topics will include risk assessment, stress management techniques, healthy weight management strategies, and more. In addition to the class meetings, participants will receive support through a help line, peer sponsors who understand what it takes to quit, and other resources. Learn more about the program, including upcoming class date and locations, by visiting the **Well Aware web page**.

To register for an upcoming session, **email Well Aware**.

Wellness Initiatives

Save Money on Your Health Insurance Premiums

Completing a yearly health risk assessment gives you the information you need to take better control of your health and well-being. That's important, because when you are running at 100 percent, being fit and in good spirits will go a long way to help you perform at your best.

Take this confidential, online questionnaire and in less than 20 minutes, you will—

- Learn your risk levels for common health problems including heart disease, colon cancer, and diabetes;
- Get a clear picture of your current health status, and learn how to improve your health in the future through preventive tests, chronic condition support, and online health coaching; and
- Discover interactive tools and educational information that can give you more details on your health status.

Managing and improving your health has never been easier. If you complete your health risk assessment by October 2, 2020, MCPS will pay 1 percent more of the total cost of your 2021 health insurance premiums—reducing your contribution by 1 percent. To get started, visit the **Wellness Initiatives for Employees web page**. Here you will find links to the CareFirst and Kaiser Permanente health risk assessments. You will also find helpful tutorials to guide you through the log-in process.

In addition to completing your health risk assessment, you can save another 1 percent of the cost of your health insurance by completing your yearly biometric health screening (or physical exam with your primary physician) by **October 2, 2020**. Be sure to follow the steps outlined on the **Wellness Initiatives for Employees web page**.

CareFirst and Kaiser Permanente Resources

Online resources have become increasingly relied upon during these times of social distancing and working from home. CareFirst and Kaiser Permanente have a number of resources to help you through this challenging time that also will help you live a healthy and well life.

CareFirst

- A comprehensive online program for those at risk of diabetes, including interactive lessons, and support and guidance from a personal health coach. **Learn more.**
- Access to stress management tools including guided meditations, podcasts, and more. **Learn more.**
- Health coaching, guided imagery, and fitness challenges available through the **CareFirst website**. Learn more at the following links:
 - **One-on-One Health Coaching**
 - **Wellness Program Challenges**

Kaiser Permanente

- Online classes, videos, podcasts, recipes, and more are available to members on the **Kaiser Permanente website**.
- **Explore Healthy Resources**
- Learn more by visiting Kaiser Permanente's **Wellness resources website**.

Attending to Men's Physical and Mental Health

In June, we celebrate Father's Day and honor the men in our lives. What better way than to give them the gift of good health, both physical and mental?

Have your husband, father, brother, son, or male friend **review these checkup and screening guidelines for men**, and encourage him to stay on top of his health.

It is equally important to make men's mental health and wellness a priority. Depression, anxiety, stress, and mood disorders can strike anyone. Introduce him to **Your Head: An Owner's Manual** from the Men's Health Network. In it, men's health and wellness experts offer insight into men's emotional needs, and how they can find help while maintaining their dignity.

Your Race, Your Pace and Virtual 5k Training

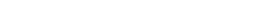
Crossing the finish line is one of the best feelings in the world. Whether you are running or walking a road race, biking, swimming, or meeting another goal you set for yourself, the finish line symbolizes your hard work, determination, and consistency.

This summer, Well Aware is challenging you to commit time to train for your race. Your race might be a walk around the block, a 5k run, or a 30-mile bike ride. Your race might be completing a yoga class, or perfecting your tennis swing. Every race is unique.

Use the online **Well Aware Fitness Log** to track your progress and fill out and post the race bib for motivation.

Is your race a 5k run? Sign up for our virtual 5k training. Join the hundreds of MCPS faculty and staff who have started running, or taken their running to the next level over the past several years with the Run Farther & Faster MCPS Virtual Group Training Program. The summer 2020 program begins on Monday, June 15 and runs through Saturday, August 15. Under the direction of experienced, certified coaches, participants will receive a comprehensive two-month training calendar, weekly emails with training support and running-related information, as well as the ability to email coaches with questions or concerns. This program is appropriate for beginners who would like to train for a 5K, as well as for runners with some running experience who would like to increase their mileage to complete a 10K. Space is limited, so **register early**. **Email Well Aware** for more information.

Staying Healthy During the COVID-19 Outbreak



The COVID-19 pandemic is certainly stressful. While times are uncertain, it is important to control what you can. Leading a healthy and well life can help boost your immunity and help with your mental well-being. It is important to get enough sleep and physical activity, eat well, stay connected to others, and find healthy ways to manage your stress. Well Aware has many resources to help you stay healthy during this time or to begin your journey to optimal health and wellness. From our video library of webinars, to our online physical activity challenges and classes, it is never too late to start. For updates on COVID-19, visit the **MCPS Coronavirus web page**. For support, visit the **Employee Assistant Program website**. Find Well Aware resources on the **Wellness News web page**, and follow us on Twitter **@MCPSWellAware**.

Stay Active This Summer

Summer is a great time to get back into walking, biking, jogging, or just playing outside with your kids. Getting active now will make it easier to keep it up when we get back to our hectic schedules in the fall. From Zumba and yoga to tai chi, Well Aware and CareFirst are offering you some options to help you get fit this summer.

For a class list and schedule, **email Well Aware**.

Share Your Wellness Stories and Encourage Your Coworkers Through Twitter!

Well Aware is proud of MCPS employee for all of the hard work they are doing to lead healthy lives. It is time to share your stories and your spirit! Or, perhaps you need some extra motivation to begin a staff wellness program at your school, depot, or office, or to turn life-long unhealthy habits into healthy ones. Follow **@mcpswellaware** for incredible wellness stories, ideas, and encouragement from your MCPS coworkers. You also will read tips on living a healthy life and receive updates on MCPS staff wellness programs.