

April Well Aware eNews

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

- this month's wellness champion—a Well Aware challenge team captain whose team, *Blocks of Granite*, is consistently at the top of our physical activity challenge winners list;
- a seminar/webinar from Cigna where you will learn how to keep your muscles strong by making strength training a regular part of your fitness routine;
- how you can take part in InSTEP with Diabetes;
- ways to stress less this spring;
- a national initiative to improve cancer prevention, detection, and treatment efforts; and
- more!

Time after Time, Wellness Champions Place at or Near the Top of Well Aware Challenges



Michael Herlihy and Team Blocks of Granite, A. Mario Loiederman Middle School

Twice a year, Well Aware holds a 10-week physical activity challenge to jumpstart and motivate Montgomery County Public Schools staff to start living healthy lives.

Challenge after challenge, one team in particular—A. Mario Loiederman Middle School's Blocks of Granite—has placed at the top or in the top 10 of the leaderboard. What is their secret?

Ask his teammates and they will tell you the answer is easy: The team's captain, Michael Herlihy, is a master motivator. Ask Michael, and he will tell you why.

"I am disciplined about exercising and logging data, and I expect the same of my teammates," Michael said. "They understand that they are making a commitment when they join my team. I talk to them every day to remind them of our goal and to thank, or cajole as necessary, them."

All that discipline certainly pays off. Blocks of Granite has won the Golden Sneaker trophy twice and has been in the top 10 of the team competition five times. Michael and his team know that winning requires sacrifice and commitment. It means getting up early to exercise and logging your activity as soon as you complete it.

"We are successful because I won't accept less than 100 percent effort and commitment, on a daily basis, for the length of the competitions," Michael said. I am very clear that the goal is to win. A successful team creates a rising tide for the rest of the school. It brings wellness into consciousness, so to speak, and people respond to that."

As someone who is completely invested in his own health so he will remain independent and active as he ages, Michael see the challenges as an incentive for staying active. He recruits teammates who share his values, sets an example for them, and makes his expectations clear.

"It becomes a source of pride to them when they see our name at the top of the leaderboard," Michael said. "That creates inspiration in and of itself. I have found that other staff members buy into the competition and form teams to try to beat us."

Michael goes one step further by sharing his team's success with his students. He posts the team awards for the students to see. In this way, he makes them aware of the importance of setting goals and doing their best.

"The Well Aware challenges are one of the best initiatives in the school system," Michael said. "I know I am in better condition now than five years ago. I carry this feeling of wellness into school and into my classroom."

But the bottom line?

"It's fun to win," he said.



Don't Miss It

**This month's free seminar/webinar—
Pump It Up!**

Join Well Aware and Cigna for this informative and interactive class to learn how to keep your muscles strong by making strength training a regular part of your fitness routine.

Wednesday, April 15, 2015
10:00–11:00 a.m.

Bethesda Bus Depot
10901 Westlake Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Wednesday, April 22, 2015
4:00–5:00 p.m.

Webinar

Tuesday, April 28, 2015
10:00–11:00 a.m.

Randolph Bus Depot
1800 Randolph Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20902

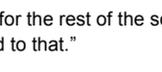
Thursday, April 30, 2015
4:30–5:30 p.m.

Carver Educational Services
Center Cafeteria
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Please register for the seminar or webinar by e-mailing [Well Aware](#) with the date and time you plan to attend. If you register for the webinar, you will receive a link to it in your Outlook e-mail as well as an Outlook calendar reminder.

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

Presented by:



InSTEP with Diabetes

Diabetes affects more than 25 million adults in the United States. Are you or your spouse living with diabetes?

This summer, join Well Aware and Kaiser Permanente for an eight-week, on-site program to better understand this disease and learn skills for healthy living. The class will be held on Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. from June 24–August 12, 2015. Topics will include—

- diabetes facts,
- nutrition and food choices,
- physical activity,
- testing your blood sugar,
- diabetes medicines, and
- recommended care.

Registration for the summer class is now underway. This is a great opportunity to take advantage of your summer break to gain control of your health and wellness. Space is limited for the eight-week class, so be sure to register early. For more information or to register, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

Stress Less This Spring

Well Aware and Cigna are offering several programs to help you reduce your stress this spring. Consider participating in one, two, or all three to improve your quality of life.

Tai Chi

If you are looking for a way to reduce stress, consider tai chi. Originally developed for self-defense, tai chi has evolved into a graceful form of exercise that is now used to reduce stress and to treat or prevent many health problems. Often described as meditation in motion, tai chi promotes serenity through gentle, flowing movements. Join Well Aware for our ongoing tai chi classes held as follows—

Thursdays

4:30–5:00 p.m. and 5:00–5:30 p.m.
Café 45
45 West Gude Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

There's no need to register ahead of time.

Seated Yoga

Have you ever wanted to take a yoga class but were worried about getting on and off the floor? Perhaps you assume that to practice yoga you must be super flexible and perfectly calm? Well, Well Aware has an answer for you!

You can now get all of the benefits of yoga without all of the worry. Join Well Aware for Seated Yoga, a series where you will learn how gentle breathing and simple exercises from a chair can lower your stress and strengthen your body. The series will be held—

Wednesday, April 15, 2015 and Wednesday, April 29, 2015

4:30–5:30 p.m.
Café 45
45 West Gude Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

To register for Seated Yoga, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

Mind Your Wellness

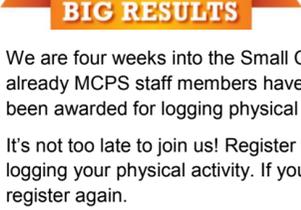
Join us for a fun and interactive seminar that will help you examine your lifestyle habits and either remove or improve them with healthier approaches to managing your health, family, other relationships, and yourself. Learn personal development techniques to increase inner peace, life balance, and well-being. Mind Your Wellness will be held—

Monday, April 27, 2015

4:30–5:30 p.m.
Maple Room
45 West Gude Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Manifest Ra, life balance expert, transformational speaker, and tai chi and qigong ambassador, will facilitate the seminar. To register, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

Stay tuned for an announcement later this spring on summer physical activity classes.



Small Changes, Big Results: The Spring Is in Our Steps!

We are four weeks into the Small Changes, Big Results spring physical activity challenge, and already MCPS staff members have made a lot of progress! So far, 40 individual prizes have been awarded for logging physical activity on the online [Well Aware Fitness Log](#).

It's not too late to join us! Register for an online [Well Aware Fitness Log](#) account and start logging your physical activity. If you registered for a previous challenge, you do not need to register again.

For details, including rules and prize information, visit the [Small Changes, Big Results web page](#). Questions about Small Changes, Big Results? [E-mail Well Aware](#).

April Is National Cancer Control Month

At the request of Congress, President Barack Obama has proclaimed the month of April as National Cancer Control Month. The goal of the proclamation is to defeat cancer by improving prevention, detection, and treatment; honor the memory of the courageous men and women who lost their lives to the disease; support cancer survivors; and bring hope to those facing it today.

A study from the American Cancer Society predicts that by 2030, cancer will surpass heart disease as the leading cause of death in America. Although recent studies suggest that many cancers can be attributed to bad luck, there is no doubt that poor lifestyle choices and outcomes, such as smoking and obesity, directly contribute to rising cancer rates.

[Watch a video](#) about how to reduce your risk of getting cancer.

Workouts: Whenever and Wherever!

Well Aware, Cigna, and Acacia TV are partnering to offer Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) staff free, weekly exercise classes on the Internet! This partnership eliminates excuses for not exercising such as, "I don't have time." "It is too expensive." And, "I don't know what to do."

To view a class, simply log in to the customized MCPS/Acacia TV website. Once you are logged in, you can watch a video of the exercise class for free. Each video is accessible for one week, 24 hours a day. A new video will be made available each Monday. You can watch it on your computer, promethean board, or smart TV as often as you like within the week. [See this week's video!](#)

Wellness Initiatives Can Save You Money

The Wellness Initiatives program provides incentives to help you reduce your health insurance costs for 2016 and beyond. [Learn more](#) about the program so you will be ready to take advantage of the rate reductions.

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.