

April Well Aware eNews

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

- this month's wellness champions: two wellness coaches who inspired 75 of their coworkers to get active to get healthy;
- a seminar/webinar that will motivate *you* to get moving;
- why you should keep up the good walk;
- the next Quit for Good class; and
- more!



Wellness Champions: Two Wellness Coaches Inspire 75 Coworkers to Get Active & Healthy

Meet Andy Lee, physical education teacher & Meghan Styles, computer applications teacher

Andy Lee and Meghan Styles, wellness coaches at Julius West Middle School, have clearly made a positive impression on their coworkers. Andy and Meghan received praise from countless coworkers for their dedication and hard work during the Million Mile Challenge fall incentive program.

One coworker referred to the two wellness coaches' efforts as a "full bombardment" of the staff. Together they:

- stuffed staff mailboxes with healthy snacks, water bottles, and wellness tips;
- sent coworkers weekly activity reminders and their Million Mile Challenge standings;
- offered T-shirts as weekly motivators;
- presented on health and wellness at staff meetings;
- held early morning boot camp and basketball games;
- challenged the staff to take the stairs and take on other healthy habits; and
- made a display with pictures of Julius West staff working out and text describing why employees decided to get active.

Andy and Meghan also came up with an idea to have the more physically active staff mentor the less active staff. Another Julius West employee noted that one group was able to increase its average by more than 1.5 miles per day after the mentoring kicked in. The wellness coaching and mentoring have also increased employee happiness.

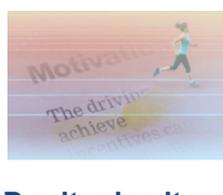
"I have seen many people going for walks together after school or riding the exercise bike," said Jeff Brink, Julius West physical education teacher. "Being healthy and active has really grown into our culture here at Julius West, and I couldn't be happier."

Meghan encouraged her coworkers to start small. She focused on achievable goals that most people could attain. Then, she took her own advice.

"I began substituting water for a can of soda, parking in the last row of the parking lot, or going to bed a little earlier," Meghan said.

Soon, both she and Andy found that they, too, were being inspired by those around them who were making healthy changes. Coworkers who had not exercised in years were logging legitimate cardio workouts and thanking both Meghan and Andy.

With 75 Julius West participants, Andy and Meghan did an amazing job motivating their coworkers to do their best!



Don't miss it—

Free Seminar/Webinar

This month:

Getting Motivated to Get Moving

Exercise plays a big role in good health: The benefits are visible, tangible, and enjoyable. Yet more than 60 percent of American adults are not active regularly. While the ultimate cure for lack of motivation is results, you need to find a personal reason to get moving. Attend this seminar to explore your readiness and motivation to exercise, and receive guidelines on getting started and finding an exercise program that meets your needs. Get ideas for sneaking exercise into your busy day, as well as tips for staying active when faced with intrinsic challenges and external roadblocks.

Tuesday, April 9, 2013
10:00–11:00 a.m.
West Farm Bus Depot
11920 Bournefield Way
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Tuesday, April 16, 2013
10:00–11:00 a.m.
Clarksburg Bus Depot
13100 Shawnee Lane
Clarksburg, Maryland 20871

Thursday, April 18, 2013
4:30–5:30 p.m.
CESC Cafeteria
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Tuesday, April 23, 2013

4:00–5:00 p.m.

Webinar

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

Spread the word with our [printable flyer](#). See archived webinars [here](#).

Presented by:



**MCPS:
Now a
Healthiest
Maryland
Business!**

Well Aware Encourages You to Keep Up the Good Walk!

Perhaps you saw them pacing around the parking lot. Maybe a group strode down the hallway holding a discussion usually reserved for a meeting room. Perhaps you were one of them!

On Wednesday April 3, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) joined the American Heart Association to celebrate National Walking Day. Why? Physical inactivity is a huge national problem; 70 percent of Americans do not get enough exercise. That is also true for many of us right here in MCPS. As a result, we are at greater risk for heart disease, stroke, and other blood vessel diseases. But we are not going to take it sitting down!

Instead, Well Aware is challenging MCPS employees to keep up the good walk! Join your coworkers who have already made a commitment to their health by getting—and staying—physically active.

Washington Grove Elementary School staff celebrated National Walking Day with an after-school walk around the neighborhood that shares the school's name.

"About eight staff members participated and several of them were new, so they got a chance to hear a bit of history about our namesake neighborhood," said Natalie Reineke, an ESOL teacher at the school. "It was fun, and now most of us want to have a weekly walk."

Walking, for most of us, is easy. Just put one foot in front of the other. Step by step, day after day, you walk to make progress. Make a daily walk a habit.

- Start a walking group with your coworkers, or hold a walking meeting.
- Visit www.Heart.org/NationalWalkingDay and use the American Heart Association's free tips and tools to help you develop a walking program and get and stay motivated.

After taking a walk, remember to register or sign in to log your miles on the [Well Aware Fitness Log](#) as part of this year's Million Mile Challenge. Help us reach one million miles of activity this school year! Visit the [Million Mile Challenge web page](#) on the Well Aware website to learn more.

Work it Circuit: Strength Training Simplified

Scientific research has shown that exercise can slow the physiological aging clock. While aerobic exercise, such as walking, jogging, or swimming, has many excellent health benefits—it maintains the heart and lungs and increases cardiovascular fitness and endurance—it does not make your muscles strong. Strength training does.

Lifting weights two or three times a week increases strength by building muscle mass and bone density. Strength training, particularly in conjunction with regular aerobic exercise, also can have a profound impact on a person's mental and emotional health.

For those beginning a strength training program, it can be hard to know where to start. For that reason, two years ago, Well Aware put together a great program that walks you step by step through a total body strengthening workout. The program, Work it Circuit, was offered to all elementary school staff members, school bus operators, and school bus attendants during the fall of 2011. The [Work it Circuit guide](#) is available online for your use. All you need to complete the circuit is an exercise ball, jump rope, and exercise band. Work it Circuit exercises can be done in the comfort of your home or at your school or office with your coworkers.

For more information on the Work it Circuit program, as well as other previous Well Aware activity challenges, visit the [Well Aware website](#).

Quit for Good

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.

Some of your MCPS coworkers already have taken advantage of this class and agree it was beneficial to them. Read what they had to say about the program:

- "Thank you so much for teaching the class. I could not have quit without it and I learned so much."
- "I haven't had a cigarette in, I don't know, it's been quite some time now. I don't even have the desire anymore. I do know that I can sing again! THAT really makes me happy!"
- "I had a wonderful weekend of breathing fresh air!"
- "I stopped smoking in February and I am still smoke free."

The next class will be held on eight Wednesday evenings beginning April 24, 2013, from 5:00–6:00 p.m. at 45 West Gude Drive, Rockville. For more information on the Quit for Good Tobacco Cessation Program, visit the [wellness 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.