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AWARDS

### *Wellness in the workplace*

Organizations in the Rochester area are getting serious about promoting wellness, going beyond simply helping employees shed a few pounds or quit smoking.

With everything from fully equipped on-site fitness facilities to financial seminars, employers are pushing for a well-rounded approach to healthy living.

Twelve local employers will be honored for doing just that. They will receive the 2013 Wealth of Health Awards, presented by Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, Rochester Region, and the Rochester Business Journal. The awards now are in their eighth year.

Honorees were judged on employee involvement in health initiatives, the creativity of these activities to reach specific targets, sustainability of programs and measurable outcomes.

The Wealth of Health Awards luncheon is scheduled for noon to 1:30 p.m. June 12 at the Hyatt Regency Rochester. Nurse practitioner Daryl Sharp, an associate professor of clinical nursing at the University of Rochester, will speak. Sharp, who holds a Ph.D. in nursing, is a psychiatric NP. Her research is in health promotion, injury prevention and health behavior change.

*Inside is a closer look at each honoree's commitment to fostering health.*

# Work it: Finding fitness and balance on the job



## Butler/Till

Butler/Till Media Services Inc., a media and communications firm in Henrietta, believes in being prepared. So the firm recently hired Henrietta Volunteer Ambulance Service Inc. to provide basic first aid training for its employees.

Roughly 20 of 75 employees signed up for a half-day session with the ambulance corps to learn how to use an automated external defibrillator, which is stored in the break room, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

The ambulance service charged \$25 per person for the training; employees paid \$10 each, and the company's health and wellness budget covered the rest.

Thankfully, no Butler/Till employee has needed CPR. But if one does, co-workers are trained, certified and ready to respond.

This is one example of the company's newly expanded health, fitness and wellness program, run by office manager Joanne Tompkins. A seven-year veteran with the firm, Tompkins will receive a master's degree in community health education this month from SUNY College at Brockport. She leads a wellness planning team of seven colleagues who meet monthly to brainstorm.

Another recent program covered the difference between food allergies and dietary intolerances. At the end of the session, one of the participants shared gluten- and dairy-free cookies she had baked, much to the gastronomic delight of her co-workers. Future sessions will cover managing stress at home and work and caring for aging parents.

Every fall, the company offers free flu shots; more than half of the employees participate. They receive health screenings, including blood pressure measurements, at the same time.

Fitness walking, logging a minimum of 10,000 steps daily, also is a priority for the staff, Tompkins says. A stroll of seven times around the building covers one mile, so several folks take a daily walk during the lunch hour. Soon the company will take advantage of the American Heart Association's complementary offer to set up an outside walking trail, with mile markers to help exercisers log their distance records.

Staffers also participate in community fitness events to support causes. One employee had a close friend who died of colon cancer, so she organized a team for a fundraiser 5K race in Buffalo.

Offering a comprehensive health, wellness and fitness program is in keeping with Butler/Till's corporate culture of promoting employees' health and happiness, Tompkins says.

"One employee, a devoted fan of fast-food meals, recently told me that she downloaded several apps to learn how to try a gluten-free diet," Tompkins says. "We are all making changes to lead healthier lives."

## SMP

There's a wellness activity for everyone at SMP Corp., says Nikki Reynolds, coordinator of health, wellness and fitness.



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie  
A stroll of seven times around Butler/Till's office building covers a mile; employees take daily walks over lunchtime.

"Our goal is to offer a variety of activities and services for the broadest audience possible," says Reynolds, who holds a master's degree in health promotion management and a graduate certificate in nutrition education from American University.

SMP is an information technology firm in Henrietta. Its 56 employees, who have recently settled into new company headquarters on John Street, can choose from a wide slate of wellness activities.

Many gravitate toward lunch-and-learn sessions that cover topics such as setting realistic health goals and heart disease prevention.

Others show up for group exercise classes in yoga, strength and conditioning, kickboxing, Zumba, stretching and relaxation. Classes are held before and after work and during the lunch hour.

The new facility in Henrietta features a large gym with dumbbells, free weights, Bosu balls, resistance bands, spin-style bikes and a bike-trainer. Locker rooms and showers are under construction and



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie  
New company headquarters gave SMP Corp. an opportunity to add a large gym with exercise equipment, including a bike trainer, above. Group exercise classes are held before and after work and over lunch.

should be completed soon.

In addition, SMP offers a Century Challenge, in which groups of three commit to accumulating 100 miles of distance by running, cycling, cross-country skiing or using an elliptical machine. Nearly 60 percent of SMP's employees have participated. A lunchtime walking and jogging club and a Friday lunch-hour group cycling ride take advantage of a long sidewalk along John Street.

Employees interested in nutritional wellness are particularly excited about new gardens filled with tomatoes, zucchini, summer squash, eggplant, herbs and other plants. Staffers enjoy the bounty and share it with clients who visit the building for meetings.

The firm also believes in promoting spiritual wellness and community outreach. Nearly half of the staff participated in a holiday matching program with clients from Action for a Better Community and prepared meals for families staying at the Ronald McDonald House.

Supported by top management, SMP's wellness program is committed to "helping employees remain active," notes Reynolds, who joined the firm last November. "Exercise does wonders for the body, mind and spirit. It's important to take care of ourselves and to always strive for balance in life."

One staff member recently offered evidence to Reynolds that the group exercise classes were paying off. The woman had been taking a lunch-time stretching course for several weeks. While spring cleaning at home, she noticed that washing the windows was easier than ever. She attributed the change to stronger muscles and greater flexibility developed during class.

"That is our corporate wellness goal," Reynolds says. "We don't talk about weight loss here. Instead, we focus on making our bodies as strong and healthy as possible."

## Vnomics

Something special with a connection to wellness happens nearly every day at Vnomics Corp.

At 3 p.m. on Tasteful Tuesdays, the 45 employees of the fleet management software company can be found snacking on fruits and veggies. Goodies include kiwi, guacamole served with sweet potato chips, samplings of new-to-the-market organic fruit juices and tasty fruit smoothies.

On Walking Wednesdays, staff members gather during their lunch hour and head outside for a brisk walk in their Bushnell's Basin neighborhood.

Fun Fridays are exactly that—a time for creative mid-afternoon activities that get everyone away from their desks and moving. Recent activities have included hula hoop contests, marshmallow golf and pineapple shotput.

Staff members have responded enthusiastically to these programs, says Michelle Hayes, office manager of the 5-year-old firm. She heads a four-member wellness committee that executes ideas and solicits employee feedback.

After the company participated in the Eat Well, Live Well Challenge, Hayes realized that "we were pretty good at eating our veggies and fruit, but we needed help with getting in the recommended 10,000 steps per day," she says.

So Vnomics called Tami Best, community engagement specialist for the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency. Best helped Vnomics obtain a \$5,000 New York state mini-grant for fitness-related items, such as partial payment of gym memberships and fitness DVD purchases.

Hayes and her committee members set up lunch-and-learn sessions. A representative from the American Heart Association came in to explain how good nutrition and fitness maximize heart health. Employees also were encouraged to take part in the AHA's three-mile Heart Walk in April, and eight staff members did so.

Best gave a presentation on blood pressure awareness and recorded attendees' blood pressure levels. Employees also participate in the Excellus Healthy Rewards program's health assessment process and have received incentives for setting up living wills and attending smoking cessation classes.

A consultant from the University of Rochester's Strength in Wellness program came to the office and offered suggestions on creative ways to incorporate fitness into the workday. As a result, small groups

Continued on next page



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

On Fun Fridays, the people who work at Vnomics Corp. gather during the midafternoon slump for hula hoop contests and other goofy fun.

Continued from previous page

of Vnomics staffers now routinely walk during their meetings, rather than sitting at a table.

Overall, employee feedback has been positive, Hayes says. She adds that many staffers use an on-site gym equipped with treadmills, elliptical machines and free weights.

Roughly three weeks after Best conducted her session on blood pressure awareness, she returned to take follow-up measurements. One participant, encouraged by her numbers but determined to lower them further, told Hayes she would commit to more daily walking.

That was music to Hayes' ears.

"Wellness programs help us improve our health and serve as an employee engagement tool, as well," she says. "Everyone enjoys participating."

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 200-499 Employees

## Arc of Yates

The pursuit of good health is meant to encompass everyone at Arc of Yates, including the social service agency's 180 employees and the 350 children and adults with developmental disabilities whom it serves.

This comprehensive emphasis permeates the culture, says Executive Director Kate Ring.

"Wellness, health and fitness are on everyone's minds within the organization," Ring says. "We are committed to the health of our employees and the people that we serve."

With an eye toward achieving that goal, the agency based in Penn Yan established a wellness center in 2010. Funding from the state Office for People With Developmental Disabilities enabled the Arc to purchase some exercise equipment for its gym.

Staff members and clients use the treadmills, elliptical trainers and free weights. In addition, Special Olympics participants play floor hockey in the space, and seniors from the Office for the Aging come in to take classes to improve their balance. The facility also hosts Zumba classes a few nights a week, as well as tai chi sessions, yoga classes and biweekly color guard practices.

Just across the street from the Arc's main office is a sheltered workshop, where roughly 50 individuals assemble product kits for manufacturers and operate a print shop. To get more physical activity—and to improve large motor skills and prevent repetitive motion injuries—workshop employees visit the gym daily to shoot hoops, play games and get moving.

"I can see the smiles on their faces as they come across the street," Ring says, noting that workshop participants who use wheelchairs get a ride during the snowy months.

Other wellness activities at the Arc include presentations by a consulting nutrition expert and lunchtime classes on topics like stress management and weight loss. Arc employees also participate in nearby Keuka College's annual Heart Walk and the Penn Yan Turkey Trot.

Like all employers, the Arc looks to

wellness programs as a way to keep health insurance rates in check. But the primary goal is to improve the lives of Arc community members.

"One of our employees recently shared with me that his blood pressure rates have decreased significantly, thanks to the increased frequency of his workouts," she says. "We've seen numerous examples of positive changes in our staff and clients' lives, and for that we are grateful."

## GE MDS

The folks at GE MDS LLC know how to make the most of their location in devising creative wellness programs.

During the Lilac Festival last month, the company—located on Science Parkway, just down South Avenue from Highland Park—sponsored its second annual Family Fun Walk. Starting at 5 p.m., families of employees gathered at the office, picked up instructions for a scavenger hunt and walked to the nearby festival.

Their mission included taking photos of healthy and unhealthy fair food and tabulating via pedometers the number of steps needed to traverse Highland Park. Prizes

cook and serve the food, while employees enjoy grilled veggies and take part in silly activities such as hula hoop competitions.

"Everyone just enjoys hanging out and relaxing together and getting a break from the daily work grind," Dilek notes.

In addition, the company offers frequent lunch-hour learning sessions; past topics include managing stress, monitoring cholesterol levels and fitting fitness into one's schedule. Onsite flu shots are offered every year, and employees get a 50 percent discount on memberships at Planet Fitness.

Staffers also can use an on-site gym. It has stationary bikes, rowing machines, treadmills and free weights. There are running and cycling clubs sponsored by the company, as well as Weight Watchers and participation in the Eat Well, Live Well Challenge. Stretching exercises are incorporated throughout the work day—a boon for roughly 80 employees who do repetitive, physical work, Dilek says.

GE MDS has found a way to promote healthy food choices even at the vending machines: It subsidizes the price of granola bars—marked at 50 cents—but not chocolate candy bars (80 cents).

Overall, the company's health and well-



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Wellness-focused employees of GE MDS LLC take advantage of an on-site gym, lunch-hour information sessions and proximity to Highland Park.

were handed out afterward, and everyone had a great time while getting some wonderful exercise, reports Zeynep Dilek, who works in human resources at the firm.

With 220 local employees, the company designs and manufactures wireless telecommunication systems. It was founded in 1985 and purchased by General Electric Co. in 2008.

Incorporating fun with physical activity is the key to running a successful wellness program, Dilek says. She is one of 12 people on a wellness planning committee that meets monthly.

To encourage healthy eating habits, the company holds a picnic in June. Managers

ness program is making a difference, Dilek says.

"We want to have a happy and healthy workforce, and as a result of the wellness program, we're seeing a decrease in health-related issues. Our employees enjoy participating in programs and report feeling more energy and less stress. We always welcome new wellness ideas and suggestions."

## Optimization Technology

When top management embraces health and fitness, a healthy corporate culture follows.

Such is the case at Optimization Technology Inc., says Jennifer Palumbo, marketing communications specialist. The company, based in Rush and founded in 1985, has 400 employees and provides engineering and construction services for industrial projects.

Company CEO Bill Pollock loves to exercise. An avid runner, he completed this year's Boston Marathon. He can be found running outside during his lunch hour with the company's vice president of engineering and other employees, Palumbo notes.

Diane Trentini, vice president of marketing and sales, also is a strong believer in the mind-body benefits of fitness. She recently started teaching a yoga class to engineers who had never tried yoga and were somewhat reluctant to do so. "One of the participants just told me that he previously had limited physical flexibility but now feels a definite improvement in his mobility," Palumbo says.



Photo courtesy of Arc of Yates

Staffers and people with developmental disabilities who come to Arc of Yates in Penn Yan use the agency's two-year-old wellness center. It has treadmills, elliptical trainers, free weights and other equipment.



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Yoga helps employees of Optimization Technology Inc. work out the kinks associated with repetitive motion and sedentary computer work.

## WEALTH OF HEALTH

Continued from page 17

Another hourlong yoga class at Optimization's Lexington Avenue manufacturing site on Wednesdays has started to pull in folks who are at risk for repetitive motion injuries. The fee is just \$7 per session, compared with \$15 charged in most private studios. The teacher earned her certification from Breathe Yoga.

"Yoga is a great form of exercise for our employees because it is low-impact, helps workers to stretch more easily and prevents injuries," Palumbo notes. "Yoga also is a wonderful body-mind stress reducer."

Employees at the Rush location take full advantage of elliptical machines, treadmills, rowing machines and free weights in the company gym. There are showers, lockers and small saunas too.

A health coach is available for weekly face-to-face consultations, and employees can buy yogurt, chocolate milk, vitamin water, cheese and hummus from the company vending machine, along with some candy bars. "We still offer chocolate bars for the chocoholics among us, or we'd have a riot on our hands," Palumbo says with a smile.

Employees run or walk as a team in the Corporate Challenge and take part in the American Heart Association's Heart Walk. The company also sponsors a Walk to Wellness program in May, facilitated by the Mayo Clinic. Staffers track their goals, in minutes or steps, and can receive financial rewards in their health spending accounts as an incentive for participating.

"Our management team is so committed to health and wellness, and we are all inspired by our bosses and co-workers," adds Palumbo, who had never been a runner but recently completed the Rochester Marathon. "Our collective goal is to make small changes that we can stick with. Wellness activities definitely make a difference in how we feel."



## ABVI-Goodwill

The finance and information technology people at ABVI-Goodwill Industries of Rochester Inc. have found creative ways to fit in 10,000 steps per day.

During a lunch hour in mid-April—on a rainy day, no less—five members of the finance/IT team hopped in a car, bound for a park in Gates. They completed an obstacle course, which included running and walking around the

park, followed by climbing stairs, wading through a sand pit and jumping rope.

Altogether, the five co-workers logged an impressive total of 14,000 steps for their efforts—and had a lot of fun doing it.

That is the goal behind Good Health, ABVI-Goodwill's umbrella wellness program, says Christine Herrman, a learning specialist for the organization. Nearly 640 people work for the 102-year-old agency, which has a downtown main office and 10 Goodwill stores in neighboring communities.

"Our wellness program is meant to be holistic by design," Herrman says. "Our goal is not to completely change staff members' lifestyles in one day but to encourage small steps toward living a healthier and more fit life over time."

Employees are exposed to many ways to be healthy. Lunch-and-learn programs are particularly popular, with offerings such as maintaining heart health, preventing and controlling diabetes, incorporating organic foods and other products into one's diet, and making a plan to stop smoking. The sessions are scheduled on changing weekdays to accommodate differing work schedules.

Roughly 20 employees have come to each session. In addition, the classes are recorded and can be viewed online.

A wellness fair in February brought in representatives from Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, Rochester Optical, YMCA of Greater Rochester, Thompson Health and other organizations. Presentations included a talk by a University of Rochester physical therapist on preventing sports injuries and making maximum use of ergonomic equipment in the workplace. People who attended had a chance to win raffle prizes donated by the vendors, including two \$285 gift cards from the YMCA.

Last December, ABVI-Goodwill became a tobacco-free organization at all of its locations. Employees were given a heads-up about the pending policy six months in advance, and many opted to participate in a smoking cessation class to help them prepare for the change.

Employees also participate in Wegmans' Eat Well, Live Well Challenge. Fifty staffers signed up in 2011, the first year ABVI-Goodwill participated. This year there are 150 employees involved. The agency's Weight Watchers at Work program also has attracted quite a few enrollees.

Because the focus of ABVI-Goodwill is eye and vision health, the organization will promote Cataract Awareness Month in August with various programs.

"Wellness is truly permeating our work culture," Herrman says. "You can see people making healthier food choices in the company cafeteria and hear conversations about increased family fitness activities at home. We are gratified to be truly reaching our goal of promoting healthier behaviors among our employees."



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

The wellness program at ABVI-Goodwill is meant to help staff members make steady, incremental changes that bring better health and vitality.

## Canandaigua City School District

Teaching children can be demanding work—with large classes, the pressures of standardized tests, ever-changing state mandates and more.

To help its teachers and staff members deal with the challenges, the Canandaigua City School District has devised a full-scale health and wellness program. Although the district has offered wellness programs for many years, it renewed its commitment last fall. In September, the district—with 756 employees and roughly 3,800 children from kindergarten to 12th grade—appointed a veteran teacher to run the program.

Bill Bowe has taught physical education in Canandaigua for 26 years. He also serves as lead teacher for the district's physical education and health curriculum and is spokesman for its health and wellness initiatives.

"Teachers are very busy people, and their work can be stressful, so we decided to launch a comprehensive wellness initiative to meet their needs," says Bowe, who holds a master's degree in physical education from SUNY College at Brockport.

The district, along with 37 others, participates in the Finger Lakes Area School Health Plan, an initiative of Excellus BlueCross BlueShield. CCSD was awarded \$1,000 by Excellus to be used to augment its wellness activities.

Members of FLASHP meet quarterly to share program ideas and the names of experts who can talk to employees on health and wellness topics.

The wellness program also partners with community organizations. The American Heart Association is sponsoring the creation of walking trails around each of the four school buildings at no cost to the district. The AHA also recently awarded the district its Fit-Friendly gold status. This designation is reserved for school districts that offer outstanding wellness programs, Bowe notes.

In March, a nurse checked blood pressure levels, body-fat percentages and cholesterol levels for more than 100 employees, taking a few moments with each to talk about areas of concern. Nearly 80 employees participated in a "Biggest Loser" contest, modeled after the popular weight-loss television show.

Canandaigua's teachers and staff also can get printed information about wellness through the district website. It has a section devoted to health topics, such as nutrition tips, exercises that can be done during the school day and recipes for heart-healthy dishes.

On weekends, numerous CCSD employees participate in community fitness activities, including 5K runs throughout the Finger Lakes and cycling events.

"If just one staff member quits smoking or lowers their blood pressure thanks to information that they've learned from our wellness program, then that is a very positive thing," Bowe notes. "The district really cares about the well-being of its staff."

## Finger Lakes Municipal Health Insurance Trust

A community consortium created 27 months ago is taking big steps to promote and expand the physical and emotional well-being of its members.

Through the Finger Lakes Municipal Health Insurance Trust, municipalities have better access to health care providers at more reasonable cost. They have combined efforts to obtain less expensive health insurance while simultaneously introducing a wellness program that would keep their collective workforce of 1,900 well and productive.

The trust's members are the cities of Canandaigua and Geneva; the towns of Webster, Chili, Pittsford, Perinton, Penfield, Victor and Henrietta; the villages of East Rochester and Fairport; and the Rochester Housing Authority.

"One of our goals was to educate our employees about the benefits of leading a healthy lifestyle," says Tony LaFountain, Penfield's town supervisor and chairman of the trust's wellness initiative. "We felt that by providing data to our employees about their current health metrics, such as weight, cholesterol levels and blood pressure measurements, we could then encourage them to become better stewards of their own health."

The new wellness program is multi-faceted. A walking challenge pits staff members from various municipalities against one another to record the most steps. Wellness committee members came up with the idea of launching a six-week Trip to the Moon—476 million steps to cover the 238,000 miles between the Earth and the moon.

Equipped with pedometers, municipality employees

Continued on next page



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

The Canandaigua City School District renewed a commitment to employee wellness last fall, appointing veteran physical education teacher Bill Bowe, left, to lead the effort.

Continued from previous page

started walking. And what fun they've had. LaFountain reports that he and other town supervisors "trash talk" one another when they see each other—checking to make sure that their competition's pedometers are working correctly while enjoying bragging rights about their respective accomplishments.

The consortium, too, has sponsored several educational lunch sessions on topics like healthy food choices, preparing meals in bulk on weekends to ease the weekday time crunch and caring for elderly family members. Programs match four quarterly wellness themes: nutrition, physical activity, preventive care and stress management.

In addition, consortium members participate in community-supported agriculture programs. Penfield and other municipalities offer gardens for residents to grow their own vegetables. Not only do community gardens promote better nutrition, but they also cultivate camaraderie and cohesiveness among neighbors, LaFountain adds.

The trust's wellness program has helped reduce work absenteeism. In addition, health care costs are considerably lower.



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Finger Lakes Municipal Health Insurance Trust is a consortium of municipalities that as a group save on health care costs. The trust's wellness program has helped reduce absenteeism.

"There really are no parameters to our wellness program," LaFountain says. "We want to include health and wellness themes into everything that we do and empower folks to be as creative as they want to be while doing so."



## Bausch & Lomb

Around the globe, Bausch & Lomb Inc.'s 12,000 employees in 41 countries celebrated Fitness and Nutrition Month during May in their own ways.

Staffers in South Korea ran a 5K race. In Malaysia and Singapore they bowled, and in the Philippines they had badminton competitions. Staffers in Jinan, China, completed a mountain-climbing excursion. And employees in Japan ran around the Imperial Palace.

Health, wellness and fitness are global priorities, says Denise Burgen, manager of Bausch & Lomb's corporate health and global wellness program. A nurse practitioner, Burgen leads a 10-member global wellness committee.

"We believe that healthy employees are productive employees," she says. "Bausch & Lomb is a health-care company that passionately supports a culture of wellness."

The company's focus on health has four pillars: tobacco cessation, fitness and nutrition, eye health and global employee assistance programs.

To address the first of those priorities, the company has announced that all of its sites will be tobacco-free by next Jan. 1. The goal is to eliminate the health hazards associated with tobacco use and exposure to secondary smoke, Burgen says. The new policy includes workers' automobiles parked in company parking lots. The company is helping staffers quit with various educational tools.

Data show that 10 percent of Bausch & Lomb staffers are smokers or tobacco users. Facilities in 20 countries already are smoke-free, Burgen notes.

Fitness and nutrition-related activities operate year-round at all company locations. Locally, the American Heart Association is re-launching a marked walking trail around the Goodman Street production facility. Staff members in Hong Kong recently participated in an organic-foods cooking class. Each market has a wellness ambassador who sets up programs and gathers feedback from employees.

In promotion of eye health, the company supports World Sight Day in mid-October. Last year, in Rochester, two ophthalmologists who wrote a book titled "Eye Foods" addressed staffers about the ocular ben-

efits derived from eating salmon and roasted vegetables, as well as smoothies made with kale and kiwi. In the company's mobile "eye vans" at many of its sites, the public can get free eye exams and samples of OcuVite, a Bausch & Lomb vitamin product for eye health.

To support employee mental health, last November the company expanded its U.S. employee assistance program to worksites worldwide.

"We believe that everyone, including our employees, has a lot of stress in their lives, and the EAP's five free counseling sessions can help staff members tap into resources to help reduce that stress," Burgen says. "By analyzing aggregate health data, we are seeing that these wellness programs are helping people live healthier lives—and that is in everyone's best interest."

## CooperVision

A diverse workforce benefits most from a wellness program that offers a variety of approaches.

That's what makes CooperVision Inc.'s 4-year-old wellness program effective, says Brian Quinn, wellness trainer in the human resources department. With 1,100 employees in the Rochester area, CooperVision operates three separate facilities—a main office in Fairport, a distribution center in Henrietta and a manufacturing plant in Scottsville. The latter two run three work shifts daily.

Many of the employees who work the second shift at the distribution center are young and "often take their health for granted," Quinn notes. He says it is not uncommon for staff members on this shift to grab a bag of Doritos and a Mountain Dew from the company vending machine for dinner.

So the company's 35-member wellness committee, co-chaired by Quinn and Bill Cherry, who manages the distribution center, came up with a plan to offer more nutritious choices for meals and snacking. Now employees can purchase salads, vegetables and soups, along with traditional vending machine fare.

"Initially, this group of employees was the least receptive to making changes that might help their general health and wellbeing, but now many of them have volunteered to be wellness champions, encouraging their co-workers to try new foods and exercises," Quinn notes. "This is all a part of our grassroots approach—to focus on employees' needs and find ways to address those needs."

A big issue for staffers who work the third shift is the sometimes elusive pursuit of sleep. As a result, the wellness committee suggested that each shift begin with stretching exercises. Also, speakers have been brought in to make presentations about getting optimal rest during off-hours.

Other experts have addressed a variety of wellness topics such as financial wellness, smoking cessation and nutritious cooking.

The company also offers a yearlong program for losing weight and keeping it off. Using a 5-2-1-0 model as a guide (five servings daily of fruits and vegetables, no more than two hours of screen time daily, one full hour of physical activity and zero consumption of sugary drinks), 400 participants have lost a total of 2,000 pounds and have reduced their body fat content by 5 percent.

Group fitness is also promoted via softball, bowling and basketball tournaments. The company also sent a team

Continued on page 20



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Bausch & Lomb Inc.'s 12,000 staffers in 41 countries around the world celebrated Fitness and Nutrition Month during May with bowling, mountain climbing, badminton and running.



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie  
**Wellness organizers at CooperVision Inc. go for variety to get employees interested in good health: nutritious snacks, stretching, weight loss and group fitness activities.**

**WEALTH OF HEALTH**

Continued from page 19

to take part in the American Heart Association's Heart Walk, where it raised one of the largest amounts of money in the event to support heart health research.

The program, tagged "Make Wellness Personal," is working, Quinn says. "We're seeing our employees becoming

healthier every day—and that makes everyone happy."

**Guardian Industries**

Financial incentives are part of the wellness approach at Guardian Industries Corp.'s glass division in Geneva.

A program called the Winner's Circle invites office and production staff members to take part in fitness. Over 12 weeks, employees keep track of the time they spend exercising, earning different points for moderate and vigorous activities. At the end of the quarter they get a bonus. Spouses and partners also are eligible to receive equivalent cash bonuses.

Roughly 300 employees work at the manufacturing plant, which produces flat glass for commercial and residential applications for Guardian, based in Auburn Hills, Mich. Staying healthy and fit is to everyone's benefit, says Kelly Mager, fabrication project coordinator and co-chairwoman of the wellness program with Shawn Pollock, who works in human resources.

"Our wellness program is called HealthGuard, and our overall goal is to encourage physical fitness, participate in community wellness events and help our employees live healthier lives," Mager says.

Outside experts talk to employees during lunch-time sessions on managing stress, improving diet and quitting tobacco. Sometimes employees themselves volunteer to lead a session; a manufacturing operator with martial arts experience recently offered a class on personal defense, Mager notes.

The plant's on-site fitness facility is open around the

clock; it has elliptical machines, treadmills, weight machines and free weights. Outdoors, employees can use horseshoe pits and a basketball court. Guardian provides skating passes for staff members to use at the nearby Geneva ice rink, and it has Frisbees they can use at Geneva's disc golf course, at the northern tip of Seneca Lake.

Team fitness opportunities include company-sponsored volleyball, basketball, golf and softball teams. Corporate tournaments pitting one division against another are held annually at headquarters in Michigan. And staff members participate in community events such as the Corporate Challenge, United Way Day of Caring and March of Dimes.

"Preventive care is a lot cheaper than reactive care," Mager says. "We want our employees to be as healthy and happy as possible."

Continued on page 22



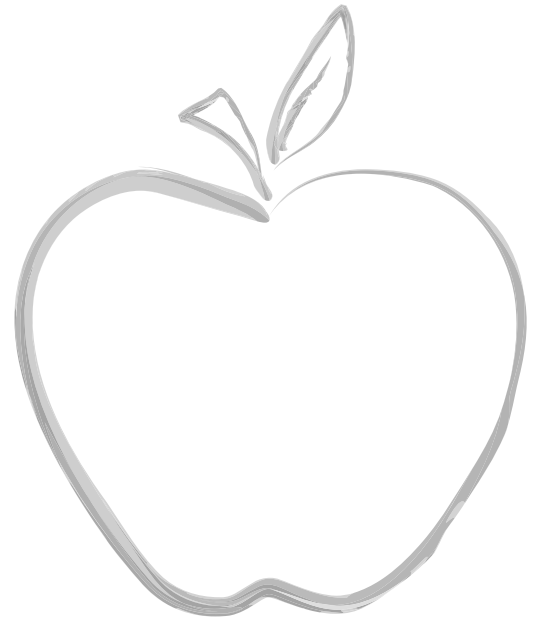
Photo courtesy of Guardian Industries Corp.

**The fitness center at Guardian Industries in Geneva is open around the clock. A basketball court and horseshoe pits are popular, and the company sponsors teams in local competitions.**

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## 2013 Honorees

The Wealth of Health Awards honor innovative organizations that promote workplace wellness, improving both their bottom line and the overall health of our community.

### 1-199 employees

**Butler/Till  
SMP  
Vnomics Corp.**

### 200-499 employees

**Arc of Yates  
GE MDS, LLC  
Optimation**

### 500-1,999 employees

**ABVI-Goodwill  
Canandaigua City School District  
Finger Lakes Municipal  
Health Insurance Trust**

### 2,000+ employees

**Bausch + Lomb  
CooperVision  
Guardian Industries Corp.**

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## Guest Speaker

**Daryl Sharp, Ph.D, PMHCNS-BC, NPP**  
Associate Dean for Faculty Development & Diversity and Associate Professor of Clinical Nursing, URSMD School of Nursing, and Clinical Director of Education and Training in the URM Center for Community Health's Healthy Living Center.

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## Questions?

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## WEALTH OF HEALTH

Continued from page 20



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

ESL Federal Credit Union has published a 17-page walking guide for employees who work at its downtown headquarters. It maps out routes easily covered during breaks from work.



## ESL Federal Credit Union

The wellness program at ESL Federal Credit Union is robust. Just ask the company's 650 employees and their families.

Last year, ESL took over the Penfield YMCA after hours for swimming, playing in the gym, climbing a rock wall and busting moves during a Zumba class.

This year, the same event will be held at the Westside YMCA, says Lisa McLaughlin, total rewards manager for ESL and an 11-year company veteran. She heads a 13-member planning team that oversees the "Be Well at ESL" program.

Fall Family Harvest Day was another popular family activity in 2012. The event featured an excursion to Stokoe Farms in Scottsville. Tickets were discounted for employees, who got to race go-carts, climb and pick pumpkins. "This was a marvelous way to get families outside and moving," McLaughlin notes.

Families also are treated to an annual ice skating party at Manhattan Square Park.

ESL has stepped up its commitment to walking by publishing a 17-page walking guide. It maps out seven city routes one to three miles long from the company's headquarters on Chestnut Street. Volunteer guides led walks this year through various neighborhoods, including the South Wedge and Park Avenue, and along the Genesee RiverWalk. Now employees regularly head out in groups during their lunch hours to take in city sights.

A new addition to the headquarters' decked-out fitness facility in 2012 was a Wii system; teams competed in golf, bowling and wakeboarding.

Caring about the community is another important piece of ESL's wellness program. The credit union sponsored a Soup, Stew and Chili event last fall. Employees brought in their own homemade dishes and paid a few dollars to taste their co-workers' creations. The event netted \$400, and the company chipped in an additional \$600, to donate to Open Door Mission, along with leftover food from the event.

"The purpose of our wellness program is to keep our people happy and healthy," McLaughlin says. "One of our core corporate values is to care about people. A comprehensive wellness program is for the benefit of the employee, family members and the company."

## Lawley Insurance

Every year on Valentine's Day, the people who work at Lawley Insurance get screened for heart health.

On that day, as has been done for the last five years, a visiting nurse screens for high- and low-density lipoprotein cholesterol levels and triglycerides. The results are heartwarming: Risks in total cholesterol level and triglycerides have fallen 30 percent, and physician compliance has increased 5 percent.

"We are very happy with these results, which indicate that our employees are truly practicing our corporate motto of 'Live Well, Work Well and Be Well,'" says Carly Kennedy, Lawley's wellness coordinator.

The local branch of the Buffalo-based company employs about 45 people. Kennedy directs the activities of a 20-member wellness committee that plans activities and evaluates their effectiveness in monthly meetings.

With a continuous emphasis on heart health—branded as the "Be Smart for Your Heart" program—Lawley has offered educational sessions about the importance of maintaining appropriate blood pressure. Topics have included tips for reducing stress, getting sufficient sleep, ways to incorporate fitness into daily life and reducing sodium intake.

Employees also participated as teams in Wegmans' Eat Well, Live Well Challenge. Everyone who took part in the program received a complimentary insulated lunch bag decorated with the "Lawley Strong" logo. Winning teams were treated to a catered luncheon, and top performers won gift cards from Wegmans. Roughly 30 percent of Lawley employees participated in the program, and Kennedy hopes more will do so in coming years.

In addition, employees have paid close attention to the content of their meals. The company's "Choose My Plate" program focuses on portion control and addresses healthy choices such as balancing calories, selecting more whole grains and drinking low-fat milk. Some 45 percent of employees took part.

Staff members receive frequent emails reminding them about making healthy choices, but they can also view staff-produced videos on wellness topics via "Lawley TV," broadcast on their work computers.

"These programs yield a reduction in health insurance claims and stress levels," Kennedy says. "In addition, the activities boost morale, employee camaraderie and team building."

## University of Rochester

Wellness is more than academic at the University of Rochester, where a program designed to improve employees' health and fitness has been in operation for several years.

During 2012, several new initiatives were introduced to augment the program, says Rachel Carmen, manager of university wellness, known as Well-U.

Since the main cafeteria at the UR Medical Center was renovated and renamed Cafe 601, live cooking demonstrations have become a regular part of the facility's operations. Professional chefs show how adding spices to foods can simultaneously add flavor and reduce calories. They hand out printed recipes while offering tastings to staff members and visiting family and friends of patients.

Another new initiative related to nutrition is "Be in Balance," introduced last November. Cafe 601 staff members post signs next to dishes that are designated healthy meals. After employees buy 10 of these meals, they are eligible for a discount on their next purchases and their



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

The University of Rochester's health and fitness program added live cooking demonstrations, incentives for buying healthy meals at the Medical Center cafeteria and more flexible times for group fitness classes.

names are entered into a drawing for substantial prizes, including bikes and other fitness equipment. To date, Carmen says, the program has been highly successful in introducing people to unusual, tasty foods.

The Well-U committee plans activities based on employee needs and feedback. Recently, staffers said they were interested in fitness classes held in the workplace—such as Zumba, Pilates and yoga—but didn't have time for hourlong classes. Exercise classes now last 20 to 30 minutes. Zumba, Pilates and yoga are still offered, along with high-intensity aerobics, abdominal strengthening sessions and more.

"Classes fill up within the first hour after they are announced," Carmen says.

Another new initiative is a 20-minute guided relaxation and meditation session, giving participants an opportunity to unplug and combat stress.

Finally, the university's School of Nursing Center for Employee Wellness, the Healthy Living Center and Well-U have joined forces to provide wellness services—including biometric screenings, personal health assessments, and condition and lifestyle management programs—for all UR employees, spouses, partners and retirees.

"The overall philosophy of our wellness program is to have a positive impact on employees' lives and health via helpful tools and resources," Carmen says. "Wellness is an ever-evolving phenomenon. This is not one-size-fits-all. We are committed to tailoring our offerings to employees' specific needs."

Debbie Waltzer is a Rochester-area freelance writer.



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

The wellness program at Lawley Insurance focuses on heart health. In five years, risks in total cholesterol level and triglycerides have fallen 30 percent.