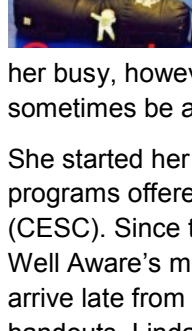


May Well Aware eNews

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

- this month's wellness champion—a regular attendee at monthly Well Aware seminars who overcame her hectic schedule and found the impetus to make sweeping healthy changes to her lifestyle;
- a seminar/webinar from Cigna where you will gain information about recognizing nutritional myths;
- a class to practice yoga from a chair;
- this year's Bike to Work Day;
- the latest on the Small Changes, Big Results challenge; and
- more!

Wellness Champion Exercises Daily to Ensure a Healthier Future



Linda Lapkoff, copy editor/administrative secretary, Office of the Chief Academic Officer

Linda Lapkoff, copy editor/administrative secretary, Office of the Chief Academic Officer, wants to live a long, healthy, and independent life. Her responsibilities keep

her busy, however, and finding time for exercise can sometimes be a challenge for her.

She started her wellness journey by attending wellness programs offered at Carver Educational Services Center (CESC). Since then, Linda has made it a priority to attend Well Aware's monthly seminars, even when she has to arrive late from a meeting, or early just to pick up the handouts. Linda also participates in the fall and spring physical activity challenges.

"Many years ago, MCPS held an Insanity fitness class in the CESC Auditorium. I believe that class, along with the first Well Aware challenge, gave me the boost I needed to take my fitness routine to the next level," Linda said. "The Well Aware programs and seminars have been a fabulous resource for me. I have been able to incorporate the tips—and even tricks—I learn into my daily practice."

Linda has exercised for much of her adult life, but over the last few years has chosen to make exercise a part of her *daily* routine. She exercises her mind too, by reading about the importance of physical activity.

"I've read that the lifestyle changes we make now will have a significant impact on the life we will be able to lead in the future," Linda said. "That is my primary reason for leading a healthier life. I'm exercising toward the future I want to lead."

Still, there are benefits to exercise that are more immediate, and Linda is well aware of them.

"My biggest motivation comes simply from how much more energy I feel as a result of exercising and how good I feel about myself," Linda said. "The fact that my clothes fit better now also keeps me motivated."

Most evenings, you can find Linda at a karate studio in Ashton, Maryland, where she takes up to three classes back to back.

"My membership at Kang's Fitness Studio, along with the instructors who teach the classes, also have helped me to maintain my exercise routine," Linda said. "Plus, I am having so much fun with it!"

Linda's motivation to maintain a healthy lifestyle is having an effect on her family too.

"My youngest son and future daughter-in-law have begun to see what eating properly and exercising has done for me, and have joined me at some fitness classes," Linda said. "It feels good to know that I might be a role model for them, and if they change some of their habits, they too will reap the benefits."



Don't Miss It

This month's free seminar/webinar—

Busted! The Truth about Nutrition Myths

Is organic really better for you? Does cholesterol free mean that a food is healthy? Join Well Aware and Cigna for this informative and interactive class to learn about nutrition myths and how to get back on track.

Monday, May 4, 2015

10:00–11:00 a.m.

West Farm Bus Depot

11920 Bournefield Way

Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

4:30–5:30 p.m.

Maple Room

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

Thursday, May 21, 2015

4:00–5:00 p.m.

Webinar

Thursday, May 28, 2015

10:00–11:00 a.m.

Shady Grove Bus Depot

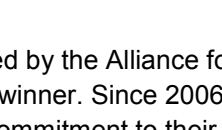
16651 Crabbs Branch Way

Rockville, Maryland 20855

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:



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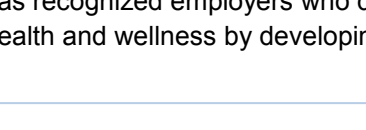
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MCPS Named a Health and Wellness Trailblazer

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has been selected by the Alliance for Workplace Excellence as a 2015 Health and Wellness Trailblazer Award winner. Since 2006, the alliance has recognized employers who demonstrate an outstanding commitment to their employees' health and wellness by developing and implementing innovative programs.

Seated Yoga to Be Held This Summer

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, now you can 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.

Seated Yoga will be held as follows:

Wednesdays, June 17, June 24, July 1, July 8, July 15, August 5, August 12, and August 19

4:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m.

Café 45

45 West Gude Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

Space is limited. To save your seat in the class, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

InSTEP with Diabetes

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 InSTEP with Diabetes, an eight-week, on-site program to better understand diabetes and learn skills for healthy living. Topics will include: diabetes facts, nutrition and food choices, physical activity, testing your blood sugar, diabetes medicines, and recommended care.

Registration is underway for our summer class. Take advantage of your summer break and gain control of your health and wellness! Space is limited for the eight-week class, which will take place on Wednesdays, June 24–August 12, 2015 at 12:30 p.m. For more information or to register for the class, [e-mail Well Aware](#). Print and share our [flyer](#).

Bike to Work Day is Coming!

Commuter Connections and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association invites you to join more than 10,000 area commuters for a celebration of bicycling as a clean, fun, and healthy way to get to work. This year's Bike to Work Day will be held Friday, May 15, 2015.

Attend one of 79 pit stops throughout D.C., Maryland, and Virginia to receive refreshments and enter a raffle for a chance to win bicycles and other prizes. Free T-shirts will be available at pit stops to the first 14,000 who register and attend.

[Learn more and register for the event.](#)

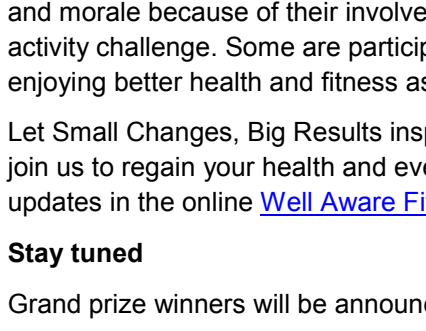
Wellness Initiatives: Have You Completed Your Health Risk Assessment?

Completing a health risk assessment gives you the information you need to take better control of your health and well-being. And that is important, because when you are running at 100 percent, you need the strength and confidence to be your true self.

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. When you complete your health risk assessment, MCPS will pay an additional 1 percent of the total cost of your health insurance (reducing your contribution by 1 percent), effective January 1, 2016. To get started, visit the [Wellness initiatives web page](#). There you will find links to the CareFirst, Cigna, and Kaiser Permanente health risk assessments. You also will find helpful tutorials to guide you through the log-in process.



Small Changes, Big Results: There Is Still Time to Join Us!

Across Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), employees are experiencing better health and morale because of their involvement in Well Aware's Small Changes, Big Results physical activity challenge. Some are participating as individuals; others as members of a team. They are enjoying better health and fitness as a result.

Let Small Changes, Big Results inspire you to become your healthiest self. There is still time to join us to regain your health and even win prizes! Simply enter your activity and weight loss updates in the online [Well Aware Fitness Log](#) by noon on Monday, May 18, 2015.

Stay tuned

Grand prize winners will be announced in the June 2nd issue of *The Bulletin!*

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, [e-mail Well Aware](#). Nominations are due by May 18, 2015.

Do not stop now!

Maintain your active lifestyle and look for information on summer and fall wellness programs on the [Well Aware web page](#), in the [Well Aware eNews](#), and in [The Bulletin](#).

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!](#)

National Day of Action: Roll Up Your Sleeves!

National High Blood Pressure Education Month is recognized each May. This year, the American Medical Group Foundation is recognizing you to Measure Up/Pressure Down. This year's National Day of Action will be held on Thursday, May 7, 2015. Take the time that day to get your blood pressure checked.

You can measure your blood pressure almost anywhere—at a doctor's office, in a pharmacy, or in the comfort of your home.

- **Doctor's office**—Have your blood pressure checked during your regular healthcare visits. Ask your health care professional to take your blood pressure reading, discuss what it may mean for you, and write down the numbers so you can monitor changes over time.
- **Pharmacy**—Many pharmacies offer the use of a machine that will measure blood pressure for you. Read the machine directions carefully, and ask the pharmacist if you have any questions. You can discuss your results with the pharmacist just as you would with your doctor. Record your blood pressure numbers and keep track of future changes.
- **Home**—Manual and electronic blood pressure cuffs are available for purchase in stores or online for measuring blood pressure at home. Read and carefully follow the instructions provided with the blood pressure cuff. Some devices will automatically store blood pressure readings (numbers) for you. If your device does not store your numbers, write them down to compare later with your future readings and discuss with your doctor.

To ensure an accurate reading when you take your blood pressure, follow these tips:

- Do not talk or eat during the check.
- Avoid caffeine and smoking 30 minutes before blood pressure reading.
- Sit with your back supported and with both feet flat on the floor.
- Wear a short-sleeved top or roll up your sleeve so the blood pressure cuff fits on your bare arm.
- Remember that certain factors may temporarily affect your blood pressure reading, including stress, cold temperatures, exercise, and certain medications.

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.