

## **JMU Wellness Program**

### **1. How does the management of JMU support employee health and wellness efforts?**

Part of the James Madison University's (JMU) strategic plan includes fostering an environment that supports a healthy work-life balance. One way the university supports this strategic plan is by promoting wellness activities implemented through CommonHealth. Over the last few months JMU CommonHealth have promoted several wellness events/campaigns with high employee participation, including members of the university's senior leadership team. Since September of 2015, JMU has taken CommonHealth from being simply an email that was distributed to a small group of employees to an exciting program filled with campaigns and competitions to encourage healthy lifestyles. JMU CommonHealth was just granted a \$5,000 budget for the 2016-2017 fiscal year to support efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of our workforce.

Employees are also permitted and encouraged to utilize our incredible University Recreation Center (UREC) at no cost to the employee or their spouse. We also allow dependents of employees to enjoy the facility during family hours. This facility offers group fitness classes, cardio equipment, weight lifting equipment, two indoor tracks and two indoor pools.

JMU's Talent Development Department regularly holds sessions related to a variety of health and wellness topics; employees are able to attend these sessions during their workday at no cost to them.

### **2. What opportunities or policies are in place to encourage JMU employees to move more?**

JMU has a beautiful campus with walking paths from all areas. We also have the Bluestone Bike Trail that allows cyclists to easily navigate through campus. Several departments have purchased Varidesks that will allow office workers to easily move from a seated position to a standing position during their workday. Many departments have utilized our surplus department and acquired fitness equipment (treadmills, ellipticals, etc...) to be housed within their department to conveniently encourage employees to move more during their work hours.

### **3. What opportunities or policies are in place to encourage healthy eating among JMU employees?**

JMU ranks in the top 10 in regards to our dining facilities. Healthy dining options are readily available all across campus; employees are able to purchase meal plans at a discounted rate for themselves and their families. Several times throughout the year, employees are able to partake in courses offered by dieticians and nutrition services in regard to healthy meal planning and preparation.

### **4. What opportunities or policies are in place to assist JMU employees in managing stress?**

The JMU Talent Development Department offers several classes related to stress management that employees of all levels are encouraged to sign up for. Employees do not incur any cost for these courses and they occur during work hours.

JMU offers a program called "Madison Meditates" which provides an hour of meditation practice daily around lunch time and located at different areas across campus. This program is open to all employees and students.

The University's Recreation Center (UREC) is creating a meditation room for anyone on campus to use at any time. This room will be completed this summer and will offer soft lighting, a fountain, and many other features to help people relax. UREC also offers massages at a very reasonable rate.

**5. What additional health and wellness opportunities are available to JMU employees at your worksite?**

JMU offers Weight Watcher's meetings at work. Employees are encouraged to attend these meetings and are not required to use their leave to participate.

As stated previously, JMU has expanded our CommonHealth program exponentially since last fall. In September, we launched "Take a Ride, JMU" to synchronize with on the state's initiative, Take a Ride, Virginia. We invited local bike shops to set up on the Bluestone Trail that runs right through our campus. Employees were able to speak with cycling experts regarding safety, bike trails, and upcoming events. Representatives from the local bike shops were available to make minor repairs/adjustments to bicycles and to assist employees if they were interested in purchasing a new bike. Several employees even "test-drove" a new bike around campus. We had several cycle-related door prizes for participants.

In November, JMU mirrored "Move It, Virginia" with our campaign, "Move It, JMU" by encouraging employees to move more during their work day. Employees submitted photos of themselves taking the stairs rather than the elevator, doing pushups in their offices, utilizing standing desks and much more. Each picture of the employee being active gained an entry into a drawing for a grand prize. The winner of this competition won a 45-minute massage!

We then geared up for another exciting campaign: The Biggest Loser. This campaign started on February 1<sup>st</sup> and ran for six weeks. During the competition, we sent out encouraging emails, exercise suggestions, healthy recipes and meal plans. We had 175 participants who collectively lost 1122.3 pounds during the competition. We allowed participants to compete either as an individual or a team. The individual winner lost 9.75%, and the winning team lost 8.87%. Many people commented that this competition encouraged them to speak to their doctor and find underlying health concerns that may have prevented them from losing weight. The winners of this competition each received a JMU tote bag filled with several items to help keep them on track.

We just wrapped up our most recent competition, "Step It Up". This competition encouraged employees to log their daily steps with a goal of reaching 10,000 steps each day. The competition ran for one month. We had several employees, including one of our Deans, that

logged 10,000 steps each day of the competition. We had over 1,500 entries for a total of over 20 million steps taken!