



Wellness Olympics  
Celebrating the wellness of our employees and patients

# Veterans Health Administration Employee Wellness



# Wellness Digest 2008







# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	Page 5
List of Reporting Facilities by VISN .....	Page 7
VA NCP.....	Page 9
VISN 1.....	Page 11
VISN 2.....	Page 17
VISN 3.....	Page 21
VISN 4.....	Page 23
VISN 5.....	Page 27
VISN 6.....	Page 29
VISN 7.....	Page 35
VISN 8.....	Page 37
VISN 9.....	Page 43
VISN 10.....	Page 45
VISN 11.....	Page 47
VISN 12.....	Page 51
VISN 15.....	Page 53
VISN 16.....	Page 57
VISN 17.....	Page 59
VISN 18.....	Page 63
VISN 19.....	Page 67
VISN 20.....	Page 69
VISN 21.....	Page 73
VISN 22.....	Page 75
VISN 23.....	Page 77





# INTRODUCTION

## 2008 Wellness Digest

The National Center for Healthy Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP) is pleased to present the 2008 Wellness Digest. The Digest features reports and pictures of wellness events at many Veterans Health Administration facilities. Chief among these events are celebrations of the National Employee Health and Fitness Day held on May 21<sup>st</sup>. On that day VA Medical Centers throughout the nation held noontime “Walk and Roll” or similar events for employees and, in many cases, patients and their families as well. These events also featured a number of displays related to health and wellness, which were highly popular as shown in many of the photographs.

Staff members at the Medical Centers also conduct a number of other wellness events such as health fairs, physical activity challenges, weight loss challenges, fun runs/walks, “Wellness Week”, and “Go Green Campaign”, among many others. Pictures of some of these events are included in the Digest as well. The creativity of VA staff is abundant and seemingly limited only by their imagination! The enthusiasm shown by these staff members is clearly apparent and is truly remarkable. This Digest can’t begin to chronicle all their achievements in the areas of employee and patient wellness. VA staff members involved in wellness activities are to be commended for their creativity, enthusiasm, energy, and commitment to the health and well-being of their fellow employees and our veterans. Please experience the energy and joy these events brought to their participants as you peruse these pages.



The grid on the following pages is a list of reporting facilities/points of contact:

VISN	Reporting Facility	Point of Contact
	VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention	Richard Harvey
1	Bedford, MA	Nancy Aucoin
1	VA Boston Healthcare System	Ildiko Halasz and Joanne Trovato
1	Northampton, MA	
1	White River Junction, VT	Tara Berry
2	Bath, NY	Linda Crocker
2	Buffalo, NY	Patricia Malin
2	Canandaigua, NY	Debbie Brahm
2	VISN 2	Pamela Chester
3	VA New York Harbor Healthcare System	Raymond Aalbue
3	East Orange, NY; Lyons, NY	Kathleen Castles-Fonseca
4	Butler, PA	Laurie Conti
4	Clarksburg, WV	Ronald Sandreth, Jr.
4	Coatesville, PA	Pamela Armentrout, Elizabeth DeFeo, Dawn Ruth
5	Martinsburg, WV	
6	Beckley, WV	Rita Goodman
6	Durham, NC	Shirley Gentry
6	Fayetteville, NC	JoAnn Jeras
6	Hampton, VA	Jemecia Braxton
6	Richmond, VA	Ruth Meyer
7	Birmingham, AL	Kathryn Williams
8	Gainesville, FL	Barry Murphy
8	Miami, FL	Elaine Stein
8	Orlando, FL	Kelly Jansen, Amy Sindler
8	St. Augustine, FL	Jane Fitzpatrick
8	Tampa, FL	Brenda Burdette
9	Louisville, KY	
9	Mountain Home, TN	Phyllis Fisher
10	Columbus, OH	Connie Gilbert, Ann McDowell



VISN	Reporting Facility	Point of Contact
11	Battle Creek, MI	Theresa Vlas
11	Danville, IL	Beth Peralta
11	Saginaw, MI	
12	Tomah, WI	
15	Kansas City, KS	
15	Kansas City, MO	
15	Wichita, KS	Lydia C. Loo
15	St. Louis, MO	Melissa Nixon
16	Jackson, MS	Donald Breckenridge
17	Central Texas Veterans Healthcare System	Verona Parker
17	Dallas, TX	Tina McDaniel
17	South Texas Veterans Healthcare System	Linda Zaiontz, Jackie Vaughan-Williams; Rene' Jacob, Beverly Reese
18	Albuquerque, NM	John Renna
18	Amarillo, TX	Lisa Kimbrell
18	Phoenix, AZ	Lucy Holt
18	Prescott, AZ	Beth Brehio
19	Salt Lake City, UT	Curtis Ivins
20	Boise, ID	Victoria Rogers
20	Portland, OR	Colleen Minier
20	Walla Walla, WA	Jacob Shaw
20	White City, OR	James Figone
21	Palo Alto, CA	
22	Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System	Julie Rose Miller
22	San Diego, CA	Dan Jones
23	Fort Meade, SD	Nancy Worth, Dianna Monahan
23	Iowa City, IA	Jennifer Gonzalez
23	Minneapolis, MN	Linda Daninger, Ebi Awosika
23	VA Nebraska-Western Iowa HCS	Jan Carlin
23	Sioux Falls, SD	Richard Schwegel

**Name of Facility:** VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

**Facility Point of Contact:** Richard Harvey

**Brief description of activities:** The NCP staff took a group one mile walk for the 2008 National Employee Health and Fitness Day on May 21st, as has become a regular practice each Wednesday morning. For this particular day, the staff enjoyed a beautiful spring morning walk through the areas surrounding the NCP offices. In addition, two NCP employees participated in the activities at the Durham VA Medical Center.







# VISN 1

**Name of Facility:** Bedford, MA

**Facility Point of Contact:** Nancy Aucoin

**EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLNESS FAIR 2008**  
**APRIL 29, 2008**  
**11:00 am to 1:30 pm**  
**Building 80 Conference Room 121**

**Demonstrations will include:**

- Ultrasonic Light Skin Therapy
- Blood Pressure Screening
- Pulmonary function test
- Derma Skin Analysis
- Visual Field Exams
- Food Reflexology
- Acupuncture
- Reiki

**Contact Nancy Aucoin @ Ext. 2349 for additional information**

**FOOD SAMPLES WILL BE PROVIDED**

**Name of Facility:** VA Boston Healthcare System

**Phone Number:** (617) 323-7700

**Facility Point of Contact:** Ildiko Halasz, and Joanne Trovato

**Brief description of activities:**

**West Roxbury VAMC—May 20, 2008**

150 attendees

Exhibits:

DHHS Representative with information on numerous health issues (2 tables)

Ergonomics display: Representative from PM&RS

MOVE! Representatives

Nutrition: Representative from Dietetics

Infection Control (MRSA, Lyme Disease, Hand washing: 2 Representatives

Dermatology (Skin protection) Representative

AAA Representative

Occupational Health (Flu and PPD information, smoking cessation) representative

Employee Education: Stress Management, Sleep, Health Guides, 2 Representatives at 2 Tables

**Jamaica Plain VAMC—May 21, 2008**

201 attendees

Exhibits:

DHHS Representative with information on numerous health issues (2 tables)

Ergonomics display: Representative from PM&RS

MOVE! Representative

Nutrition: Representatives from Dietetics

Infection Control (MRSA, Lyme Disease, Hand washing: 2 Representatives

Dermatology (Skin protection) Representative

Employee Education: Sleep, Health Guides, 2 Representatives at 2 Tables

Chair massages (volunteer graduate)

Dental Hygiene: 2 Representatives

Stress Management: Representative from Medical Psychology Service

**Brockton VAMC— May 22, 2008**

109 attendees

Exhibits:

DHHS Representative with information on numerous health issues (2 tables)

Ergonomics display: Representative from PM&RS

MOVE! Representative

Nutrition: Representative from Dietetics

Infection Control (MRSA, Lyme Disease, Hand washing: 2 Representatives

Dermatology (Skin protection) Representative

Employee Education: Sleep, Health Guides, 2 Representatives at 2 Tables

Chair massages (volunteer students plus instructor)

Therapeutic massage- 2 volunteers

Dental Hygiene: 2 Representatives

## Brockton Division



## Jamaica Plain Division





**Name of Facility:** Northampton, MA

**Brief description of activities:** The Northampton VAMC kicked off the Employee Health and Fitness Day with a short walk led by the Director. The health fair included educational information on nutrition, exercise, and behavioral modifications. In addition, blood pressure, blood sugar, and weight checks were offered.



**Name of Facility:** White River Junction, VT

**Point of Contact:** Tara Berry

**Phone Number(s):** 802-296-5127

**Brief description of activities:** Here at White River Junction Vermont we celebrated the National Employee Health and Fitness Day with a grand viewing of our newest crown jewel. Although we did not take any pictures of the event the activity was well attended with **over 100** people throughout the day. The people attending the event were able to touch, feel and see the most recent addition to our Medical Center, the exercise room. This room will certainly become one of the many hallmarks in White River Junction's continuous pursuit for veteran and employee well being. The room consists of state of the art equipment including treadmills with DoD protocols for fitness testing, recumbent bicycles, traditional strength equipment and a new pulley style circuit training system which affords 360 degrees of motion and accommodates the users size, style and function. A suggestion board was established so any who wished to make comments were able. The noted suggestions/compliments were studied with implementation of several including extended hours consideration, orientation for introduction to the equipment and established hours for special programs such as MOVE, PTSD, PT and OT. We anticipate great success with the availability of this room with positive impacts predicted for veterans, employees, volunteers and residents directly and indirectly on health care costs as a whole.



# VISN 2

**Name of Facility:** Bath, NY

**Point of Contact:** Linda Crocker

**Brief description of activities:** The Bath VA 2008 Employee Wellness Fair was held on 5-30-08. **One hundred forty (140)** employees attended. The focus was VA and local community preventative health programs available to our employees. We offered vision testing, blood pressure screening, cholesterol and blood glucose screenings, massage therapy, herbals/medications, stress/anger management, employee assistance program, fitness center and promotion of the simply fit program, US Healthier Vet program, MOVE program, Diabetes, hypertension, lipid education, nutritional education related to fats, sodium, sugar ,and fiber daily intake; weight loss program.





Name of Facility: Buffalo, NY (VA Western New York Healthcare System)

Point of Contact: Patricia Malin

# WELLNESS WEEK

May 12<sup>th</sup> – May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2008

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
Monday May 12 <sup>th</sup>	1pm-4pm	<b>OPEN HOUSE FITNESS CENTER - Rm 312D</b> *See what the Fitness Center has to offer. *Sign up for orientation to use the exercise equipment with a release from personal MD.
Tuesday May 13 <sup>th</sup>	2pm-2:30pm	<b>ANDREW DUNN, STEVEN PASSMORE</b> <b>Chiropractic Medicine - Room 301</b> Learn about back health, posture, stretching, ergonomics, proper body mechanics and how to avoid cumulative trauma syndrome.
Wednesday May 14 <sup>th</sup>	24 hrs Continuous	<b>VIDEO VIEW - Room 422B</b> View health and stress related videos
Thursday May 15 <sup>th</sup>	8am - 11am	<b>Larry Brennan, RN - Room 301</b> <b>Professor of Humor Development-“Building Harmony”</b> Humorous stress relief. See Supervisor for approval
Friday May 16 <sup>th</sup>	11am - 2pm	<b>VISN 2 Nutrition &amp; Exercise - “SIMPLY FIT”</b> <b>Competition Sign-Ups - Outside Cafeteria</b> VISN 2 Exercise/Weight Loss Competition Exercise and Nutrition information



Sponsored by the VA Wellness Committee

Daily: Wellness Tips  
Healthy Recipes  
Messages in Outlook and Vista  
Tempo credit will be given





**Name of Facility:** Canandaigua, NY

**Point of Contact:** Debbie Brahm

**Brief description of activities:** On May 21, Canandaigua VA celebrated National Employee Wellness Day by taking advantage of the Network virtual fitness program, *Simply Fit*. Local wellness committee members encouraged staff to sign up for the program by raffling off wellness gift baskets. In addition, they provided wellness educational material related to nutrition, exercise, and stress reduction. Pictured here is the area that is currently used for weigh-ins and monitoring blood pressure. Included is a wellness library consisting of videotapes, DVDs, books and other information. To date, Canandaigua staff has lost over 100 pounds and exercised over 2200 miles.




**Name of Facility:** VISN 2

**Point of Contact:** Pamela Chester

**Brief description of activities:** On May 21, the Network 2 Wellness Council and the *MOVE!* Task Group kicked-off *Simply Fit*, a 16-week virtual fitness event. This event provides staff with the ability to track exercise and weight loss via an online database. Facility wellness chairpersons and committee members are coordinating *Simply Fit* in various ways such as holding weekly drawings and/or providing lunch and learn sessions. At the completion of the event, the medical center directors will recognize the winners with time-off awards in both of the exercise and weight loss categories.

Network Wellness Council and *MOVE!* Task Group Presents...



<http://vha02app2/empwell/index.cfm>

Participants eligible for random drawings for time off awards!

**We've exercised over 5,500 miles and lost more than 289 pounds!**

Current Standings	Miles	Per Employee	Pounds	Per Employee
Albany	1241.54	0.85	16.7	0.01
Bath	1101.04	1.63	88.75	0.13
Canandaigua	1733.87	2.06	87.65	0.10
Syracuse	397.5	0.29	37.4	0.03
WNY	1058.58	0.61	58.9	0.03



# VISN 3

**Name of Facility:** VA New York Harbor Healthcare System

**Point of Contact:** Raymond Aalbue

**Phone Number(s):** 718-630-2804

**Brief description of activities:** Employees at all three campuses of the VA New York Harbor Healthcare System put on their walking shoes, grabbed a bottle of water and participated in the 2008 National Employee Health and Fitness Day on May 21. **Over 50 staff members** in Brooklyn hiked around a golf course which is adjacent to the campus, while **14 employees** at the New York campus took a walk along the bustling East River and **11 folks** enjoyed walking around the bucolic St. Albans campus in Queens. Everyone enjoyed getting out of the office for a while, spending some time with their co-workers, meeting new friends and getting fit. Many promised to make it a part of their weekly routine and other walks are being planned in the future.

This is only half of those who took the walk in Brooklyn.



All photos by Ray Aalbue



Water and oranges in hand, everyone enjoyed the day in Brooklyn.

Health and fitness information along with water and fruit was available to all New York Harbor Healthcare System participants.

**Name of Facility:** VA New Jersey Healthcare System (East Orange and Lyons)

**Point of Contact:** Kathleen Castles-Fonseca

**Phone Number(s):** 973-676-1000 x3572 at East Orange, x6695 at Lyons

**Brief description of activities:** I was involved in a wide range of activities to promote National Health and Fitness Day. As captain of the NJ VA running team (ROVE or Runners of Veterans Everywhere), I encouraged many of our runners to participate with me in the one hour walk held at both NJ campuses (led by Ingrid Renwanz) and many did! In addition, as MOVE coordinator, I had a table placed in the hallway to the canteen and cafeteria from 9 am to 2 pm with flyers on MOVE and general health and diet tips. Also, as a psychologist and coordinator of the dual diagnosis program for NJ VA, I discussed health and fitness in all inpatient and outpatient groups throughout the week. I also exercised with the veterans before each group discussion.

# VISN 4

**Name of Facility:** Butler, PA

**Point of Contact:** Laurie Conti

**Phone Number(s):** 800-362-8262 ext 4374

**Brief description of activities:** We hosted a health, wellness, and prevention fair including information booths on exercise and fitness center promotion, nutrition, behavioral health (stress management), pharmacy (vitamins, diet meds), infection control, obesity screening (BP, weights, BMI, body fat analyzer), and My HealtheVet information. We had a DJ present (employee willing to give his time) and offered fresh fruit, vegetables, water bottles, granola bars to all in attendance. We had 90 people visit the event over the 2 hour time period and it was very well received with positive feedback from many. We did not photograph the event but it was successful (in the past, health fairs have not been well attended here so we were very pleased with our attendance). The weather did not support a walk that day but our campus does have a good number of folks who do walk daily and we continue to promote this indoors and out.



## **National Employee Health & Fitness Day and HealthierUS Veterans**

Join co-workers, supervisors, providers,  
volunteers, and veterans for a



### **Wellness Walk & Health Fair**

**Wednesday,  
May 21, 2008**

**11:30-1:30pm in the Auditorium  
Group walk time(s) to be announced**

**Additional Activities Include: Health and Wellness Fair, Obesity  
Screening; *Healthy Snacks will be provided!***

**For More Information Contact  
Laurie Conti, MPT, and Susan Leslie, RD  
HUSV/MOVE! Co-coordinators  
1-800-362-8262 x4374, x2425  
[laurie.conti@va.gov](mailto:laurie.conti@va.gov) or [susan.leslie2@va.gov](mailto:susan.leslie2@va.gov)**





**Name of Facility:** Clarksburg, WV (Louis A. Johnson)

**Point of Contact:** Ron Sandreth

**Brief description of activities:** On May 21st, 2008, the wellness committee hosted a Wellness Walk and Roll event in front of the Retail Store. We encouraged our employees, Veterans, and visitors to make a personal pledge to be more active and make positive lifestyle changes. The 51 that participated chose to sign a pledge that they would exercise at some point that day and to continue that pledge throughout the year. Of those 51, 32 were employees, 3 volunteers, and 16 Veterans and family members. Each participant received a free bottle of water, and a prize. Prizes included backpacks, recipe books, safety lights, water bottles, and lunch sacks. We also had information tables provided by Nutrition Services, MOVE, and Employee Wellness. In addition, we provided a body fat analysis for those who were interested. We would like to thank everyone who participated and look forward to next year's event.




Name of Facility: Clarksburg, WV (Louis A. Johnson)

Point of Contact: Ronald Sandreth, Jr.

Phone Number(s): 304-626-7730

**Brief description of activities:** Here is some information on our latest wellness initiative Gridiron Challenge. We have 12 teams of 5 individuals keeping track of their weekly exercise. Each team captain reports the team miles to me by the Wednesday of the following week. Exercise is converted to points and teams compete against 1 other team weekly. There are divisions and two conferences, just like football. The attachments should explain things in detail. So far we just ended week 2. Things are going well and everyone is enjoying the competition. Hopefully, this will be a productive event for other facilities as well.

# Gridiron Challenge



**TIME TO GET IN SHAPE !!**

**FOOTBALL SEASON IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER !**

**Join the Wellness Team in the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Gridiron Challenge. The Program will last all through football season & will culminate the week of the Super Bowl.**

**Team Sign-Ups will be held August 30<sup>th</sup> from 11:00am to 1:00 pm outside of the Retail Store**

**What: Teams of 5 players. One will be designated as Team Captain & be responsible for collecting the teams weekly activity log. Teams will be paired up against another team each week**

***\*THIS WILL BE SIMILAR TO OUR WALK TO THE BEACH PROGRAM HELD EARLIER THIS YEAR, BUT WITH A FOOTBALL TWIST\****

**Track Your Teams Progress: A weekly schedule will be posted along with the previous weeks results in the Wellness Bulletin Board. The Top 12 Teams will advance & compete in an NFL style playoff to determine which 2 teams will face each other in the 1<sup>st</sup> Wellness Gridiron Super Bowl.**

**FOR MORE INFO CALL RON AT EXT: 7715**

Farmer's Market





**Name of Facility:** Coatesville, PA

**Point of Contact:** Pamela Armentrout, Elizabeth DeFeo, Dawn Ruth

**Phone Number(s):** (610) 384-7711 x3657

**Brief description of activities:** The day started with trepidation, the weather forecast was calling for rain, not the best news for an outdoor event. But the rain held off and we had a beautiful, sunny, crisp & breezy day – just right for the scheduled fitness walks we had planned.

First up was Dr. Anthony Iaccarino taking a group (see picture) for a challenging walk down & back up the front hill then around the perimeter of the buildings or Ovals as we call them – total distance between 2&3miles!

Next was Norman taking a group around the Ovals – he is pictured doing some karate type stretching prior to taking out his group.

The third and final group walk was also around the Ovals lead by Margery – seen giving the victory sign as they headed out!

We also had a couple of tables set up for the sign in & also to provide nutritional & fitness information to both the employees & Veterans.

The employees who walked were entered in a raffle for Canteen Gift Certificates and bottles of cold water & fresh fruit were offered to all.

Our event ran from 11:30am to 1PM and just as we were taking down the tents and cleaning up the area the clouds started to roll in, and the rain that was predicted following shortly after – the timing was so perfect it was almost as if it was holding off just for our event!

A wonderfully healthy time was had by all.



Dr. A Iaccarino leading the way



Getting ready to walk



Margery leading the way to victory



Dawn, Pam and Beth manning the info booth

# VISN 5

Name of Facility: Martinsburg WV

## Texas Hold'em



National Employee Health & Fitness Day  
May 21, 2008

*Employee Service Challenge!*  
Begins  
May 14th-20th

Teams begin the GAME with Two Common Cards  
Then GO for IT!  
**SERVICE** Team with the **BEST** Hand **WINS!**  
Best Hand Showdown May 21, 2008

Live Entertainment! Canteen Patio 11:30 PM-1:30PM Dancing on the Patio!  
Come Join the **FUN!**

Call Julia for Registration Forms & Additional Details!  
Ext. 4561 after 12Noon







# VISN 6

**Name of Facility:** Beckley, WV

**Point of Contact:** Rita Goodman

**Brief description of activities:** We had a “lunch-time” walk (done indoors mostly due to inclement weather) wherein **48 people, including several visitors**, walked during lunch hour. After walking, a light snack and a bottle of water was provided from Employee Health.

**Name of Facility:** Durham, NC

**Facility Point of Contact:** Shirley Gentry

**Phone Number(s):** 919 383-6107

**Number of veterans involved:** 25+

**Number of staff involved:** 100+

**Brief description of activities:** One hundred plus employees and 25 plus veterans from the Durham VAMC came out to support our 4<sup>th</sup> annual National Employee Health and Fitness Day/HealthierUS Veterans activities on May 21, 2008.

Our Patient Health Coordinator, Jacki Tatum, RN welcomed employees and veterans and encouraged a goal toward health and wellness.

Mr. Gigliotti, our Medical Center Director opened with words of encouragement; “when we open our fitness center next year, we will have flexible working hours so we can exercise doing lunch, shower, eat lunch and return to work.”

This was followed by warm up exercises by our GRECC representatives, Miriam Morey and Carola Ekelund. They really had us “sweating”. We then paired off and walked around our facility, led by Jackie Boykin, RN ACS and Sue Diamond, HealthierUS Veteran Coordinator.

There were health exhibits by Diabetes Education (fingersticks for blood sugar), Risk Reduction Clinic (body fat analysis), Pharmacy (medication safety), BP checks, and OIF/OEF representatives.

Preventive health topics such as exercise, health education resources, diabetes health, healthy eating, cholesterol management, ticks, mosquitos, immunizations, sun safety, “Time Is Life”, “AskMe3”, HealthierUS Veteran, My Healthe Vet, stroke, hypertension, smoking cessation and weight management were on display.

This year’s prizes were donated by VCS and included pedometers, lunch bags, and lighted necklaces for evening runners/walkers and back packs.

We thank all of our employees and veterans who came out to make this another successful effort to “keep us moving and eating healthier.



**Name of Facility:** Fayetteville, NC

**Point of Contact:** JoAnn Jeras

**Number of staff involved:** 90

**Number of patients involved:** approximately 10-15

**Brief description of activities:** This year volunteer members of the wellness committee along with Food and Nutrition services decided to have stations set up for participants to learn about stretching, strengthening and aerobic exercise. Staff volunteered to demonstrate the exercises and provide handouts. Dieticians were available to provide nutrition information regarding food portions and healthy diet choices. VAEA sponsored fitness centers to come onsite to educate participants about their services. Education credit was offered. The event was offered outside. Music served to attract participants. Evaluations were positive in hopes of making this an annual event.

Thank you to Terri Admire, Ruby Williams, Brenda Griner, Julie Thayer, Kelly Wilson, Marcus Murray, Dr. Charles Ellis, Montana Rucinski, Melvin Peterson, Bernice Stoutmire, Tony Curry, Marisol Huertas, Tracy Vogtli, Theresa Whittington, and Judith Coley for making this event a success.





**Name of Facility:** Hampton, VA

**Point of Contact:** Jemecia Braxton

**Brief description of activities:** Walk 100 miles in 100 days Hampton VAMC 100 mile walkers

1. Dr. Kenneth Lipshy
2. Linda Allison
3. Anne Pennington
4. Dr. Arul
5. Jemecia Braxton
6. Carol Stevens
7. Bessie Charity
8. James Gibson
9. Christina Foxworth
10. Marilyn Sellers
11. Dr. Makesha Sink
12. Melisha Bradley
13. Michael Amundson
14. Cynthia Bethea
15. Sarah Semones
16. Annette Dawson
17. Meades Laffavor
18. Jill Clarke
19. Roger Barkers
20. William Vauters
21. Shirley Sealy
22. Kim Bushong-Mauga
23. Michael Powell



Left to right in photo Jemecia Braxton FNP employee move coordinator, Rita Brown Chief of Canteen Services, Christina Foxworth, Linda Allison, Mike Amundson LPN, move coordinator



**Name of Facility:** Richmond, VA (Hunter Holmes McGuire)

**Point of Contact:** Ruth Meyer

**Phone number(s):** 804-675-5519

**Number of Staff Involved:** 90 employees had blood pressure measured, 76 had blood glucose measured, 72 employees had weight and waist measurements taken

**Brief description of activities:** In preparation for Employee Health and Fitness Day 2008, a Health and Fitness Treasure Hunt was created – employees were given passports to Wellness with 24 locations to visit throughout the 6 story facility and out onto the fitness trail to answer site specific questions; bonus stamps were given if the stairs were taken. 42 passports were returned to the treasure chest and prizes rewarded included lunch bags, workout DVD's, cookbooks, healthful gift baskets ( green tea, nuts and dried fruit, gym socks, candle, mug, energy drinks, etc)

Many thanks to the nursing, laboratory, mental health, and kinesiotherapy staff who provided blood pressure, blood sugar, weight/height and waist measures and stress screenings throughout the work day. We had educational tables provided by nursing, dietitians, pain management, neurology, employee health, women's health, environmental services, recreational therapy, occupational therapy, EEO, research, mental health Demos were provide by current employee wellness group exercise leaders: T'ai chi, Zumba, Shimmy Fit (belly dancing) and line dancing.

Displays by Arthritis Foundation, Bike to Work, Juvenile Diabetes Association and Blue Cross Blue Shield.

Employee Wellness sponsors monthly walks, group exercise classes, fitness center, At Your Service programs (specific exercise/wellness programs brought to staff meetings or shift changeover times). McGuire participated in Champions Challenge 100 mile Walk and Roll with monthly walks and over 300 registrants and President's Challenge with 72 participants. We have an outdoor fitness trail, two outdoor walking trails, basketball league, volleyball, an indoor walking map and an Employee Fitness center with 780 members. Currently in development : Greatest Losers, garden Market, Stairwell and Fit for Life.



Champion's Challenge



Fitness Center Walk





# VISN 7

**Name of Facility:** Birmingham, AL

**Point of Contact:** Kathryn Williams

**Number of Staff Involved:** 25+

**Brief description of activities:** The Birmingham VA Medical Center held a “Walk and Roll” on 5/16/08 for National Employee Health and Fitness Day. The walk was held at 12 noon and led by the BVAMC Workforce Wellness Sub-Committee. Walking route maps were also provided in Employee Health for employees that wanted to walk at other times during the day. 25 employees participated in the noon walk and received a certificate of participation. The employees enjoyed the group walk so much they requested to start weekly walks. The Workforce Wellness Sub-Committee will begin weekly employee-led walks as a result of the 2008 “Walk and Roll” success!





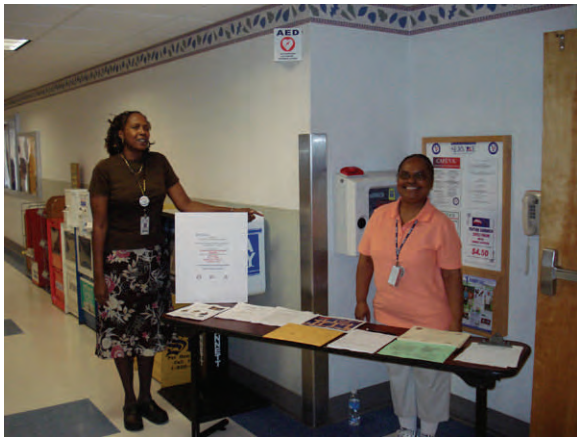
# VISN 8

**Name of Facility:** Gainesville, FL (Malcolm Randall)

**Point of Contact:** Barry Murphy

**Phone Number(s):** 352-376-1611 ext. 4499

**Brief description of activities:** Health Fair





**Name of Facility:** Miami, FL

**Point of Contact:** Elaine Stein

**Brief description of activities:** On Friday May 9, the Miami VA celebrated National Employee Wellness month with an employee wellness expo entitled "Self Care for Better Healthcare". More than 250 Miami VA employees participated in the event which was sponsored by the Employee Wellness Committee. The event, provided employees with hospital and community opportunities focusing on the four dimensions of self-care encased in Franklin Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (Physical, Mental, Social/Emotional and Spiritual). Among the VA exhibits were Recreation Therapy, Nutrition & Food, Dental, and Hurricane Preparedness for Children, Pets, and healthy nutrition choices.

The community-based exhibits included: Phoenix University, University of Miami Wellness Center, South Florida Body Talk Association, Biofeedback, and an Intuitive Healer. Participants and providers engaged in a Tai Chi demonstration, healthy snacks, and many employees had the opportunity to register to win items.



Vinicio A. Gonzalez, MBA a Supervisory Health System Specialist was the first winner during the event and received a lovely cookie bouquet donated by Cookies by Design. The Grand prize winner was Salvadora Merced from Medical Services/ Pulmonary Lab who won a matching pearl earring and necklace set graciously donated by the owners of Wow Miami Corp a frequent flower vendor at the Miami VA Medical Center. Thank you to everyone who participated in the event and made it a success.

May is National Wellness Month. We invite you to celebrate at the employee wellness program:

# SELF CARE FOR BETTER HEALTHCARE.....

As you take care for yourself, you take care of others.

**Date:** Friday May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008  
**Time:** 10:00am -2:00pm  
**Location:** Auditorium (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)

Employees...come and enjoy, relax, and have fun as you learn about healthy alternatives and community resources.

Call Patient Education and Employee Wellness office at x4377 for more information.



**Name of Facility:** Orlando, FL

**Point of Contact:** Kelly Jansen, Amy Sindler

**Brief description of activities:** We had three walks by the Lake. 7 AM; Noon and 6:30 pm. The first two were 1 mile walks and the 6:30 pm walk was 2.5 miles around Lake Baldwin next to the Orlando VAMC. There is a beautiful walking path along the Lake. The 2.5 mile walk around the Lake is now a weekly event. We had ice cold water provided by the VA Canteen Service for all those that participated.



## Farmer's Market



**Name of Facility:** St. Augustine, FL (OPC)

**Point of Contact:** Jane Fitzpatrick

**Brief description of activities:** We had a great day! We set up a table in our lobby with numerous handouts on exercise and nutrition for staff and patients to enjoy. Most of our staff brought in items that they use when they are exercising... We had my rebounder (of course), Dr. Turner had his bicycle, and there were many others with balls, weights, stretch bands, horse back riding gear, jogging outfits, a karate ghee (sp?) and an exercise "bean". It was a lot of fun! Then we all walked around our facility, some did a half mile, others did a whole mile. A successful day over all I think!





**Name of Facility:** Tampa, FL (James A. Haley Veterans Hospital)

**Point of Contact:** Brenda Burdette

**Phone Number(s):** (813) 972-2000 ext. 6716

**Brief description of activities:** In Tampa, we celebrated National Employee Health & Fitness Day by having a Fitness Week's worth of event sto encourage daily activity such as walking, trying one of our yoga classes, or visiting the gym. We also created a deck of cards with sample exercises that we gave to employees as a tool to help them incorporate fitness on a daily basis. On May 21, we held a Fitness Olympics. It consisted of several different "games" including miniature golf, basketball shoot, "discus" (Frisbee) throw, a relay, and horseshoes, for which we gave bronze, silver, or gold medals. I'm sorry that I have no photographs to share.

I also have been meaning to submit a write-up for the Go Green event we had in April. We had almost 500 employees attend and also had materials sent to all CBOCs, OPCs and outlying facility employees for Earth Day. I have an impactful slideshow that was looped to play during the show, but it is too large to send over e-mail. It is full of eco-friendly facts and photographs. Every employee who attended received a canvas reusable bag to use instead of paper or plastic for sutre shopping. There were representatives educating employees on how to save on their home energy bill, carpooling, water conservation while giving out faucet aerators, low-flow shower heads and rain gauges. We also had information on recycling for all 4 surrounding counties and the Cell Phones for Soldiers recycling program, tips for buying local and organic, information on what our facility is doing to go green through biodegradable products in N&FS to energy conservation, and simple recipes for creating non-toxic household cleaners. It was an unbelievable success and we are already planning for next year's event.







# VISN 9

**Name of Facility:** Louisville, KY

**Brief description of activities:** The activities at the Louisville, Kentucky VAMC for National Employee Health and Fitness Day, May 21, 2008, was a great success. The Prevention Care team sponsored a display table at the entrance to the Canteen, with information on the MOVE program, nutrition, stress reduction, and other health related issues. The highlight of the event was the "Wellness Walk and Roll" featuring Mr. Wayne Pfeffer, Medical Center Director and our 107 year old World War 1 era veteran. The walk began with Mr. Pfeffer pushing our veteran around the hospital grounds accompanied by several staff members. After the walk/roll, Mr. Pfeffer and our veteran enjoyed a healthy Wise Up® lunch courtesy of Robert Huber, Chief, Canteen Service. The veteran jokingly asked if he was supposed to push the Director, or would the Director be pushing him!



LaQuincy Weatherall listens as Nyoka Emily, RN—Occupational Health/Wellness Coordinator—describes services offered to employees thru Occupational Health Section

**Name of Facility:** Mountain Home, TN

**Point of Contact:** Phyllis Fisher

**Brief description of activities:** Employees were asked to join the lunchtime "Walk & Roll" on VA grounds. The turnout was great with over 132 walkers. The walkers gathered at the VA gazebo where they signed in, received a pedometer and educational material. After that the walk around the historical campus began.





# VISN 10

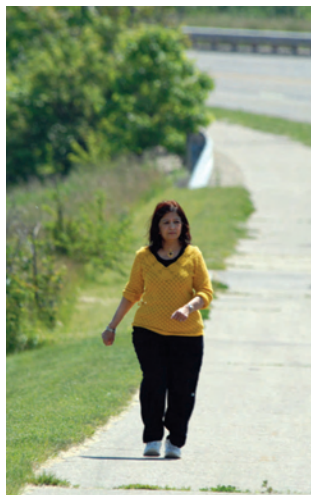
**Name of Facility:** Columbus, OH (OPC)

**Point of Contact:** Connie Gilbert and Ann McDowell

**Number of staff involved:** 72

**Phone Number(s):** 614-257-5574

**Brief description of activities:** Brief description of activities: On May 29, 2008, at the Columbus, Ohio Chalmers P. Wylie VA Outpatient Clinic, eleven employees participated in the “kick off” line dance class held at the clinic from 4:30-5:30pm. On May 30, 2008, the facility celebrated National Employee Health and Fitness Day with an information display in the main lobby of the clinic from 11:00am to 1:00pm. Handouts were provided on various topics including nutrition, diabetes and pre-diabetes, blood pressure control, smoking cessation, eye health, reducing infection, and safe exercises. A fruit and vegetable tray was prepared by Canteen Services for employees visiting the display. Also, 61 employees participated in the one-mile walking event and received a water bottle from VAEA Committee and one of the prizes donated by the Director's Office and Canteen Services (tote bags, lunch bags, umbrellas, pens and flashlights).







# VISN 11

**Name of Facility:** Battle Creek, MI

**Point of Contact:** Theresa Vlas

**Brief description of activities:** HUSV-MHV-MOVE-Welcome Home event



**Name of Facility:** Danville, IL (VA Illiana Healthcare System)

**Point of Contact:** Beth Peralta

**Brief description of activities:** A walk during lunch time was organized for employees/staff.

**Name of Facility:** Saginaw, MI (Aleda E. Lutz)

**Brief description of activities:** Summer was welcomed in at Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center, May 29, with a warm Hawaiian breeze. An island themed Veteran and Employee Health Fair was creatively executed by a committee of employee's including Susan Calentine, Debra Lamberton, Sonya Mack, Carrie Seward, Susan Wernecke, and Barbara Vargas. With a record attendance of guests, a tropical beach setting provided a vacation get-away and added to the fun of learning about health. Our auditorium was turned into a magical island retreat.

Many enthusiastic VA employee experts in health topics, and outside health facility experts, welcomed our island guests. Gifts, tropical beverages and healthy snacks were provided. Clog dancing; display of a Hawaiian travelogue, and Hawaiian music added to everyone's enjoyment. Awards were presented to our successful MOVE veteran and employee participants. Employees that participated in a recent team weight loss contest were awarded their winning prizes. An invited group of women veterans were asked to attend a focus group led by Rose Birkmeier and Susan Calentine. This added an additional health sharing opportunity.

We were all able to shake off the chill of winter and celebrate the anticipation of a warm, healthy Michigan summer.







# VISN 12

**Name of Facility:** Tomah, WI

**Brief description of activities:** VA Medical Center Tomah, WI celebrated National Employee Health & Fitness Day with a fun walk/run on May 21, 2008 sponsored by the Healthier Vets Committee with a Leadership Development planning team. The weather was great and there were **approximately 35 participants** in the walk/run. Fitness handouts were available and a Tai Chi demonstration by Todd Weibel, Physical Therapy Assistant. Participants also received a turkey wrap made by the Canteen and a bottle of water. A fitness crossword puzzle was available for employees not able to walk/run. Door prizes were distributed to participants.







# VISN 15

Name of Facility: Kansas City, KS

Brief description of activities: Farmer's Market





**Name of Facility:** Kansas City, MO

**Brief description of activities:** With an over cast sky and 72 degrees, it was a beautiful day for a walk at the Kansas City VA Medical Center campus. The walking path was decorated with brightly colored balloons to indicate every ¼ mile walked.

Patients and staff members participating in the walk, receiving one of many gifts (insulated lunch bags, water bottles, pedometers, backpacks, etc.) Participants were provided with health information on healthy eating and exercise as well as enjoying bottled water, fresh fruit, and a trail mix snack created by our very own KCVA's Wellness Committee.

At Noon the fun and activities continued with our Director, Mr. Kent Hill, presenting awards to the participants of the virtual walking program. This walk was 1,225 miles from Florida back to the Kansas City VAMC. Those completing the walk received \$250.00; over 1,000 miles, \$150.00, and those that made it half way received 4 hours of AA. The awards for this walk were not made public, so the motivator was a healthier lifestyle. Also the "National US Healthier Veteran" prize winner from Kansas City VA Medical Center, was announced --- Tammy Eaton.

**This is only the beginning of the summer walks, activities, and fun.**





**Name of Facility:** St. Louis, MO

**Point of Contact:** Melissa Nixon

**Brief description of activities:**

**Come join our Healthy Eating for Life Contest sponsored by the MOVEmployee Committee!**

Join together with others in your work group to have a healthy lunch. To enter the contest, employees should prepare healthy dishes and bring them in for your co-workers to share and also bring the recipe. Work Groups who wish to participate should e-mail Employee Health, Melissa Nixon via Outlook or Vista by Tuesday, May 13, 2008. Judging will take place from 1100 to 1300 at both facilities on Wednesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>. If your group has to eat prior to judging; please leave 1 serving on a plate for the judges.

Members of the Veteran MOVE Committee and Clinical Nutrition Staff will come to the work areas and judge the lunches based on:

- 1) **Creativity/uniqueness of the recipe:** we will need to see your recipe and would like a copy to share with other employees as appropriate.
- 2) **Nutritional Value:** as evidenced by including ingredients from multiple food groups (grains, fruits, vegetables, meats/proteins and dairy products), using low fat ingredients or moderate amounts of “healthy fats”, high in fiber and lower in calories. (Points will be given for each of these areas).
- 3) **Appearance and Taste:** we may not be able to taste everything.

The winning participants will get: 59 minutes of leave.

You must bring in a dish to share and your recipe to be eligible for the leave.

Please remember to use good hand-washing and consider food safety in all food preparation!

As always; we encourage you to remain active and enjoy the warmer weather with a walk on the grounds. The Employee Wellness Web is located on the VA homepage site under Employee Resources, and then Happy Carrot Cyber Café has many great wellness tips for increasing physical activity.



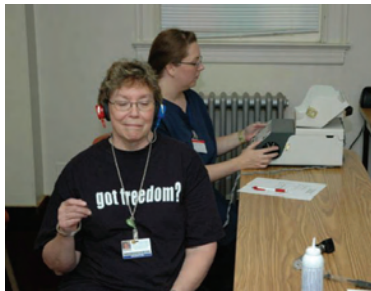
Name of Facility: Wichita, KS

Point of Contact: Lydia C. Loo

**Brief description of activities:** To kick off National Start Walking Day, April 16, 2008 the Wichita Kansas VA held its first of many station walk-a-thons. Employees signed up in the Employee Health office where they were given maps of the campus to show the path and the distance both inside and outside and were given step a meters to keep track of the miles walked. On the day of the walk employees checked in at the retail store and received bottles of water. The plan will be to have a walk-a-thon once every quarter to keep encouraging our employees to get out and get moving. As you can see from the pictures we even had some of our four legged friends participate in the walk, go Argus.



Employees checking out the booths



Hearing test



Director hand sanitizing

On August 24, 2007 the Wichita Kansas VA held their Employee Health Fair. We had a total of 19 booths on the day of the fair. We had a huge turn out of employees (400+) and were told by everyone it was the best health fair ever. We did labs several days prior to the fair and Employee Health had a booth where the NP went over the lab results with the employees. We had station Audiologist doing hearing tests, our eye clinic did eye checks. We had members of the Chinese Wellness Clinic doing massages and acupuncture. We had representatives from several health clubs, a chiropractor doing spinal checks and numerous other booths displaying pamphlets on healthy eating and work place ergonomics. We also had very generous vendors that supplied us with healthy snacks and coupons. Our theme was "Mind, Body and Soul. So to add some extra fun we had a desk top water fall contest with prizes.



Employees signing in and getting their water before their walk



Security on the MOVE



"Argus" leading the way



# VISN 16

**Name of Facility:** Jackson, MS (G. V. “Sonny” Montgomery)

**Point of Contact:** Donald Breckenridge

**Phone Number(s):** 601-362-4471, Ext. 5031 or 1706

**Number of employees/patients involved:** 55

**Number of staff involved:** 3

**Brief description of activities:** Employees of the G. V. “Sonny” Montgomery VA Medical Center took positive steps toward improving their personal health as they participated in the National Employee Health and Fitness Day Walk and Roll, 2008. Approximately 25 employees met at the front of the hospital at 12 noon. The eager walkers signed their release of liability and “Healthy Fitness Pledges”, stretched to warm-up and then walked the 1.2 miles (2 laps around the medical center). In addition to the Walk and Roll, an Open House was held to celebrate yet another birthday for the ‘Employee Lifestyle Fitness Center’. Approximately 30 employees attended the Open House. May 2008, marks the 16<sup>th</sup> Year the Jackson VA Medical Center Administration has offered the employees the benefit of a well-equipped fitness center. Another hallmark for this year was the recent addition of new exercise equipment: “True” treadmills, elliptical striders, a recumbent bike, a stretching cage and ‘Hoist’ upper/lower body weight machines. Through participation in these activities as well as the addition of the new equipment, The Employee Wellness Program continues toward our goal of providing improved patient care through improved employee health and fitness.







# VISN 17

**Name of Facility:** Central Texas Veterans Healthcare System (Austin OPC, Temple, Waco)

**Point of Contact:** Verona Parker

**Brief description of activities:** The event was offered at all Central Texas Veterans Health Care System locations. An **estimated 90 staff and 10 veterans** walked some distance and most walked 0.5-1.0 mile to receive the larger prizes.

Health information handouts and displays were provided. Prizes were available for all walkers: insulated lunch bags, athletic shoulder packs, fitness flashlights, mini-hand sanitizers, walking log cards. Information was shared in Temple about the new *MOVEmployee!* Program.

Services involved in planning: N&FS, Patient Education, Environmental Health & Safety, Education Service (Library), Director's Office, Nursing Service, PM&RS, some CBOC representatives.

The event kicked off a new 60-day Employee Fitness Challenge. Employees can register on the President's Challenge website, [www.presidentchallenge.org](http://www.presidentchallenge.org) until May 31<sup>st</sup> to start the challenge. Groups were set up for Austin, Temple, Waco and one for all CBOCs. Each employee will have the opportunity to register until May 31<sup>st</sup> whether or not they participated during Employee Fitness Day events. A follow up announcement will be sent by Outlook on 5/27 encouraging staff to participate.

If they complete the challenge, they will be eligible for prizes: ten (10) Stay Fit Personal Fitness Kits (a fitness bag containing 3 sizes resistance bands with instructional CD) are available and will be awarded for the highest individual points at each location. There will be a grand prize drawing for an iPod for all those completing the challenge.

Sign up total as of May 31<sup>st</sup> - 122 employees



**Name of Facility:** VA North Texas Veterans Healthcare System (Dallas, TX)

**Point of Contact:** Tina McDaniel

**Brief description of activities:** Wanted to share two programs that I've offered at our medical center. Cruisin Down the Road to Good Health on Route 66 was an individual program with weekly self reporting weekly. Weight No Longer - MOVE was a team program with weekly captain reporting.

**Name of Facility:** South Texas Veterans Health Care System

**Point of Contact:** Linda Zaiontz, San Antonio; Jackie Vaughan-Williams, Kerrville; Rene' Jacob, RD, Frank Tejada Outpatient Clinic; Beverly Reese, Corpus Christi Outpatient Clinic

**Phone Number(s):** 210-617-5125; 830-896-2020 x12061; 210-699-2236; 361-806-5622/62273

**Number of patients involved:** 16 (San Antonio); 25 (Kerrville)

**Number of staff involved:** 75 (San Antonio); 29 (Kerrville); 19 (Frank Tejada OPC); 50 (Corpus Christi OPC)

**Brief description of activities:** In San Antonio, at the Audie L. Murphy Memorial VA Medical Center employees and veterans participated in “Fun Fitness Stations” of the balance ball, step aerobics, hula hoop, jump rope, BOSU ball, basketball free throw, push ups, abs roller, blood pressure check and the Cha Cha Slide. The Canteen Service provided sandwiches, fresh fruit, water, and lite punch. Winners of the basketball free throw were given pedometers. At the Kerrville VA, the Recreation Therapy Service sponsored the Walk & Roll. Participants walked or rolled the one plus mile route and participated in 3 fun leisure stations of washer pitching, hula hooping, and fly casting. Participants were given a card to be initialed at each station. There were 3 healthy snack and hydration stations, which included Sugar Free Hawaiian Ice, along the route. The cards were drawn at the end of the walk for the following prizes: \$20 gas cards, Canteen meal cards, recipe books, back packs and lunch bags. Great discussions were had at the Frank Tejada Outpatient Clinic on how to improve employees’ health. Especially taking better care of ourselves mentally and emotionally along with the physically. Plus, those who came were given a coupon for a blood pressure check or nutrition consultation. Also, most employees walked around the building at lunch. The CMO, Dr. Teresa Boyd provided healthy snacks at the employee meeting that morning. Corpus Christi OPC promoted National Employee Health & Fitness Day by distributing a flyer to 50 employees heightening awareness of the benefits of 30 minutes of physical activity. Ten employees submitted certificates of completion for the door prize (watermelon). Four of these employees were also veterans. Additional employees stated they received 30 minutes of physical activity but did not elect to enter the door prize drawing so did not complete their certificate of completion. All areas gave wellness information from the MOVE! and HealthierUS Veterans. This event was organized and implemented by the Recreation Therapy Service, Employee Wellness Committee and the HealthierUS Veterans Subcommittee.



**Name of Facility:** South Texas Veterans Health Care System

**Point of Contact:** Linda Zaiontz, CTRS, San Antonio; Jackie Vaughan-Williams, Kerrville

**Phone Number(s):** 210-617-5125; 830-896-2020 x12061

**Number of patients involved:** 15 (San Antonio); 55 (Kerrville)

**Number of staff involved:** 35 (San Antonio); 19 (Kerrville)

**Brief description of activities: Veterans Honor Walk and Roll—November 9, 2007**

To “kick off” the Champion’s Challenge, in San Antonio, a “Walk and Roll” took place at the University of Texas Health Science Health Science Center track across from the Audie L. Murphy Memorial VA Medical Center. Each participant received bottled water, a cereal bar, a pedometer, a scratch off ticket and a tracking card. The Kerrville “Walk& Roll” took place on the Medical Center grounds. Each participant received bottled water, a nutrition bar, yogurt, a pedometer, a scratch off ticket and a tracking card. All areas gave wellness information from the MOVE! and HealthierUS Veterans web sites. The Pedometers, tracking cards and scratch off tickets were furnished by the Canteen Service. This event was organized and implemented by the Recreation Therapy Service, Employee Wellness Committee, HealthierUS Veterans Subcommittee and the Canteen Service.



# VISN 18

**Name of Facility:** Albuquerque, NM (New Mexico VA Healthcare System)

**Point of Contact:** John Renna

**Brief description of activities:** We had our Employee Fitness Day May 6<sup>th</sup> during Public Service employee Recognition Week. The event theme was Kummonna Wanna Wellness, with a Hawaiian flavor. We had vendors from the community (a bike shop, running shop, Whole Foods, Yoga center, health insurance company, active wear clothing shop and the Employee Wellness Committee) promoting fitness and wellness. We had an employee bring some custom bikes he made and had Hawaiian dancers demonstrate native Hawaiian dances. Hula Hoops were on hand where employees could spontaneously burst into a Hula Hoop attempt. All this with Island music playing in the background. It was a fun event and we had lots of positive feedback.

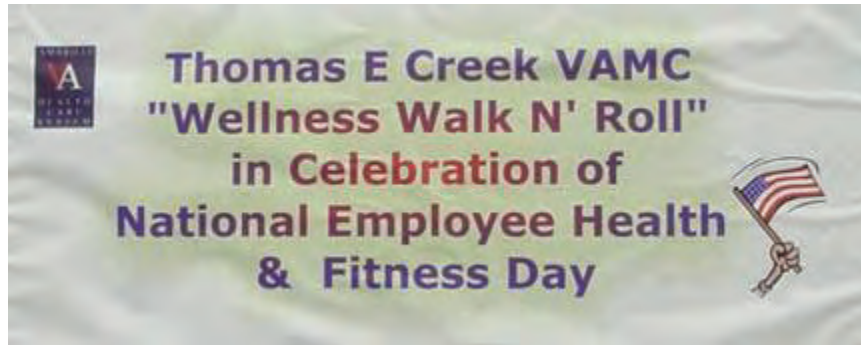




Name of Facility: Amarillo, TX

Point of Contact: Lisa Kimbrell

Phone Number(s): 806-355-9703 ext 7168



The Amarillo VAMC held our 4<sup>th</sup> annual walk & roll celebration on the Patio of Honor.



The event was hosted by the Wellness Task force from 10a.m. until 2p.m. & had a total of 104 participants.



The MOVE coordinators used the walk as their class for the day & even had a member drive over 100 miles to participate.

**Name of Facility:** Phoenix, AZ (Carl T. Hayden)

**Point of Contact:** Lucy V. Holt

**Phone Number(s):** 602.277.5551, ext 6969

**Number of staff involved:** 100+

**Brief description of activities:** The focus this year was to raise awareness of selected health & wellness topics at our VA that are available to staff and to veterans. We hosted each topic at an information table / station. We created a form for participants to take to each table to learn about that featured topic; then the host would write their initials on the form. A mini health report card also was created, optional for participants to write down health info. We featured the following topics:

- **My HealtheVet**-- with our facility Point of Contact staff and laptop/projector to show the website on-screen.
- **VA Regional Office Wellness Center**-- with the Center Director & photo displays showing the facility & applications to join.
- **Pure Fitness Center**--with the corporate representative, displays showing the facilities and how to join through our VA Employee Assoc.
- **Diabetes Education Classes**--with flyers about the classes, selected patient educ. handouts, staff doing accucheck testing and talking about our classes.
- **Blood Pressure checks**--with info about how to get an accurate reading.
- **Nutrition displays**--Dietitians featured our **MOVE! Weight Management** classes, including info & models about hidden salt & fats, body mass index checks, optional weigh-in and MUCH more.
- **Body Mass Composition**--Kinesiotherapists did testing and talked about exercise.
- **Kick off for 100 Mile Club**--signed up staff to commit to walk at least one mile/day for 100 days, beginning May 21 through Aug 28. Promoted our indoor walking route: 10 laps around the conference rooms is about one mile.

Outcomes:

1. At least one staff member was referred for medical follow-up because of an elevated finger stick glucose reading.
2. About 12 staff members reportedly enrolled in My HealtheVet in the days following.
3. More than 100 people signed up for the 100 mile club; will keep records of daily exercise and turn in at the end of August and be entered in a drawing for prizes.
4. Began a "Weekly Wellness Tips" feature in our weekly Hayden Hotline email newsletter. Goal is to promote exercise & nutrition with tips provided by our staff, facility wellness classes & resources and VA health initiatives.





**Name of Facility:** Prescott, AZ

**Point of Contact:** Beth Brehio

**Brief description of activities:** The Wellness Committee at the Northern AZ VA Health Care System sponsored a Wellness Fair on June 11, 2008. The fair, which was geared toward promoting a healthy lifestyle for the employees, volunteers, and patients, offered a variety of activities for everyone. Some of the programs offered were: Cholesterol screening, blood pressure, body fat measurement, glucose screening, Dental Clinics, Tai Chi, and Healthy Cooking demonstrations. Chiropractic, Massage, Bowenwork, Healing Touch, and Hypnosis were also part of the program. Many NAVAHCS employees donated their time and talent to this worthwhile event. Several community partners such as the American Cancer Society, Yavapai County Community Health Services, Zeta Tau Alpha-Breast Cancer Awareness, Diabetes and Alzheimer Associations also participated and providing handouts and other useful information.





# VISN 19

**Name of Facility:** Salt Lake City, UT (Salt Lake City Healthcare System)

**Point of Contact:** Curtis A. Ivins

**Phone Number(s):** (801) 582-1565 ext 1576

**Brief description of activities:** VA Salt Lake City Health Care System held a lunch time Wellness event to commemorate the 2008 National Employee Health and Fitness Day on May 21, 2008.. Employees, volunteers and veterans were invited to participate in a variety of activities provided during lunch hour time. Original plan included walking routes of various distances (.5 – 3 miles), Tai Chi class in the garden, Kettlebell introductory class, guided bike rides for both road bikes and mountain bikes. We also had short presentations on the MOVE and MOVE Employee programs.

Unfortunately our weather did not cooperate and all of our activities had to be modified. We cancelled the bike rides, the kettlebell and Tai Chi classes had to be moved indoors and the walks had to be moved indoors into our tunnel system. We have a 1 mile MOVE walk mapped out in the tunnels and buildings so our walks were limited to the 1 mile course inside. The Tai Chi class was our most attended class. This was taught by one of our VA employees, Ray Godin who is a certified instructor. Kettlebells are iron balls with handles used in a form of free weights to improve strength and core stability. This class was taught by one of our Physical Therapist's Steve McNamara.

MOVE education/presentation was provided by Cathy Bristow, clinical dietician. MOVEmployee education/presentation was provided by Curtis Ivins, Physical Therapist.

Our overall participation was approximately 20 individuals. We anticipated many more people but we feel that the weather was a significant de-motivator, despite our efforts to advertise the change in locations for the events.

What was anticipated to be a very fun, healthy, and informative program suffered setbacks due to weather but those that did participate, expressed interest in support of this and other activities in the future.



# VISN 20

**Name of Facility:** Boise, ID

**Point of Contact:** Victoria Rogers

**Phone Number(s):** 422-1000 X7001

**Brief description of activities:** I am new to the VA and the Occupational Health position, but am very excited about promoting health, so this was a fun activity for me. This year I tried to start out with some basics, and hope to have something to build on for future years. We started out the day with a lunch time walk, which even though the weather was overcast, windy and threatening to rain, we had about **25 people** complete the mile loop around our facility. I provided stickers and water to those that completed the loop. Two of the people who walked the loop and came to the afternoon informational fair received 3 month memberships to local health clubs.

During the afternoon for 2 hours we had an informational fair for the employees, family, and veterans. Our physical therapy department was there to answer questions and to give out some information about back health. We had fitness balls, Pilates and yoga kits as giveaways at their booth. Also available was an MA from our facility who took blood pressure and recorded it for the employees, and there was information about hypertension available as well. We had a large display from a local company that teaches smoking cessation classes with millennium funds about the hazards of smoking and how to quit, as well as information on a free class that started the end of May. We had a couple of health clubs that attended, some measuring body fat percentage and all offering special deals for the employees. Two of these clubs donated memberships for giveaways for the employees through the VAEA. Our nutrition department had a representative available to talk about food and the fat, salt, and sugar contents of many foods as well as being available to answer any questions that the employees might have about nutrition. We had a dental hygienist that came to talk about dental health, and also discuss how dental health was connected to physical well being. A financial advisor came and was available to discuss any questions that employees might have about how to invest well, both within our TSP and outside of TSP's. Finally, I was available and had a large amount of information about exercise, offering pedometers and the "Get Fit for Life" DVD. I have signed our group up for the "America on the Move" website, and handed out information about that. I also had some information/invitations for the employees to join the weight loss group that we recently started on site called TOPS.

We had a wonderful support of the Veterans Canteen Service and donations from their fund including water for the participants, as well as a monetary donation, which was used towards the purchase of health related cookbooks and prizes.

I was very happy with the turnout, and hope that I have started a tradition which can be continued for many years.





**Name of Facility:** Portland, OR

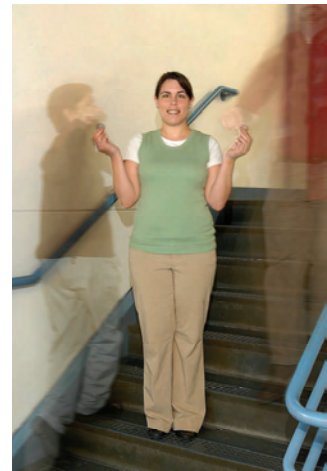
**Point of Contact:** Colleen Minier

**Phone Number(s):** (503) 220-8262 Ext. 57669

**Brief description of activities:**

**Up 2 Down 3 Employee Stair Use Challenge Report**

The Portland VA Medical Center Employee Wellness Program strives to implement programs that support sustainable healthy behavior change. In the past, we have held a walk for National Employee Health and Fitness Day, with minimal attendance. Additionally, the participating staff were generally those who already took walks during their breaks on a regular basis. This year we decided to use the event to kick off a wellness initiative that can be done at all sites, by most employees, while they are working. The Up 2, Down 3 Stair Challenge encourages employees to commit to using the stairs to go up at least 2 flights and to go down at least 3 flights before using the elevator. To promote the initiative, we organized a four week challenge to use the stairs for prizes. Posters were hung in the stairwells and staff were asked a question each week that required them to go to the posters to find the answers. Questions such as, “How many calories can you burn walking the stairs for 5 minutes?” “How can you add a new healthy exercise to your daily routine?” and “How can you encourage a co-worker to exercise with you?” required staff to think about their options and to engage other employees in these behaviors as well. Signs and flyers were displayed at elevators to encourage staff to think about using the stairs instead. Prizes included weekly raffles for bagels and a fruit tray for winners’ work areas. \$1 wooden tokens for our canteen services were given out randomly in the stairs wells to those using the stairs. A gift certificate to a local healthy food store next to our campus was the grand prize, as well as an additional grand prize for those staff located on other campuses. The ultimate prize?...better health!



We had several executive level leaders’ support the program and over 300 employees have committed to using the stairs and participated in the weekly challenge. In the future, we plan to continue to promote stair use through stairwell improvements (art, better lighting, etc.), staff challenges, better signage to stairs locations and changing sign reminders at elevators.

Employees have given positive feedback about the initiative.

“This is the motivation I needed to start doing this every day”.

“I actually think about using the stairs now each time, before I usually did it only when someone was walking with me.”

**Name of Facility:** Walla, WA

**Point of Contact:** Jacob Shaw

**Phone Number(s):** 509-527-3450 (ext 126713)

**Brief description of activities:** On May 21, 2008, the Health Promotion and Volunteer Services teams joined forces with the Employee Wellness Committee at the Walla Walla VA Medical Center to host a Wellness Olympics event for employees and patients. The event was sponsored by the Veterans Canteen Service.

More than 75 patients and employees participated in the Wellness Olympics, which started at 11:30 a.m. with a one-mile walk around the VAMC led by the facility’s Associate Director, Chris Martin. Martin started the walk by telling employees, “You’ve got to find time in the workday to dedicate to yourself and to your wellness.”

The Wellness Olympics included events that promoted participation by all employees and patients. Events included Ring Toss, Water Balloon Shot Put, Horse Shoes, Frisbee Golf and a 3-point basketball shoot-out. The events were open from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. to allow most employees to take part during their lunch break or afternoon break.

During the event volunteers kept track of high scores, longest throws, etc. Two days after the Wellness Olympics, the team came together again to host an awards ceremony. Gold, Silver and Bronze medals were awarded to winners of each event, and canteen gift certificates were awarded to several Wellness Olympics participants through a random drawing of all participants.

Health Promotion Services Coordinator Clark Schmidt said during the ceremony, “It is important for employees and leaders to model wellness and healthy living for our patients and for each other.”



All photos are by Greg Lehman

**Name of Facility:** White City, OR (VA Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center & Clinics)

**Point of Contact:** James Figone

**Brief description of activities:** The SORCC (VISN 20) celebrated our fourth annual Health and Fitness Day with our traditional 1.25 mile walk around our campus. We choose to delay the event by one week due to numerous requests from staff indicating they could not participate on the traditional 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday in May. It had rained long and hard the few days before the event, and we all ventured out under the cloudy sky, some with trepidation not knowing if it would start raining again. Most of us were resolved to the fact that Oregonians and rain just go together. We all felt droplets along the way but no one ran for cover. Once we got back inside the nursing staff was there to take blood pressures, there were fresh fruit snacks, water bottles, written materials on wellness, free pedometers, etc. Recreation Service coordinated the event with our Police Department and supervised the walk. There was a drawing for dinner certificates at local restaurants for staff and gifts for patients. Employees not able to participate due to working obligations were able to walk on their own and still participate in the drawing for the dinner certificates. It was a fun and healthy event that can be done again and again with co-workers or by one's self.





# VISN 21

**Name of Facility:** VA Palo Alto Healthcare System

**Brief description of activities:** The 2008 National Employee Fitness and Wellness day was a day of physical activity, healthy foods and education throughout the VA Palo Alto Health Care System. May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008 marked the launch of VAPAHCS' Farmer's Market. The market will be held weekly through October on Wednesdays from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Palo Alto Division. The market is run by the local Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Association and features eight to ten vendors per week selling fresh, seasonal agricultural produce. VAPAHCS also sponsored a booth at the market to distribute health and wellness information and educate staff and veterans health and wellness opportunities available at the health care system and throughout the local community. To celebrate the market kick-off and National Employee Fitness and Wellness day, those visiting the market were treated to an awesome rock-and-roll performance by VAPArts, the VAPAHCS employee band. The response to the market from employees was overwhelmingly enthusiastic. Employees were seen throughout the facility carrying bags of fresh produce – thrilled at the opportunity and convenience of buying fresh, healthy food!

To culminate the 2008 National Employee Fitness and Wellness day celebration, a walk or fitness challenge was also held at all nine VAPAHCS locations at noon on May 21st. Participants gathered to join together in physical activity. Those at the Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Livermore Divisions joined for a walk around the perimeter of the respective divisions. Prizes were raffled off to all those participants who completed the exercise – including VAPAHCS canvas Farmers' Market bags, pedometers, water bottles and even an Ipod Nano!

A special thanks to facility leadership, Recreation Therapy Service, Occupational Health and the HealthierUS Veterans Committee for organizing the events.







# VISN 22

**Name of Facility:** Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System

**Point of Contact:** Julie Rose Miller

**Phone Number(s):** (310) 478-3711 x49464

**Brief description of activities:** The Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System held 3 very successful Employee Health and Fitness Day events. Over **140 employees** attended the event at West LA and the Downtown LA and Sepulveda Campuses each had over **50 attendants**. The events included table representation from Nutrition and Food Service, Veteran's Canteen Service, MOVEmployee, Vet's Garden, Wellness Center, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Patient Education, and fitness facilities from the local area. Employees participated in body fat analysis, fitness demonstrations, portion size activities, and learned how to increase their fruit and vegetable consumption. The day also included health and fitness outreach to nursing units on other floors, since many of the staff could not break away from their work to attend the large scale event. In addition, the event launched MOVEmployee at the West LA campus. The event was a huge success and we look forward to holding it again next year.

**National Employee Health and Fitness Day!**

**Sepulveda Event - Tues, May 20th**  
11:30am - 1:30pm  
Conf Room B&C  
call 818-895-9569 for questions

**West LA Event - Wed, May 21st**  
10:30am - 12:30pm  
Room 1281  
call 310-478-3711 x43964 for questions

**LAACC Event - Wed, May 21st**  
11:30am - 1:30pm  
Room B-256  
call 213-253-2677 x4573 for questions


Join your fellow VA employees to learn about your health and fitness!

- Check your body fat
- Set fitness goals
- See fitness demonstrations and participate if you want!
- Win Prizes!!



**National Employee Health and Fitness Day!**


**West LA Healthcare Center**  
Wednesday, May 21st  
10:30am - 12:30pm  
Room 1281



Join your fellow VA employees to learn about health and fitness!

- Check your body fat
- Sign up for MOVEmployee
- Learn to increase fruit & vegetable intake
- Participate in fitness demonstrations
- Earn Tempo Credit!!

**Call PERC for more info**  
310.478.3711 x43964



**Name of Facility:** VA San Diego Healthcare System

**Point of Contact:** Dan Jones

**Phone Number(s):** 858-642-3993

**Brief description of activities:** The VASDHS Employee Wellness Committee, MOVE Program staff, the Health Promotion Coordinator, the US Healthier Vets Team, and the Nutrition and Food Service coordinated and hosted the event. To increase nutrition awareness each employee, veteran, and visitor entering the facility between 7-8am received a banana and orange juice. In addition, dieticians were present answering questions and providing on the spot consultation as well as providing educational handouts. At noon we offered a Walk and Roll for employees and veterans.





# VISN 23

**Name of Facility:** Fort Meade, SD (VA Black Hills Healthcare System)

**Point of Contact:** Nancy Worth, Dianna Monahan

**Brief description of activities:** The event held at Fort Meade, SD was a “Walk & Roll Day.” This involved a total of 54 participants walking both outside and inside our facility (it was a cloudy and chilly day). Several employees also assisted veteran inpatients by rolling them on brief walks outside the facility.

Facility maps and Healthier Lifestyle information was available for a 24 hour period to encourage employees who work other than administrative hours.

Numerous door prizes were awarded and all participants received a water bottle donated by Healthy South Dakota.





**Name of Facility:** Iowa City, IA

**Point of Contact:** Jennifer Gonzalez

**Phone Number(s):** (319)338-0581 ext. 6065

**Brief description of activities:** The Iowa City VA celebrated National Employee Health & Fitness Day with a guest speaker.

**Seventy employees** and veterans gathered midday to listen to a presentation by Dr. Terry Wahls. The title of Dr. Wahls presentation was, “The hidden epidemic of starvation and obesity”. It was a very heartfelt, personal account of how diet and exercise has impacted Dr. Wahls own health and wellbeing.

After sharing her thoughts on diet, nutrition and the impact of food on chronic diseases, time was allotted for questions and comments. The group responded with a great discussion. Fruit provided by our Veterans Canteen Service was distributed to all attendees as well as to some veterans waiting for appointments.

Congratulations to Laura Evans, R.N, for coordinating a successful event. After such great participation, and the additional support for promotion activities we look forward to planning many more events for staff and veterans.

**Name of Facility:** Minneapolis, MN

**Point of Contact:** Linda Daninger, Ebi Awosika

**Phone Numbers:** 612-467-4634; 612-467-4589

**Number of veterans involved:** 800+

**Number of staff involved:** 218 +

**Brief description of activities:** Two-hundred eighteen plus employees and 800 plus veterans participated in the Third Annual Employee/Veterans Wellness Expo on May 20, 2008. **Veterans' activities** in the first floor flag atrium included health education and screenings, benefits, rehabilitation and career education information and service organization information. In addition, a Welcome Home OEF/OIF reception and entertainment event took place in the evening.

**Employee activities** in the second floor flag atrium included 11 booths addressing employee issues as follows:

Mindfulness Meditation:

52 surveys were completed to assess the awareness and interest in establishing regular Mindfulness Meditation sessions for employees

Humans Resources:

Information on human resource activities, and educational opportunities were available

Ergonomics:

An office mock up was used to demonstrate proper ergonomic desk placements. 23 requests were made for ergonomic evaluations for present work station modifications

Health Style Self Assessments

170 assessments were completed with many requesting healthy life style coaching and fitness center applications

Weight Watchers

Employees had the opportunity to learn more about our Weight Watchers at Work group .66 employees entered a drawing for 2 Weight watchers cookbooks

Tuberculosis Screening

83 employees had mantoux placed. The booth used lollipops to entice employees to stop and get their required mantoux. Employees also had the opportunity to learn more about the yearly requirement of mantoux placement and vaccines available in occupational health

Chair Massage

5 minute free massages were provided in a comfortable, relaxing massage chair

Walk and Roll

Walk and Roll attracted 30% more participants this year than it did in 2007. Employees from a variety of services signed up to participate. Walking course maps, tracking tables and activity conversion to miles information was available. Employees who record their physical activity for 6 weeks are competing to earn prizes.

Occupational Health Services

Hand outs were available describing what occupational health services are available, how to access them and what future programs are being planned

Safe Movement Advisory Resource Team (SMART)

Safe patient handling equipment was demonstrated and resource team members were available for questions and concerns

Hand Hygiene Police

All employees entering the expo were given a sample of alcohol gel to emphasize the importance of good hand hygiene





**Name of Facility:** Omaha, Grand Island and Lincoln (VA Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System)

**Point of Contact:** Jan Carlin

**Phone Number(s):** 402.995.4987 or 1.800.451.5796 Ext. 4987

**Brief description of activities:** Employees in the VA Nebraska-Western Iowa's health care system took advantage of a fun walk organized by the Employee Wellness Committee to celebrate National Employee Health and Fitness Day. 85 employees participated at all of our sites which include: Omaha, Lincoln, Grand Island and North Platte Nebraska. Omaha, Lincoln, Grand Island and North Platte all walked an outdoor route on May 21 and enjoyed a beautiful spring day. Our Lincoln site held theirs on May 23 and unfortunately had a rainy spring day to deal with...but with a little modification they devised an indoor route and had great participation. All participants received a National Employee Fitness Day sticker, a bottle of water and a granola bar. The most asked question? When is the next walk?!



Grand Island



Omaha



Lincoln



**Name of Facility:** Sioux Falls, SD

**Point of Contact:** Shirley Redmond

**Phone Number(s):** 605-333-6889

**Brief description of activities:** As part of National Hospital Week, the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center hosted a wellness walk for medical center and regional office staff, volunteers, veterans and visitors on May 13. Photos are attached. Eighty three individuals registered for the event – in spite of the day’s weather. Participants were encouraged to pick up bottled water, fresh fruit, and information about how to lead an active lifestyle. They were also encouraged to bring along a co-worker, family member, or veteran and get started walking at least 1000 steps a day. Paul Bockelman, Director, authorized employees to wear their VA t-shirts and to take up to 30 min. to walk.

On May 21, National Employee Health & Fitness Day/US Healthier Veterans, another walk took place similar to the one held the week before with 110 employees, volunteers, veterans, and visitors participating. Information from the prevention website was used to create handouts, a table top display, and stickers for participants. Courtesy of the Veterans Canteen Service dividend account, bottled water, fruit, low-fat string cheese were also available to walkers. Individuals were encouraged to share in the activity – no matter what their ability levels. This event was sponsored by the Workforce Development Committee. (photos 5200324 and 5200326).

In addition, staff also participated in the local YMCA Corporate Cup on May 8, where staff participated in competitive events such as biking, volley ball, swimming, CEO challenge, tug of war and other fun events such as the toilet paper toss, and dunk the CEO (Yes, Paul Bockelman, Director, participated in this event). Sioux Falls VAMC placed third in the category of organizations with over 500 employees and also received the Spirit Award for team participation and enthusiasm.

A “Biggest Loser” local VA employee contest kicked off on April 1 and will end on June 25. Thirty six teams of two are competing for weekly prizes and a cash grand prize (using registration funds). So far a total of 559.5 pounds has been lost! Nutrition and Food Service/MOVE staff have assisted with menu plans and healthy recipes. This contest is in follow-up to last year’s competition among Business Office staff.

Allie, the therapy dog, is the newest addition to the Sioux Falls VAMC Employee Assistance Program team. Allie is a small dog of mixed heritage to who brings smiles to employees and veterans alike. She “works” two days a week.

Sioux Falls VAMC was the recipient of a \$2500 mini-grant to implement the “StairWELL to Better Health” campaign. As part of the StairWELL project, landings of the staircases in the medical center will be painted inviting, motivating colors. Themes will be created in the stairwells to make them more inviting. Motivational signs encouraging veterans, family members, and employees to use the stairs are being created. Informational cards to educate individuals about being more active are also being created with the focus on making small changes every day – like taking the stairs. The StairWELL project will begin by September 2008.





**Name of Facility:** St. Cloud, MN

**Point of Contact:** Richard Schwegel

**Phone Number(s):** (320) 255-6480 x6764

**Brief description of activities:** We held our event a week early due to scheduling conflicts and room availability.

The St. Cloud VAMC celebrated National Employee Health and Fitness Day by holding a Health Fair on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The theme of the fair this year was “Stress Reduction”. There were exhibitors from both inside the VA and from the community. “Stress dots” provided by our EAP program, maps of walking trails around our 218 acre campus, yoga instruction, and massages were the most popular exhibits. Ten massage therapists were available to provide relaxing massages for all that attended. Exhibitors also provided information on local health clubs, food portion sizes, healthy snacks, stretching exercises, MyHealth@Vet, smoking cessation and more. Blood pressure and blood glucose checks were also available. Evaluation forms showed 98% of employees who attended felt the fair met or exceeded their expectations and 89% said they learned at least one healthy behavior that they will incorporate into their daily lives.

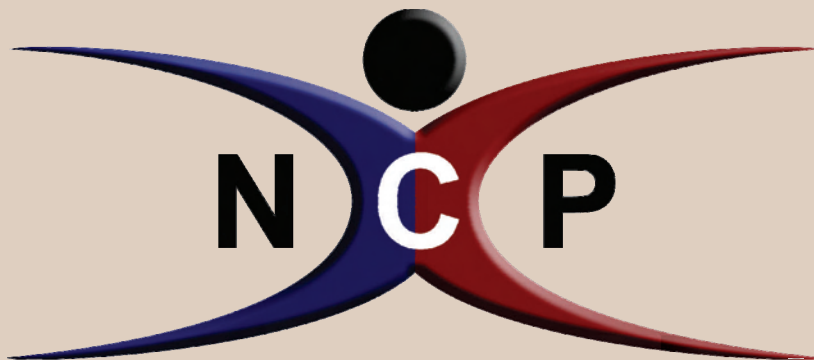
The Employee Wellness Committee organized the event. Healthy snacks were provided using Veterans Canteen Dividend Funds.











VA National Center for Health Promotion  
and Disease Prevention  
VHA Office of Patient Care Services  
3022 Croasdaile Drive, Suite 200  
Durham, NC 27705

(919) 383-7874 (phone)  
(919) 383-7598 (fax)

[www.prevention.va.gov](http://www.prevention.va.gov)

Linda Kinsinger, MD, MPH  
Chief Consultant for Preventive Medicine