

## December Well Aware eNews

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

- this month's wellness champion—a bus attendant who found the motivation to take full advantage of Well Aware's wellness offerings and improved her health significantly;
- this month's seminar/webinar from Cigna on planning for the holidays to keep them fun and festive for your family while avoiding stress and overindulgence;
- the latest from the Your Race, Your Pace challenge;
- ways to Mind Your Wellness;
- an opportunity to take a Zumba class; and
- more!



### Don't Miss It

#### This month's free webinar— Holiday Survival

Are you looking forward to the holidays? Do they bring about fun and festivity with family and friends, or are they likely to lead to stress and overindulgence? Get a plan in place now to ensure your holidays are special for everyone in your family.

**Wednesday, December 16, 2015**

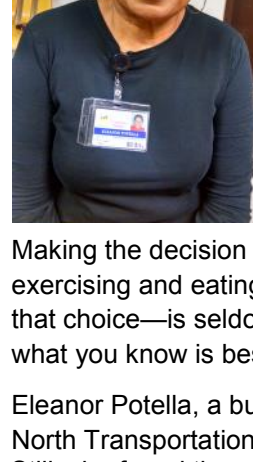
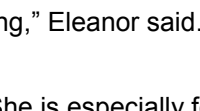
4:00–5:00 p.m.

Webinar

**Please register** for the webinar by e-mailing [Well Aware](#). You will receive a link and log-in information 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:



### Wellness Champion Finds the Motivation to Exercise and Eat Right; Improves Her Health Considerably

**Eleanor J. Potella, bus attendant, Shady Grove North Transportation**

Making the decision to change your lifestyle by exercising and eating right—and following through with that choice—is seldom easy. Sometimes, the will to do what you know is best for you is hard to come by.

Eleanor Potella, a bus attendant with the Shady Grove North Transportation Depot, knows how tough it can be. Still, she found the motivation to take full advantage of Well Aware's wellness offerings at the depot and significantly improved her health and well-being as a result.

"I am human, and there are times when I don't feel like exercising," Eleanor said. "But, when I push myself, I always feel great in the end."

Eleanor rarely misses a class or seminar offered at the depot. She is especially fond of the Zumba class that takes place between her bus runs. She looks forward to lowering her stress with a great Zumba session.

"Having the wellness program at the depot is definitely a good thing," Eleanor said. "I wish more of my coworkers would get involved."

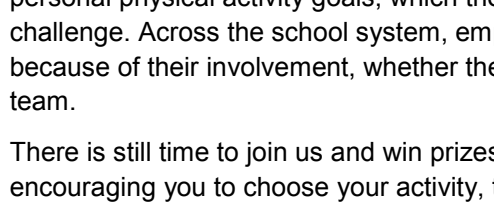
She encourages them to at least try out a class or get tips in better eating choices.

Eleanor lost 15 pounds by participating in the exercise classes and applying what she has learned in the seminars to her daily life. She also dropped her cholesterol level by more than 100 points, which pleased her doctor.

"My doctor is very impressed with the changes in my health," Eleanor said. "For me, being healthy is not an option. I want to live a long life, so I have made healthy eating and exercise my lifestyle."

Eleanor's favorite part of her new active life is sharing it with others. She makes it a habit to ask her Well Aware class instructors for handouts to share with her family.

"I take what I have learned home to my family and do stretching exercises with my granddaughter," Eleanor said.



### Your Race, Your Pace: Every Participant is Different, so Every Race is Unique

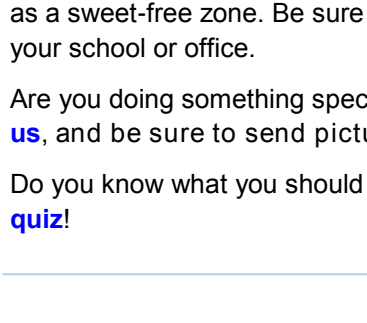
Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) employees are working hard to achieve their personal physical activity goals, which they set as part of this fall's Your Race, Your Pace challenge. Across the school system, employees are experiencing better health and morale because of their involvement, whether they are participating as individuals or as members of a team.

There is still time to join us and win prizes! Through Your Race, Your Pace, Well Aware is encouraging you to choose your activity, train for it, and achieve it! Your activity updates need to be entered in to the online [Well Aware Fitness Log](#) by 12:00 noon on Monday, December 14, 2015.

**Learn more.** Print and fill out your personal [race bib](#)! Post it for all of your coworkers to see! Show your spirit and encourage others to participate!

#### Stay tuned

Grand prize winners of the fall challenge will be announced in the December 22<sup>nd</sup> issue of *The Bulletin*!



### Set Your Sweet-free Zone

Well Aware is once again challenging you to designate your school or office as a sweet-free zone. What does that mean? It means that you pledge to do your best to celebrate the holidays in a healthy way.

During the holidays, post this [flyer](#) on the staff lounge or break room door to designate the area as a sweet-free zone. Be sure to read the suggestions in the flyer for changing the culture in your school or office.

Are you doing something special to stop the influx of sweet and treats in your work location? **Tell us**, and be sure to send pictures!

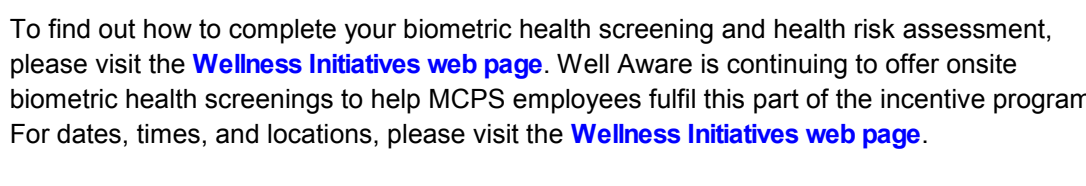
Do you know what you should be eating over the holidays? Take this [holiday sweets and treats quiz](#)!

### Coming This Spring: Another Chance to Quit for Good



Are you ready to quit tobacco? Quit for Good is a free eight-week class for MCPS staff and their spouses. This successful class covers everything from Nicotine Replacement Therapy, coping techniques, stress management, nutrition, and more.

The next class begins on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, at 4:30 p.m. For more information on the Quit for Good Tobacco Cessation Program, visit the [Well Aware website](#). **E-mail Well Aware** to reserve your spot in the class.



### Wellness Initiatives: Reduce Your Share of Health Insurance Costs for 2017

If you are covered by an MCPS-provided medical insurance plan through CareFirst, Cigna, or Kaiser Permanente, you can learn more about your health and reduce your contributions to your health insurance with the Wellness Initiatives program. To take full advantage of these rate reductions, complete a biometric health screening and a health risk assessment yearly, and if you use tobacco, consider quitting.

The Wellness Initiatives are very simple to accomplish. To receive the maximum 2 percent incentive toward your health insurance premiums in 2017, you have until October 7, 2016, to complete—

- an annual online health risk assessment, and
- an annual biometric health screening.

To find out how to complete your biometric health screening and health risk assessment, please visit the [Wellness Initiatives web page](#). Well Aware is continuing to offer onsite biometric health screenings to help MCPS employees fulfil this part of the incentive program. For dates, times, and locations, please visit the [Wellness Initiatives web page](#).

### Mind Your Wellness

Are the holidays stressing you out? Join seated yoga and tai chi classes and learn how to manage your stress.

#### Seated Yoga

Maple Room  
45 West Gude Drive  
Rockville, Maryland 20850  
Wednesdays, December 9 and 16, 2015  
4:30 p.m.

#### Tai Chi

Café 45 (lower level)  
45 West Gude Drive  
Rockville, Maryland 20850  
Thursdays, December 10 and 17, 2015  
4:30 p.m.

To register, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

### Join Us for Zumba!

Join Well Aware and Cigna for free Zumba classes for MCPS staff. Classes will be held as follows:

**When:** Fridays from 4:30–5:30 p.m.  
December 4, 11, 18  
January 8, 15, 22

**Where:** Washington Grove Elementary School  
8712 Oakmont Street  
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878

Class size is limited to 50 participants. Be sure to sign up [here](#).

**Learn more.** Questions? E-mail [Lisa Cooperstein](#), wellness coordinator, or [Maria Lunsford](#), instructor.

### Diabetes Corner

People are unique and have different needs when it comes to managing diabetes. Well Aware is excited to offer you self-paced, monthly resources with content tailored to where you are in your diabetes journey. Monthly topics include healthy eating, active living, diabetes medication, and blood sugar tracking.

Learn more about [reading nutrition labels](#) and [making better fast-food choices](#).

For more information or to register to receive the monthly information and booklets, [e-mail Well Aware](#).

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 [e-mail Well Aware](#).