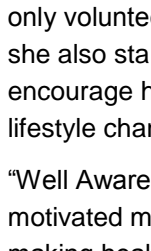


January Well Aware eNews

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

- this month's wellness champion—a wellness coach who started a wellness committee at her school to encourage her coworkers to make healthy lifestyle changes;
- a seminar/webinar from Cigna where you will find out why eating breakfast is so beneficial and discover ways to add variety to your first meal of the day;
- how five minutes (or less) a day can make a big difference to your health and safety;
- the MCPS Wellness Initiatives program and related biometric health screenings;
- the fall winners of the Small Changes, Big Results challenge; and
- another chance to climb for fitness; and
- more!

Wellness Champion Serves as Wellness Coach, Spearheaded Wellness Committee at Her School



Amanda K. Strite, classroom teacher, East Silver Spring Elementary School

Amanda Strite, first grade classroom teacher at East Silver Spring Elementary School, is Well Aware's wellness champion for January. She not only volunteered to be her school's wellness coach, but she also started a wellness committee at her school to encourage her coworkers to make the kind of healthy lifestyle changes that she has made.

"Well Aware's fall and spring physical activity challenges motivated me and helped keep me accountable for making healthy lifestyle changes," Amanda said. "I love that I am seeing this with my coworkers as well!"

It is clear that her coworkers attribute much of their success to her efforts.

"Amanda came up with some excellent ideas to help not only our team, but our whole staff to be more mindful of their health," Stacy Cardillo, media specialist, said.

"Amanda purchases healthy snacks for the school staff and is planning to invite a guest chef to the school to prepare some healthy recipes."

This month's champion works hard to practice what she preaches. Following Well Aware's Just 10 challenge in the fall of 2013, she purchased a Fitbit activity tracker to help her stay on track with her nutrition and fitness. And, as Just 10 encouraged her to do, she tries to do more every day.

"Each day, I try to find ways to take more steps," Amanda said. "I might choose to print to a copier that is further away from my classroom or take the longer path to get to places around the school."

Inspired by her coworkers' hard work during the Just 10 challenge, Amanda established the wellness committee at East Silver Spring Elementary School to encourage the staff to change their nutrition and exercise habits. One thing the committee does is provide "Healthy Hump Day Snacks" on Wednesdays in the staff lounge.

Amanda also sends out weekly inspiring messages to remind her coworkers to log all of their minutes into the online Well Aware Fitness Log. If they are unfamiliar with the log, she shows them how to use it and makes sure they are logging all of their activity.

"Amanda doesn't give up on us," Stacy said. "We won as one of the top 10 elementary schools in the first challenge, and, thanks to her motivation, it looks like we might be one of the top elementary schools again!"



Don't Miss It

This month's free seminar/webinar—

Don't Skip Breakfast

Do you grab a donut and then dash out the door in the morning? Are you bored with your breakfast routine? Eating breakfast is a great way to keep up your energy throughout the day. Learn tricks for changing your breakfast choices and get some healthy morning menu suggestions.

Thursday, January 15, 2015

10:00–11:00 a.m.

Randolph Bus Depot

1800 Randolph Road

Silver Spring, Maryland 20902

Thursday, January 22, 2015

4:00–5:00 p.m.

Webinar

Monday, January 26, 2015

10:00–11:00 a.m.

West Farm Bus Depot

11920 Bournefield Way

Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Thursday, January 29, 2015

4:30–5:30 p.m.

Carver Educational Service

Center Cafeteria

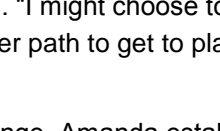
850 Hungerford Drive

Rockville, Maryland 20850

Please register for the seminar or webinar by e-mailing [Well Aware](#) with the date and time you plan to attend. If you register for the webinar, you will receive a link to it in your Outlook e-mail as well as an Outlook calendar reminder.

Spread the word with our [printable flyer](#). See the [Wellness Webinar Library](#).

Presented by:



Small Changes, Big Results Challenge Winners Announced!

Nearly 6,400 Montgomery County Public Schools employees made small lifestyle changes to accomplish big results in Well Aware's fall physical activity challenge. They competed for prizes and, more importantly, adopted or maintained healthy lifestyles. Each of the top 10 schools averaged at least 45 minutes of physical activity per employee per day. This is an increase of 15 minutes over last year!

Congratulations to all those who improved their health by participating!

The following 10 **Overall Lifestyle Change Award** winners each will receive a \$200 gift card for having the greatest decrease in Body Mass Index over the course of the challenge:

- **David I. Suggs**, Parkland Middle School
- **Charles (Chuck) L. McGee**, Central Services
- **Joshua (Josh) R. Phillips**, Neelsville Middle School
- **Karen Briggs**, Earle B. Wood Middle School
- **Anne E. Strong**, Candlewood Elementary School
- **Shirley L. Ben-Ami**, Parkland Middle School
- **Kathryn (Kate) H. Wardle**, Parkland Middle School
- **Mary B. Dempsey**, Central Services
- **Susan (Sue) B. Reber**, Central Services
- **Dorothy I. King**, Harmony Hills Elementary School

Grand prize winners are as follows:

Team Grand Prize: The top 10 teams with the most average activity time throughout the 10-week challenge will receive a \$1,000 grant to promote wellness in their schools or offices. Teams needed to log at least 30 minutes per person/per day of activity to be eligible for the prize. They are:

- **Blocks of Granite** (A. Mario Loiederman Middle School: Mary Ellen Delayo, Michael G. Herlihy, Jenna Kiefer, Sara J. Sanz)
- **Fitbit Beall Dragons** (Beall Elementary School: Carolina B. DeVriendt, Esta M. Franklin, Gina M. Gill, Jessica L. Cohen, Julie A. Taylor, Kathleen M. Clagett, Michelle J. Stanley, Robert M. Healy, Rosa E. Martins, Sun J. Kim)
- **Mission Slimpossible** (Julius West Middle School: James (Jimmy) A. Little, Jeffrey (Jeff) C. Brink, Raienne A. Oliver)
- **2 Fast 2 Furious** (Harmony Hills Elementary School: Ashton L. Pontious, Kyle J. Finke, Tanner W. Nelson)
- **Exercise? ... We done did dat den!** (Central Services: Cara D. Grant, Jeffrey Mehr, Karen B. Kart, Matthew P. Augustin)
- **Surf & Turf** (White Oak Middle School: Margaret Geiser Kline, Susan E. Krisch, Susan Lee)
- **Team Eyler** (Neelsville Middle School: David C. Gentzel, Laura A. Eyler, Rodrigo Godinez, Joshua (Josh) R. Phillips)
- **Goal Getters** (Harmony Hills Elementary School: Christine N. Skroback, Dorothy I. King, Kalanda Papafio)
- **Goal Diggers** (Parkland Middle School: Brendan T. Flanagan, Chad Beswick, Christina N. Montello, Jose J. Rodriguez, Lauren Voorhees, Nathan W. Timm, Alan R. Grenidge)
- **Fit IT** (Central Services: Charles (Chuck) L. McGee, Leslie J. Guerra, Susan (Sue) B. Reber, Tammy S. Rasmussen, Trina H. Vogel)

School Grand Prize: The top 10 schools with the most average activity time throughout the 10-week challenge will receive a \$1,000 grant to be used for physical education equipment or to support staff wellness. Schools needed to log at least 30 minutes per person/per day of activity to be eligible for the prize. They are:

- **A. Mario Loiederman Middle School**
- **White Oak Middle School**
- **Beall Elementary School**
- **Ritchie Park Elementary School**
- **Harmony Hills Elementary School**
- **Wilson Wims Elementary School**
- **East Silver Spring Elementary School**
- **Robert Frost Middle School**
- **Neelsville Middle School**
- **Thomas Edison High School of Technology**

Golden Sneaker Team Prize: In addition to a grant, the top team overall with the most average miles throughout the 10-week challenge has won the Golden Sneaker Trophy and bragging rights until the next challenge. The winner is:

- **Blocks of Granite**

Spirit Award: Ten applicants for the Spirit Award will each receive a 6-week yoga, tai chi, or Zumba class at their school or office. The winners are:

- **Amanda K. Strite**, East Silver Spring Elementary School
- **Laura A. Eyler**, Neelsville Middle School
- **Melinda S. Bredow**, Central Services
- **Rosanna Batista**, Jones Lane Elementary School
- **Marysol S. Franco**, Rosemary Hills Elementary School
- **Pamela (Pam) L. Altman**, A. Mario Loiederman Middle School
- **Marie C. Umali**, Quince Orchard High School
- **Tanner W. Nelson**, Harmony Hills Elementary School

Although the first half of Small Changes, Big Results has come to an end, the challenge continues! (See accompanying article, "Small Changes, Big Results: A New Year Can Mean a New You!") Watch for further details in the January issue of the *Well Aware eNews*, in the next issue of *The Bulletin*, and on the [Well Aware website](#). In the meantime, the [Well Aware Fitness Log](#) continues to provide a resource for you to track your physical activity and diet.

Small Changes, Big Results: A New Year Can Mean a New You!

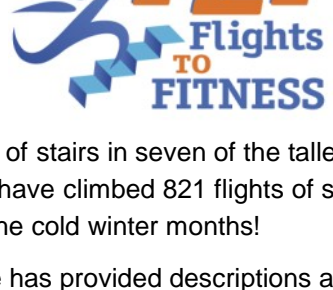
The second half of Small Changes, Big Results, Well Aware's physical activity challenge for this school year, is about to begin. If you were not able to join us last fall for the first half of the challenge, now is your chance!

New Year, New You, the third Small Changes, Big Results mini challenge, begins Monday, January 12, 2015. This mini challenge suggests a New Year's resolution that everyone can keep: "I will not make any more New Year's resolutions!" If you are trying to lose weight, quit smoking, stress less, or get out of debt, small daily changes are your answer. Most people set unrealistic goals in January, and they already have stopped working toward their resolutions by the Super Bowl. By setting smaller, more realistic goals for yourself, you may find that the behavior change is easier to attain and maintain.

Join us for Small Changes, Big Results *and* New Year, New You. Print out the mini challenge calendar available on the [Small Changes, Big Results web page](#), follow its daily tips and suggestions, and enter your activity in the online [Fitness Log](#) for your chance to win prizes and get healthier! Learn how to set smart goals and see how 2015 can be your best year yet!

Climb the World's Tallest Buildings via Flights to Fitness

Stair climbing can be a wonderful way to keep fit. Most of us work and/or live in or near a building with stairs. Stair climbing can be done anytime throughout the day as a break in your routine. There are benefits to your heart, your mind, as well as your leg muscles.



Well Aware is challenging you to climb the number of flights of stairs in seven of the tallest buildings in the world. By the end of this challenge, you will have climbed 821 flights of stairs! What an achievement! And what a way to stay in shape in the cold winter months!

To help you accomplish your stair-climbing feat, Well Aware has provided descriptions and charts for each of the buildings, which you can use to keep track of your progress. To find and printout the charts, visit the [Flights to Fitness web page](#).

Be Healthy and Safe: Take Five (or Even Less)

Take five for your health! Being healthy and safe takes commitment, but it doesn't have to be time-consuming. Most things are so simple and take so little time, that you will wonder why you have been avoiding them. Taking just a few of the 1,440 minutes in a day to improve your health and safety is more than worth it for you and your family.

[Review these tips](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that take five minutes or less to accomplish.

Take Steps Now to Reduce Your 2016 Medical Insurance Costs

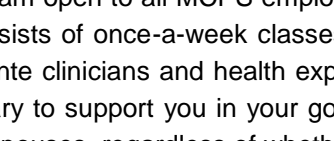
Have you heard? You have an opportunity to save money on your medical insurance premiums come 2016 and every year after, but you need to do a few things first:

- **Complete an online health risk assessment** between October 13, 2014, and October 9, 2015—and yearly thereafter—to be eligible for a 1 percent increase in MCPS contributions toward your medical insurance, effective January 1, 2016.
- **Complete biometric screenings of your cholesterol, blood pressure, blood sugar, and body mass index** within the same timeframe—and yearly thereafter—to be eligible for an additional 1 percent increase in MCPS contributions toward your medical insurance. Your primary care physician may conduct the screenings or you can attend one of the free screenings Well Aware is offering to MCPS staff.
- **If you smoke, consider quitting** to avoid a 3 percent increase in your contributions towards your medical insurance. You will need to be tobacco free for 12 months prior to the January 1, 2016 effective date.

[See further details](#) on completing your health risk assessment and dates for upcoming Well Aware health screenings.

You Too Can Quit for Good

Since Kaiser Permanente and MCPS first teamed up to offer the Quit for Good tobacco cessation program in 2011, 58 MCPS employees have completed their course. Of those, 43 were still tobacco-free six months after their course ended. That's a significant accomplishment!



Isn't it time you quit for good?

Quit for Good is a free, course-based tobacco cessation program open to all MCPS employees and their spouses. The program is eight weeks long and consists of once-a-week classes led by a nurse practitioner, with assistance from Kaiser Permanente clinicians and health experts. Class size is limited to ensure the personal attention necessary to support you in your goal of quitting. Sessions are open to all MCPS employees and their spouses, regardless of whether or not you carry Kaiser Permanente health insurance.

The next session of Quit for Good begins on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, at 4:30 p.m. in the Maple Room at 45 West Gude Drive, Rockville. To register, e-mail [Well Aware](#). To learn more about the program, including the week-by-week course content, visit the [Well Aware website](#).

The employee wellness newsletter is brought to you by the Employee and Retiree Service Center (ERSC). To learn more about employee wellness, visit our [website](#). To view this e-mail newsletter as a .pdf document, click [here](#). Questions or comments about your employee wellness program? Contact ERSC at 301-517-8100 or wellness@mcpsmd.org.