

Andrews Launches Health & Wellness Initiative

University works toward a healthier campus and community

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Dominique Wakefield is the new director of University Health & Wellness. Photo by Darren Heslop

By: Becky St. Clair

Andrews University officially launched its new University Health & Wellness initiative on Wednesday, September 23, built on the principle and Andrews core strength of Live Wholly. This new initiative is ongoing and includes the development and construction of a Health & Wellness Center, currently still in planning stages.

“I am thrilled about the incredible opportunity we have to utilize the foundational principles of health and wellness to improve, transform and save lives,” says Dominique Wakefield, newly appointed director of University Health & Wellness. “My role is to provide expert executive health and wellness advice and to strategically coordinate all things health and wellness for students, faculty, staff and the community.”

Wakefield will accomplish this task with the support and guidance of the newly established Health & Wellness Council, and the new Wellness Action Team will carry out the practical components of health, wellness and fitness within the campus and community.

“Wellness is an active process of optimizing every aspect of our multidimensional self to harmoniously reflect the image of our Creator by nurturing and equally emphasizing physical, mental and spiritual development,” says Wakefield. “This means that wellness is a complete lifestyle, challenging us to make positive choices in all areas of our lives each day, both personally and professionally.”

University Health & Wellness will integrate five deeply connected pillars: physical, spiritual, mental, relational and professional wellness.

“Together these pillars promote living life to our fullest potential as our Creator God intended for us,” says Wakefield. “This process is about joy, happiness and balance, all of which contribute to leading successful and satisfactory lives.”

With strong support from administration, Wakefield encourages every member of the Andrews community (both on- and off-campus) to join and support this movement. Some initial ways to get involved include:

- **Andrews University Plank Challenge:** Plank each day at 3 p.m. for 30 seconds (or whatever you can do), starting Monday, October 5. For details on planking, visit andrews.edu/wellness.
- **Wednesday 5K Walk:** Every Wednesday at 5 p.m. Meet at the J.N. Andrews sculpture in front of PMC, starting Wednesday, October 14.
- **Wellness website with wellness calendar:** andrews.edu/wellness. To be completed October 2015.
- **Wellness Lounge:** A space to enjoy a variety of special wellness offerings. Coming November 2015.

“Together we can transform this community and become the healthiest university,” Wakefield says, “inspiring the world to live life to the fullest through the foundational principles of health and wellness.”

Wakefield comes to Andrews from La Sierra University (Riverside, California), where she served as assistant professor of health and exercise science. She previously worked at Andrews as director of Fitness & Exercise Studies and assistant professor in the Department of Nutrition & Wellness from 2008–2012. Wakefield also holds a BA in physical education with a health emphasis and an MA in teaching international languages with an emphasis in curriculum and instruction from California State University.

“Having worked in the corporate, clinical and academic settings thus far, I have had many different types of rewarding experiences,” says Wakefield. “All of these have had their own challenges, but I believe if it doesn’t challenge you it doesn’t change you, and change is what we need, especially as it pertains to health, wellness and fitness.”

In addition to working as a personal trainer, wellness coach, group fitness instructor and fitness and programs director, Wakefield has taught at Southern Adventist University (Collegedale,

Tennessee), University of Tennessee-Chattanooga and California State University-Chico in the areas of health, fitness and exercise science.

“Dominique Wakefield is an exciting choice for this position,” says Andrea Luxton, provost. “She brings energy and passion for health and wellness, along with excellent credentials. I have no doubt that she will energize the campus community to make wellness part of the fabric of the University.”

Wakefield considers her work at Andrews not only academic and administrative, but spiritual as well.

“I believe that God has made us humans ‘very good’ and he wants us to live extraordinary lives,” she says, “which is possible through optimal levels of the different dimensions of wellness. When you see the power of wellness transform lives and even save lives, it truly is an inspiration.”

Stay connected to Wakefield and her team through their new website (andrews.edu/wellness) or by emailing wellness@andrews.edu.

Related Website(s): <http://www.andrews.edu/wellness>

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