Certified Healthy Departments

First three departments achieve certification

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On Wednesday, Nov. 15, the first three Certified Healthy Departments (CHDs) will be recognized and rewarded during the Wellness Ambassador Rally. The three areas are the School of Health Professions (the first to achieve the status), Department of Digital Learning & Instructional Technology and Lamson Hall.

The goal of the CHD initiative is to continue promoting University-wide health and wellness in hopes of transforming Andrews University into a campus known for wellness. Three aspects of the health and wellness program are essential to CHD certification: Fitthumb, the Wellness Menu and Wellness Ambassadors.

Fitthumb is the interactive e-wellness platform for Andrews employees and their spouses. It provides many different opportunities for employees to become meaningfully engaged with their personal and institutional health through customized wellness opportunities in the form of educational opportunities, events, classes, challenges and online articles.

Further promoting this campus-wide initiative toward health and wellness is the Wellness Menu, the list of on-campus wellness opportunities available to students, employees and the local community. It includes classes and walking groups and can be found at andrews.edu/wellness.
Both the Wellness Menu and Fitthumb are tools that Wellness Ambassadors use in their contribution to the development of CHDs. Each ambassador represents the Andrews University Health and Wellness initiatives by participating in campus-wide health events, inviting others to participate in and attend programs and events, taking a Wellness Pledge and exemplifying a healthy and fit lifestyle.

Additionally, departments are integral to this process as they are unique spaces where staff, faculty, students and colleagues interact in meaningful and healthy ways. To qualify as a CHD, departments must fill out an application showing they have met certain criteria. Some of the criteria includes having at least one Wellness Ambassador, visibly promoting the Wellness Menu, having a certain percentage of employees active in Fitthumb, offering a departmental Fitbreak and having a certain percentage of employees complete a Full Body Scan. To view the complete list of criteria for the 2017–2018 school year and access the application, visit andrews.edu/wellness.

Dominique Gummelt, director of University Health & Wellness, says, “Certified Healthy Departments (CHDs) is a new initiative as part of our goal to become the healthiest university. It provides an opportunity for departments to be more autonomous and take charge of making positive healthy changes for their employees and students. It is a challenge for our faculty, staff and students to translate theory into practice, and the list of criteria reflects that. The president, Andrea Luxton, is in full support of this new initiative, and it is the vision of University Health & Wellness to certify 10 departments by the end of this school year. I am thrilled to have three departments already step up and do what is necessary to make positive policy and procedure changes!”

Other departments are in the process of applying and have until January 2018 to obtain recognition for the 2017–2018 year. Once achieved, a recertification process will be implemented for the following school year, and other departments can continue to apply for the first time.

To learn more about the Certified Healthy Department initiative and the University’s overall goals for health and wellness visit andrews.edu/wellness. To contact University Health & Wellness, email wellness@andrews.edu or call 269-471-6165.

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