Wellness Ambassador of the Month – January 2018
Patricia (Patty) Covington Fleming and Stacey Sheehan

How long have you worked at UC Davis?

**Patty:** I have worked at the UC Davis Human Resources Department since January 2014.

**Stacey:** I have worked at UC Davis for the last 12 years, and I joined the Human Resources Department in 2015.

What does wellness mean to you?

**Patty:** According to me, wellness is our overall well-being and includes physical fitness and mental health.

**Stacey:** It is a way of life where being well rounded is promoted. Wellness is also taking the time for yourself and not being bogged down by occupational stresses.

How long have you been a wellness ambassador?

**Patty:** I became a wellness ambassador in 2016.

**Stacey:** Since the program started (Summer 2016).

Why did you become a wellness ambassador?

**Patty:** I came across a blurb on the Staff Development website about the program, and I was really interested in promoting health and well-being. We have a team approach to wellness in our department, which I really liked too.

**Stacey:** I heard about it when they started the pilot program. In the previous department that I worked in, I was always the person trying to find ways to bring wellness to my coworkers. Once I moved to the Human Resources department, I saw the need for our staff to spend time together to feel less stressed. At that time, I heard about the program and immediately became a wellness ambassador.

What has been rewarding or positive about your experience thus far?

**Patty:** When we see people in our building regularly participate and look forward to activities, it makes the experience worthwhile. Whether it’s the fitness breaks every Tuesday, Yoga once a month, making cards, planting flowers or monthly coloring, people who normally would not interact with each other are now interacting much more!

**Stacey:** It’s amazing to feel included and part of a community of people that try to lead healthy lives. Seeing different coworkers and staff at different events is so refreshing! Its never the same people at each event, so we learn something new about our coworkers every time. The work culture has changed, and now many of us are able to talk about topics apart from human resources too.

What are some of the challenges you face as a wellness ambassador?
Patty: Finding the time was a challenge because something else would always get more priority. However, having a team of wellness ambassadors to rely on and work with has really changed the experience for me. It would have been a completely different experience if I did it on my own, so it's really helpful to have co-wellness ambassadors. With my co-wellness ambassadors, everything is so much easier, and we work well as a team!

Stacey: In the beginning, I struggled to find my own balance. My schedule was extremely busy and it was difficult for me to prioritize my health and well-being. I needed to be sure that I was taking care of myself before I could promote the wellness to members in my department. Ever since we formed our team, it has been nothing but positive!

What is one piece of advice you would like to share with new wellness ambassadors?

Patty: Ask for help when you need it, and actively seek advice from other wellness ambassadors. Suggestions and feedback are key in guiding and improving your experience as a wellness ambassador. Ask your coworkers for ideas for future events is a great starting point.

Stacey: There's a wealth of knowledge around you. Join the network and build a good base using the success of other departments. Using those tips of what has worked for a department, and learning from them is a great starting point.

Staff and Faculty Health and Well-being aims to build an environment that makes the healthier choice the easier choice, while providing staff and faculty with the required support to make UC Davis the healthiest community. How do you feel you have contributed to our mission?

Patty: We try to organize events every month and keeping a regular routine and schedule (for example fitness breaks every Tuesday) has helped people make healthier choices while they are at the workplace. The daily little things add up, like encouraging our coworkers to step away from their desks for five minutes and clear their mind. We have also formed a wellness group for those who are interested.

Stacey: Apart from hosting and organizing events, we share information and pass on resources first hand to as many people as we can. Regular reminders, useful resources and frequent communication allows us to guide them as much as possible so that they can make the healthy choice on their own.

What is your favorite thing to do in your spare time?

Patty: If you asked me this question 6 months ago, my answer would have been completely different! Lately, I have been working out and doing strength training or cardio. I enjoy listening to podcasts and audiobooks.

Stacey: I have quite an intense workout routine. I have been spending most of my free time working out with a Triathlon training group, or cycling. I also like to read.

To be part of wellness initiatives with Patty and Stacey, please email pcovingtonfleming@ucdavis.edu or sasheehan@ucdavis.edu or visit them at the Human Resources Administration building.