Wellness Grant Feature of the Month: Student Health and Counseling Services
Wellness Ambassador: Claudia Durksen

Student Health and Counseling Services used the Mini Grant for the purchase of Yoga mats, resistance bands, and $25 gift cards as incentives. Using the resources in their building, they gathered to exercise and meditate during the lunch hour. A raffle was done at the end of Winter Quarter for those who had a chance to attend the Sessions.

Their goal was to promote a better Work Life Balance by engaging as many employees as possible at SHCS through Fitness activities. They achieved this goal by meeting during the lunch hour for 30 minutes, twice a week. There were a combination of exercises for the mind and body done during their group workouts. At times, they relied on YouTube videos to lead the exercises and followed them with a meditation session to wind down. They had U-Jam sessions led by a licensed instructor who is an employee in their department. In addition, an employee who is a Reiki Practitioner led their Guided Meditations. With the start of the fitness session on Wednesdays and Fridays, they included Mindful Mondays as well to foster better well-being for everyone.

Given that some of the employees from Student Health are not all in the same building, the department’s Wellness Ambassador, Claudia Durksen set some bands and mats aside for the North Hall office and for the IT department.

Communication through the department’s Staff Website helped promote the activities. Approximately 4-12 people participated in each session, and they were asked to complete a survey after the sessions. There was an old bulletin board not being utilized in their break room, so Claudia converted it to a “Tell me something good” board, to encourage mindfulness in their office.

One of the challenges they faced was primarily due to the change in the email system, which caused a lapse in the scheduling calendar. There were a couple times that there was a lack of space to work out, so they had to improvise, but they were still able to complete their exercise sessions.

Currently, the fitness sessions has more employees participating and has encouraged coworkers to support each other, especially through the U-Jam and Meditation sessions as well as Mindful Mondays.

Their Wellness Ambassador, Claudia says “Overall, I feel like we have developed a new culture of self-care at Student Health. It may have been in place before I came to this department, but it was clearly dormant. I am being approached with new ideas and being asked to join committees to incorporate a healthy work life balance as a result of this Wellness Grant. At this point, I have been asked by my coworkers to continue the Fitness Sessions/Mediation sessions”.

The comradery in the department has definitely increased. On top of their regular sessions, many employees have expressed interest in doing activities outside of work. One activity they took part in was the ‘Paint & Sip’ event they went to, here in Davis. In the future, they plan on continuing the Mindful Mondays with Guided Meditations and also having Wellness Wednesday Fitness Sessions, and Friday U-Jam Sessions.
Some of the Feedback Received after the sessions:

**What did you like about the sessions?**

They were varied. Repeated it twice so you were not always dealing with something new each time. Claudia did a fabulous job.

Fun group of working buddies & feel comfortable...

I like the variety and convenience of attending at lunch.

Starting on time and only takes about 30 minutes away from our lunch hour. Like the floor exercises and using the bands!

Having the opportunity to have a great workout during my work day. Also it is a great stress reliever, and lifts my mood, gives me energy, and just generally makes me feel good overall. Not to mention enjoying all the health benefits that come with cardiovascular workout.

It gives staff an opportunity to interact with the different departments we have because we don’t get to on a daily basis. It gets us away from our desk, and forget about work.

Gets me away from my desk and moving my body, which makes me feel better.

U jam, videos with bands, yoga, and 30 min sessions fit into lunch break

The exercise videos, not crowded

**What did you dislike about the sessions?**

I know it’s something that can’t be controlled but the last minute changes.

Short hours.

Yoga session that I attended was a little too advance for me.

Nothing

The only dislike is that we do not have enough space to accommodate the group which keeps growing.

**Is there anything else you’d like to share about the event?**

Keep it going!!!!

I really enjoy this fitness group, very friendly and a great workout.

The event is good; I just wish there was more hours allocated for it and not just lunch time.

This is a great program. Well worth taking the time from your day to do something healthy for yourself!

It has been great, and Claudia you are doing an awesome job!

Just my thanks and appreciation!!!