Wellness Ambassador of the Month – December 2017
Cornel Wade

How long have you worked at UC Davis?
I have worked in the Public Health Sciences since 2001.

What does wellness mean to you?
Wellness includes physical, mental and emotional health. I am a strong believer that internal health really affects how you cope with situations, and balance is key for a healthy lifestyle!

Why did you become a wellness ambassador?
I was approached by 2 people in my department who heard about the program, and thought I would be a good representative for our department. The encouragement from my department led me to join the program and become a wellness ambassador. Also, the Staff and Faculty Health and Well-being program’s Director, Stacey Brezing presented about the Wellness Ambassador program at our department, which further motivated me.

How long have you been a wellness ambassador?
Since the program started (Summer 2016).

What has been rewarding or positive about your experience thus far?
When my coworkers get excited about different ideas that promote wellness activities, it surprises me positively! Their reaction to events and workshops, as well as seeing them outside of work duties and work hours is great. I feel really good that we are now talking about things apart from our work or the weather, and we have become closer as a department.

What are some of the challenges you face as a wellness ambassador?
Personally, the biggest challenge is coordinating events and finding a day and time that works for everybody. This is a little harder than I expected because we have staff in 2 different buildings which have a distance of about 4-5 miles between them.

What is one piece of advice you would like to share with new wellness ambassadors?
I would advise wellness ambassadors to send surveys to coworkers before planning events. Giving everyone a chance to experience something they are interested in is truly important. I’m a positive person, and I would tell wellness ambassadors to never underestimate the importance of encouraging yourself and those around you!

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?
I try my best to motivate my coworkers by living a healthy lifestyle. I applied for the mini grant last year from the Staff and Faculty Health and Well-being Program and my department got awarded! I organized the 45 day challenge, promoting exercise for the entire length of the challenge. The overall goal was to get people moving and walk at least 6500 steps (which we measured using Fitbit trackers). Walking, playing tennis, fitness classes and dancing were some of the activities we did, and prizes were given to those who got the most steps. It really changed my coworkers’ view of physical fitness as some started incorporating walking and physical activities in the time family time.

What is your favorite thing to do in your spare time?
I grew up playing sports, and really enjoy participating in physical fitness challenges. In my free time, I teach group fitness classes in Sacramento and I play basketball and golf. I have recently started playing soccer, dancing and being in the water more!

To be part of wellness initiatives with Cornel Wade please email cewade@ucdavis.edu or visit him at the Public Health Sciences Department.