Mohawk Valley Community College
Wellness Design Team Recommendations

To: Randall VanWagoner, President of Mohawk Valley Community College
Mohawk Valley Community College Senate

From: Mohawk Valley Community College Wellness Design Team:
Pam Fess, Assistant Professor/Second Year Coordinator for Nursing (Co-Chair)
Kristen Bowers, Project Coordinator (Co-Chair)
John Bullis, Executive Director of Organizational Development
Jeri George, Director of Child Care Services
Bob Gould, Associate Professor in the Physical Education Department/Coach
Ann Popeo, College Nurse
Carolyn DeJohn, Coordinator of Community Education

Date: October 28, 2011

RE: Recommendations for the Employee Wellness Program at Mohawk Valley Community College

The mission of Mohawk Valley Community College Employee Wellness Program is to enhance organizational wellness by fostering interest and encouraging employees to initiate or expand healthier lifestyles, provide diverse resources to meet a wide range of personal health needs, recognize employees for participating in healthier lifestyles activities, decrease absenteeism due to illness and stress, and develop a positive school culture that is focused on celebrating and improving the quality of life for all employees.

The design team's research has shown that comparable colleges and other similar-sized organizations with successful Employee Wellness Programs focus on access to current resources that will enhance and improve the physical wellness of its employees. Completion of the recommendations below with associated long-term considerations will create the foundation to build a successful employee wellness program at Mohawk Valley Community College.

Recommendations

I. **Focus on Physical Fitness, Nutrition and Smoking Issues**

   i. Workday breaks to engage in wellness activities such as walking, stretching, nutritional and physical fitness workshops, etc. that are effective, yet will not take a significant time from the employees' workday.
   ii. Provide varying environments for wellness activities including solitary, small groups and large groups to be sensitive for individuals' comfort level with engaging.
   iii. Participation in local, regional and MVCC-sponsored wellness initiatives, specifically, the Go Red for Women Corporate Challenge, America's Great Heart Run/Walk, the Boilermaker, the Ted Moore Run, etc.
   iv. Provide health-conscious food options at all campus dining establishments. Encourage employees to eat lunch on a regular basis (purchase or brown-bag)
   v. Explore the feasibility of offering smoking cessation classes to employees.

II. **Eliminate the Wellness Pass Fee and Refund the Fees to Those Who Have Paid Thus Far.**

   i. The Wellness Pass Fee poses a potential barrier between employees and wellness activities.
   ii. Consider a variety of wellness plans and services consider whether a fee shall be imposed. Fees should be based on special services, not general access.

III. **Create an Employee Wellness Committee**

i. The Committee will consider the above recommendations and design a plan of action with key players to begin implementation of efforts.
ii. Each committee member will serve a 2-year term and will include MVCC employees as well as one community agency representative.
iii. The Committee will develop a system to measure success of the program (Factor the number of participants, average number of employee sick days used, effect on health care insurance costs and personal achievements such as weight loss, low BP/cholesterol, miles logged while walking or general participation in wellness-centered events.
iv. The Committee will identify needs for improvement/adjustment to ensure continued success (Consider incentives for participation such as monetary awards, gift cards, athletic or wellness gear, health screenings, flex time to participate in wellness activities, recognition at college events, etc.)
v. The Committee will maintain relationships with community agencies to garner supplemental resources.
vi. The Committee will provide quarterly reports to the Board of Trustees, President's Cabinet and College Senate.

IV. **Utilize MVCC's Current Resources to Implement and Develop Initiatives in Accordance with Recommendations Specified.**

i. Fitness Center Staff – Orientation to fitness equipment, including pool and track; Personal fitness plans; Assistance with personal fitness plans; General fitness education. Provide recreational sports times and organize recreational leagues.
ii. Food Service – Education on making healthy nutritional choices whether from home or from the dining options on the Utica and Rome campuses.
iii. Campus Security – Promote personal safety/security.
iv. Nursing Faculty & Students/Health Office – Promote General Health & Physical Well-Being; Referrals; Infection Control Initiatives.
v. Human Resources – Educate the community about the Employee Assistance Program, its services and confidentiality; Reintroduce MVCC's confidentiality agreement in relation to EAP.
vi. Employee Enrichment – Develop a track of sessions for the annual Enrichment Institutes Series that focuses directly on issues relevant to Employee Wellness.
vii. Corporate and Community Education (CCED) – Additional options for personal and professions development; non-credit and certificate programs; Utilizing instructors for wellness events, workshops, etc.
viii. Integrated Technology – Evaluate workspace and equipment to ensure all employees are working in an ergonomically sound environment and make adjustments as needed.
ix. Marketing & Communication – Utilize Communitas and MVCC Today to raise awareness of wellness activities and health/wellness tips, such as simple exercises, healthy recipes and upcoming events.