

Project Goal 1; Initiative 10
Create a Comprehensive Wellness Program

Start Date Fall, 2011

Client ISU students, faculty, and staff

Program Manager Strategic Plan Wellness Committee

Project Manager Rachel Wedding McClelland

Thesis Statement The goal of Sycamore Wellness is to enrich the lives of Indiana State University students, faculty and staff by bringing about opportunities for the ISU community to engage in programmed activities and education opportunities that will reinforce healthy lifestyles.

Introduction/Background – What?:

ISU students are interested in fitness and have demonstrated their interest through their willingness to fund with student fees the construction of the \$21 million, 109,000-square-foot Recreation Center. This award-winning facility is attractive to students, but until we better understand the needs and fitness levels of our student population – and eventually our faculty and staff population – we will not be able to use our facility to its greatest capacity.

ISU has been willing to invest in the wellness of students through services and programs that are organized and offered by the staff of Student Health Promotions. That staff – which primarily consists of students – has introduced programs including Wellness Bash and Sober Ride that have had a significant impact on the university community. These programs have given students access to flu shots and safe transportation, and the programs have also been lauded by President Bradley. The goal of this initiative is to enhance and expand these programs and others that already are working well while identifying and creating additional wellness programs and opportunities for the benefit of the campus community.

Proposal/Purpose/Justification – Why?:

Creating the **Sycamore Wellness Initiative – Healthy Sycamores** for students, faculty and staff would nurture a campus environment supportive of the development and maintenance of a healthy mind, body, and spirit for **all** members of the ISU community. Such an initiative aligns with the university's mission to provide an engaging, challenging, and supportive learning environment, and supports the university's vision to improve our community while ensuring the success of its people. Further, with health care costs ever-increasing, the **Sycamore Wellness Initiative – Healthy Sycamores** has the potential to impact ISU's bottom line. Research has shown that cost follows risk and as the number of risk factors an employee has increases the cost significantly increases. Conversely, as risk decreases so do costs. In order to manage costs, employers must manage risks and they do this by offering their employees a comprehensive health promotion and wellness program. If employers do this well, they can realize a significant return on investment.

Work Plan – Action Steps – Process – How?:

1. Employ one graduate assistant

The graduate assistant will work to expand the web site to provide more tools for individual and classroom use and develop a text messaging system for wellness tips and reminders about programs and services.

2. Engage a faculty research associate to begin research on funding opportunities for wellness programming and education

This faculty member's primary responsibility will be to identify and study ISU students and student groups with the greatest level of need then produce a report with suggestions for improvement and/or education. The associate will examine broad-based obstacles to student wellness at ISU and coordinate with other faculty to infuse wellness education into academics. The associate will also assist with distribution of wellness grant funding.

3. Create a campus wellness grant funding program

Because a variety of campus organizations and academic units can play a role in carrying out this mission, but few have the financial resources to carry forward those ideas, it is the desire of the wellness initiative team to create and administer a funding stream that will assist campus groups in implementing and funding wellness programming.

Reporting and Deliverable Schedule – When?:

Since receiving our initial funding allotment of \$35,000 in mid-April, 2011, the Sycamore Wellness Initiative committee has identified both a graduate student and a faculty research associate to assist us with our work. Their appointments will begin in August at the onset of the Fall 2011 semester.

Grant funding guidelines have been drafted and are being revised in order to put a grant funding program in place prior to the onset of the Fall 2011 semester. Throughout the summer, the committee will also continue its work to establish a Student Health and Wellness Advisory Board – including guidelines, mission and policies – with representation from SGA, Greek organizations, athletes, international students, commuter students, students with disabilities and honors students.

The work of the wellness personnel will be assessed throughout the semester when work commences with a final report to be issued at the conclusion of each semester of work.

Budget – How Much?:

Our funding request approved in April underestimated the cost for tuition waiver and a stipend for the graduate position for an academic year. We were awarded \$9,600 for this position, however the graduate assistant position requires \$7,500 for a stipend and \$7,500 for a tuition waiver.

In order to fund this position in FY 2012, we request \$5,400.

Stakeholders and Management Plan – Who?:

The wellness committee will oversee all of this work and will work in concert with the faculty fellow to further develop health and wellness promotion opportunities and programs. The graduate assistant will support and report directly to the Student Health Promotions Wellness Educator by analyzing data, including the monitoring of faculty, staff and student participation, and helping in the expansion of Student Health Promotions. Expansion will include additional services for students with program and services administration provided by students resulting in increased experiential learning opportunities on campus.

Outcome Assessment & Future Testing – How Well?:

In assessing the success of this program, we'll look for evidence of expanded Student Health Promotion services provided for and by students that results in a greater number of experiential learning opportunities. The wellness committee, along with the faculty fellow, will complete this assessment and one of the benchmarks will be their ability to expand and successfully execute wellness education, programming, and services to include at least eight new wellness activities each semester. Additionally, graduate students will be expected to enhance the SHP web site with more tools for individual and classroom use and begin development of a text messaging system for wellness tips and reminders about programs and services. The faculty research associate's ability to collect useful data about the state of wellness on the ISU campus will assist in a variety of ways, of which much will be used to supplement grant funding requests of external sources. Therefore, increased wellness-related grant funding will be one indication of success.