WorkLife Programs Ambassador Activity Ideas

WorkLife Programs staff has often heard ambassadors stating, “I wish I could think of some activities to do with my represented area.” We’ve put together a running collection of ideas generated from past ambassadors, WorkLife Programs staff members, and/or reference books. Feel free to test some of these ideas in your area.

From: Tonya Agnew, 2008-2010

Description of Activity/Event(s): Qualtrics Surveys
Set up a survey in Qualtrics (search “Purdue Qualtrics” online) to see what types of presentations/workshops your area is interested in being offered onsite.

From: Trish Anderson & Jill Mullens, 2011-2012

Description of Activity/Event(s): Walking Program
Krannert Walking Program at lunch was implemented and expanded to four days per week. We used WorkLife resources (print, pedometers, measure wheel) and we made maps for our area. Other ideas for expansion include 1) walk-a-thon for charity, 2) semi-permanent route maps installed in KRAN tunnels for cold weather walking, and 3) add route maps to current WorkLife Programs Physical Activity Resource Guide for future walkers.

From: Jennifer Biehl, 2009-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): General
Consider these ideas for your area:
- program that are streamed live for view on computers
- department competitions – food finders food drives, weight loss
- walking program around building
- weight loss program like Biggest Loser

From: Judy Bower, 2010-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): Social Networking
Utilize and promote the Live Well App to make individual activities more social

From: Anita Brieda, 2011-2013

Description of Activity/Event(s): Presentations
Host a presentation on the expectations of work styles and communication skills among different generations. Stress caused by assuming reactions of co-workers based on your own generation can be troublesome.
From: Annette Brown, 2009-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): Presentations
Presentations on “Humor for the Health of It” and “Emotional Intelligence” were presented to staff by HFS Human Resource Specialists. These sessions were intended to assist staff in incorporating humor into their daily lives and the impact humor plays on one’s health as well as understanding when one is stressed and/or emotionally taxed.

From: David Caldwell, 2009-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): Retiree Username & Passwords
Encourage all retirees to get a @purdue.edu account so they can log into the online registration system to view all offerings.

From: Tami Conn, 2010-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): Flex Time
Work with the department head to allow flex time for attendance at WorkLife Programs opportunities and to recognize the importance and value it brings to their employees.

From: Coping with Holiday Stress

Description of Activity/Event(s): Holiday Stress Relief Tips
By sending out e-mails during the holiday season (in mid December) with ideas of activities to do, helped staff members relieve their “Holiday Stress”. These e-mails or posters included a thought for the day with a photo from online and even a recipe as a suggestion. The tips included fun activities, for all ages, such as: sledding, seeing holiday lights, cooking/baking with a friend or child, and much more. There was also a stress walk in the Alumni center once a week which consisted of walking the stairs or around the building during lunch time and then having lunch together after, which each person brought for themselves. And, as prizes, each participant got a healthy treat and easy advice to follow. Another great idea is to post nutritional information, whether it is a chart or advice, on refrigerators or vending machines in break rooms.

From: Kenneth Field, 2009-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): Walking Program
Offer a summer physical activity walking challenge. Coordinate walks (30 minutes/2 miles) over lunch and provide slips of paper with name and date for each walker. Offer monthly drawing with prizes for walkers. More entries equal more chances to win. Schedule 4 times per week from May – July.

From: Jim Gilligan, 2007-2009

Description of Activity/Event(s): Health Awareness Red Apple Workshop
I organized a presentation about participating in Healthy Purdue and scheduled it for our college-wide COESAC meeting. I also set up a nutrition presentation on site for the COE employees. This was very easy to organize and it was well attended and worklife did all the work.
From: Amanda Goodnight, 2009-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): Walking Program
Consider offering a walking program at the lunchtime or after work near your area of representation.

From: Gina Haines, 2005-2006

Description of Activity/Event(s): Traveling Award
Develop criteria for a weekly or monthly award to be submitted by peers. Wellness Ambassadors would select a recipient and present the award to them.

From: Elizabeth Hartley, 2007-2009

Description of Activity/Event(s): Housing & Food Services Activities
We offered 1) presentations on Healthy Purdue incentive program, 2) started a university residence hall stop smoking class, 3) Walking Program, 4) Weight Watchers at Work, 5) HFS Fitness Room. Also we worked on developing a day long retreat for staff on wellness to earn red or purple apples.

From: Health Promotion Ideas that Work (checkout book for more details)

Description of Activity/Event(s): Employee Bakeoff
Increase your area’s ability to make good nutritional decisions with an old fashion bakeoff. It can reinforce basic concepts of good nutrition and challenge their ability to modify their favorite recipes.

From: Health Promotion Ideas that Work (checkout book for more details)

Description of Activity/Event(s): Untie the Stress
Casual dress-down days are becoming more common throughout the business world. If your area hasn’t adopted this convention, consider hosting an Untie the Stress day to introduce the concept with a few easy steps.

From: Krista Hixson, 2009-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): 10,000 Steps Challenge
Group/participants buy pedometers and try to increase steps to 10,000 per day. We did a theme of walking to Disney World and there is a prize for the team that wins. Also consider these ideas for your area:
- food drive
- book drive
- brown bag lunch seminars
- Red Cross Angel Tree
From: Rhonda Hostetter, 2010-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): Host a Presentation
Plan a lunch time offering for your department. Choose a topic and contact the WorkLife Programs office to solicit a speaker. Reserve a room in your building and email an announcement to your area. Also fundraisers are a good way to get people involved. People always want to help someone out.

From: Dorothy Hughes, 2007-2009

Description of Activity/Event(s): Host a Presentation
Plan a lunch time offering for your department. Choose a topic and contact the WorkLife Programs office to solicit a speaker. Reserve a room in your building and email an announcement to your area.

From: Anneliese Kay, 2006-2008

Description of Activity/Event(s): On-site Presentations
A WorkLife Programs staff member came to a staff meeting last year about Stress Reduction. I really enjoyed it and thought it was very helpful.

From: Danica Kirkpatrick, 2008-2010

Description of Activity/Event(s): Extension E-Newsletters
Share information about alternative wellness screenings and flu shot options via new extension newsletter.

From: Sue Lakin & Martha Williams, 2011-2013

Description of Activity/Event(s): Presentations
Invite Mitch Nettesheim from the Recreational Sports Center to offer a presentation on Functional Fitness.

From: Kathy Lawhead, 2003-2005

Description of Activity/Event(s): Recreational Sports Center Tours
As a member of the Recreational Sports Staff, an idea I would like to throw out there are tours available of the RSC and AQUA. We would be willing to show employees our facilities and talk about our offerings. As an ambassador you could arrange groups from your department(s) to visit together. It is best to keep groups under 20 if possible. Contact Kathy Lawhead at 494-3111 or Andy Milton at 494-3124 to find out additional details.

From: Judy Lindell, 2005-2006

Description of Activity/Event(s): Bulletin Boards
Each month prepare and update a “Wellness” bulletin board for the department that includes wellness information and nutrition information. This will be a great way to help others understand the basics of wellness.
From: Michelle Liratni, 2008-2010

Description of Activity/Event(s): Bulletin Board
Create a bulletin board for staff as a resource area to find upcoming information about events, programming, etc.

From: Jamie Loizzo, 2006-2008

Description of Activity/Event(s): Walking Group
It would be great to have a walking group started for those working in the AGAD building. We need to brainstorm more ways to provide programs to county offices.

From: Kim Mullen, 2011-2013

Description of Activity/Event(s): Healthy Cooking Class
Offer a healthy cooking class using a chef from Marriott Hall inside one of their classrooms.

From: National Wellness Institute

Description of Activity/Event(s): National Health Observances Calendar
Visit http://www.nationalwellness.org to determine which health observances are in each month of the year. Focus some of your information, activities, or discussions on a specific health issue.

From: Mary Helen Nesbitt, 2005-2006

Description of Activity/Event(s): Healthy Eating & Exercise
On the department break room refrigerator or vending machines, place healthy food tips or advice on nutritional values. Make plans to organize a weekly group walk over the lunch hour. The walk could consist of tours around campus buildings.

From: Kathy O’Brien, 2009-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): CIGNA Presentations
Offer a CIGNA presentation for you area of representation to assist with understanding all the perks of the benefit plan and website programming.

From: Jaclyn Palm, 2005-2006

Description of Activity/Event(s): Stress Relief
Stress relief opportunities to encourage others around us to be relaxed and enjoy each day can easily be obtained by: providing games, CD’s, radios, a carry-in lunch, or scheduling guest speakers who touch on stress relief techniques and to share resources on tips to use. It is important to encourage each staff member to take part in at least one or more activities to improve their self esteem and decrease stress levels.
From: Jaclyn Palm, 2006-2008

Description of Activity/Event(s): On-site Presentations
Bring in speakers from WorkLife Programs to promote relaxation and stress relief.

From: Mollie B. Pennock, 2003-2005

Description of Activity/Event(s): Blood Pressure Screening
Contact the School of Nursing and arrange for a student nurse to visit a department/building to take the blood pressure of staff in the comfort of their office. This will benefit the employee by providing their blood pressure reading at work which may be higher than at home. Before arranging, a quick poll of staff should be taken to see if a sufficient number will participate. Flyers can be placed in hallways/stairwells advertising the event.

From: Terry Phillips, 2007-2009

Description of Activity/Event(s): Retirees Posters & Materials
Replace posters and make handouts available to the retirement centers to keep in communication with them: Westminster, University Place, and Green Tree. Participate in the PURA Purposeful Living in Retirement Conference every April.

From: Angie Ping, 2005-2006

Description of Activity/Event(s): Stress Management Initiatives
During the month of December, have one week dedicated to “coping with holiday stress”. Each day send out an email to all staff that includes a relaxation tip of the day, therapeutic pictures, or recipes for healthy eating. During this week, organize a group walk and motivate walkers with signs and posters on the route/stairways. Finally, have a brown bag lunch after the walk and hand out a small reward.

From: Mary Ann Prah, 2011-2013

Description of Activity/Event(s): EAP Manager/Supervisor Training
Invite Cheryl Laszynski in your department to discuss the benefits of Employee Assistance, how managers and supervisors can work with Employee Assistance, and how to utilize the program as a management tool.

From: Amy Raley, 2003-2005

Description of Activity/Event(s): Information Dissemination
I have a tough sell among a difficult audience. They can be quite challenging with their overall attitudes. The best I can do is pass along information via email or by putting up posters.
From: Becky Rice, 2010-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): Web Streaming & Share Point
Schedule monthly presentations and arrange to have them streamed so staff all over campus can be involved. Also utilize a Share Point site to archive presentations and handouts.

From: Angela Roberts, 2010-2011

Description of Activity/Event(s): Social Networking
Once the WorkLife Programs Facebook page is up and running, add a link to the monthly emails sent to groups so they can “like” the page. Also you could share pertinent Facebook postings via links from your own personal profile so that your Facebook friends reading the news feed would be more aware of WorkLife Programs. Also, it might be nice to utilize the check-in function in social media to promote participation in WorkLife Programs. For instance, if you help out at a class, check in at that location and make a brief mention of the program.

From: Mindy Schultz, 2011-2013

Description of Activity/Event(s): Biggest Loser Event
Host a Biggest Loser event and maybe have an award for the biggest loss form the month within different departments within the college. Also start a walking program. Search for grants to help with expenses.

From: Carmen Sheets, 2005-2006

Description of Activity/Event(s): “Inside Scoop”
Develop a monthly information board in your area of tips, small blurbs, or tidbits on the “Inside Scoop” that will help inform them of easy and fun ways to monitor their wellness. Also, create a way to encourage staff members within departments to form a walk group that will walk together during lunch or during a break to help relieve some stress. Walking will not only help the individual relax, but it will also help the group become accountable to one another and the activity.

From: Cody Sipe, 2003-2005

Description of Activity/Event(s): Ismail Center Tours
As an employee of the Department of Health & Kinesiology, an idea I would like to throw out there are for tours available of the A.H. Ismail Center. We would be willing to show employees our facilities and talk about our offerings. As an ambassador you could arrange groups from your department(s) to visit together. It is best to keep groups under 20 if possible. Contact Cody Sipe at 496-6449 to find out additional details.

From: Sasse Steele, 2007 - 2009

Description of Activity/Event(s): Overall Messages
Take one month per apple to focus on. For example in February you could highlight the red apple. This could involve an emailing explaining the apple, a special presentation to earn a red apple for your department, etc. Then the next month you could do the same for another apple type.
From: Jane Stewart, 2006-2008

Description of Activity/Event(s): Regular Communication
Post lots of signs and encourage people to call or e-mail you as an ambassador. Make sure all queries are answered.

From: Sharon Sturgeon, 2005-2007

Description of Activity/Event(s): Wellness Fair for Libraries
We tried for two years to get some sort of “fair” set up using perhaps a room in STEW with information, brochures, WorkLife staff, and the different worklife offerings. This must be coordinated with Rebecca Richardson. Also performing a staff survey of interests can be good for each population.

From: Latrisha Swanson, 2011-2013

Description of Activity/Event(s): Colorful Choices
Provide fruits and vegetables each week based on a themed color. Present chart with information about nutritional value of each fruit/veggie.

From: Sarah Vaughn, 2008 - 2010

Description of Activity/Event(s): Healthy Bake-Off
Coordinate a healthy bake-off where you and several colleagues sample healthy baked goods that have been prepared by other colleagues. Everyone brings copies of the recipe to share and collect.

From: WorkLife Programs

Description of Activity/Event(s): Departmental Wellness Committees
To assist you with your efforts as a Wellness Ambassador, you could organize your own wellness committee for your area of representation. This committee could help you organize events for your area or determine initiatives that you would like to take on as a group.

From: WorkLife Programs

Description of Activity/Event(s): Information Dissemination
You can request additional Working Well newsletters, program brochures, informational brochures, etc. to post around your building/department. You could also send out an email stating that you have specific information located at your desk.

From: WorkLife Programs

Description of Activity/Event(s): WorkLife Programs Resource Center
Familiarize yourself with the online web resources, books, videos, and items that can be checked out by looking at the online resource center at http://www.purdue.edu/hr/WorkLife/resourceCenter.html.
From: WorkLife Programs

Description of Activity/Event(s): Health Messages for Staff Meetings
Reserve time at your departmental/staff meetings to share health messages or wellness event updates. Or, invite someone from WorkLife Programs to do a presentation at one of these meetings.

From: WorkLife Programs

Description of Activity/Event(s): Great American Smokeout
In November, have resources, quit kits, and referral information about smoking cessation available for your area of representation. WorkLife Programs can provide you with all of the materials you need.

From: WorkLife Programs

Description of Activity/Event(s): Fitness Campaign
Use campaign materials (provided by WorkLife Programs) to encourage employees to take the stairs instead of the elevator.

From: Jody Zink, 2007-2009

Description of Activity/Event(s): Bulletin Board
We’ve placed a bulletin board in the breakroom of our TLT area. It has been great for sharing the worklife mission and a wonderful conversation starter.