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Purdue's Healthy Planet 2010: It's all about taking the right steps

France A. Córdova, president of Purdue University

At Purdue, we want you to be healthy, wealthy and wise in the ways of a balanced lifestyle.

That's why we've introduced Healthy Planet 2010, a way of focusing attention on the importance of a healthy lifestyle, backed up by the expertise of dozens of Purdue faculty and staff who want to help you live a healthier life.

Think of it as a virtuous cycle, where one good deed reinforces another.

* If you take care of your health, you save money on doctors and medicines and you have more time for a productive and rewarding life.

* Staying financially healthy means less mental stress, which improves wellness, and that means you have more energy for the activities you enjoy.

* Getting active helps keep you healthy, improves your immune system and your mood.

There are other benefits to a healthy lifestyle.

Getting active gets you out where you meet people who share your interests. (I met my husband-to-be while rock climbing and we've been together 25 years.) It also helps you shake off winter blahs and stay positive.

Good nutrition can be its own reward. It's getting easier to create meals that taste good and are good for you. Nutrition education at Purdue is more than just good food-bad food. It's all about making informed choices that lets you eat the foods you like and the foods you need, and which foods can be both.

It all starts with learning more about health and a balanced lifestyle and your own well-being. The Student Wellness Office and the Black Cultural Center are offering the first Annual Health & Wellness Fair at the Black Cultural Center from noon - 5 :00 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 4. This is your chance to learn more about health and wellness with free health screenings, snacks and information on physical activity, nutrition, academic success and healthy relationships.

I'm grateful to the 40 individuals who worked so hard to create this event. Dennis Savaiano, dean of the School of Consumer and Family Sciences, was chair. David Rollock, associate professor of Psychological Sciences chaired the global committee and Mindy Paulet, WorkLife Programs administrative director, chaired the local committee.

Healthy Planet 2010 is our way of calling attention to Purdue resources and information that are there for you year-round. There's a website with resources and contact information at http://www.purdue.edu/healthy_planet/ and although we're in the midst of things, there are many events still to come. I hope you take advantage of Healthy Planet 2010 and all the information Purdue faculty, staff and students have made available. They've worked hard to make this week fun and engaging. It's for a great cause - you!