

# WELLNESS CONNECTION

Live well. Work well.

NOVEMBER 2019

## IN THIS ISSUE

### ▶ INSPIRE TO MOVE

*Motivating ideas to incorporate physical activity into your daily life.*

### ▶ NOURISHING YOU

*Healthy recipes that feed your body and mind.*

### ▶ HEALTHY HARMONY

*Self-care, mindfulness, work-life balance, and dealing with stress.*

### ▶ GOOD DECISIONS

*Making good financial and safety decisions that positively impact your life.*

### ▶ EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

*Shining a light on our U of I System colleagues.*

### ▶ WELLNESS EVENTS



*Check the event calendars at your university to find great opportunities for wellness activities in and around your work community!*



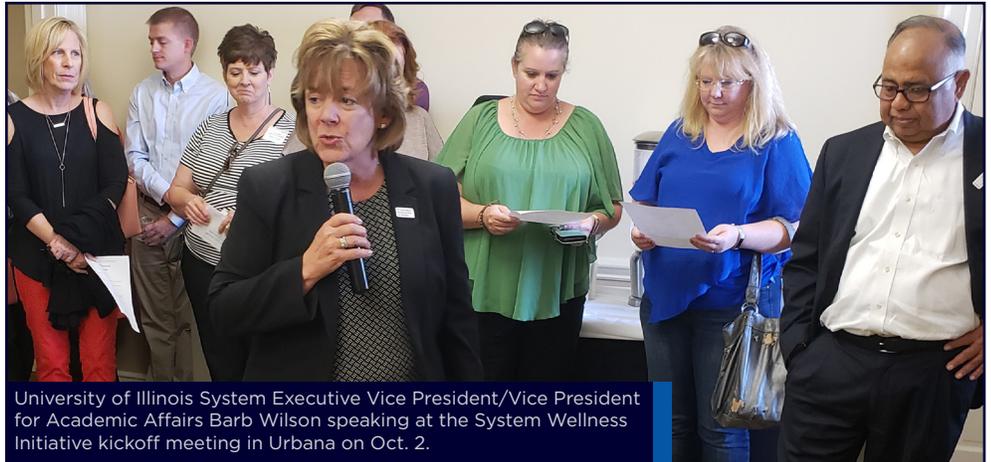
[UIUC Campus Wellbeing Service Wellness Events](#)



[UIC Wellness Center Calendar of Events](#)



[UIS Connection Events Calendar](#)



University of Illinois System Executive Vice President/Vice President for Academic Affairs Barb Wilson speaking at the System Wellness Initiative Kickoff meeting in Urbana on Oct. 2.

## System Offices Hitting Their Stride

Thank you to all who attended the wellness kickoff meeting on Oct. 2! We estimated 90-100 system office employees attended between the three universities. Barb Wilson and Avijit Ghosh spoke at the Illini Union in Urbana and Ed Seidel spoke at Student Center West in Chicago. If you weren't able to attend or haven't had a chance to hear their comments, you can find both recordings on the System Office Wellness [webpage](#).

Our first big initiative, UI Stride, is in its fourth week! A total of 260 system office employees signed up for the challenge. Twenty-four teams are competing to

be the first to complete 859,500 steps by Nov. 30. OTM Chicago is in the [lead](#) for three straight weeks! Several smaller units have combined to form their own unique multi-departmental teams.

Pay attention to the red line on the UI Stride logo at the top of the home page! This red line indicates the overall progress of all of the teams in reaching the 859,500 steps goal. The team who completes the challenge first wins bragging rights and will house the highly coveted UI Stride trophy in their office(s) until completion of the next challenge.

Every UI Stride participant will receive a t-shirt and LED zipper pull. This swag will be delivered to you before the Thanksgiving holiday. Wear your apparel with pride and do your best to be active every day!

Good luck to all of the teams, and thank you for helping us make wellness an everyday goal! ■

### ▶ FEEDBACK



Contact the System Office Wellness Committee:

[SOWellness@uillinois.edu](mailto:SOWellness@uillinois.edu)



READ TIME:  
5 MINUTES

## Motivate Yourself to Move

By Lydia Schillinger

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, this is the sound of your early morning alarm going off so you can jump start your day with a 5 a.m. workout. You wake up from an impeccable night's rest all refreshed and ready to start your day. You make your bed, jump into your clothes and eat a healthy breakfast of a glass of skim milk, a piece of whole grain

toast with almond butter, three perfectly cooked egg whites and two strips of crisp to perfection turkey bacon. The sun is shining and the birds are chirping. You drink 8oz. of water on the way to the gym and make it in plenty of time to refill your water bottle and warm up before your workout begins.

If this is your typical morning kudos to you, keep up the great work! If this does not sound like your typical morning, no worries. To be healthy and fit, you do not have to get up and workout at 5 a.m. The great thing about healthy living and wellness is you can be flexible and fit in activities when it is convenient and most enjoyable for you.

The areas of healthy living and wellness encompass Emotional, Physical, Occupational, Social, Spiritual and Intellectual needs for a healthy life balance. This newsletter will address each of these areas of wellness. This *Inspire to Move* section will focus on the physical.

In this series Motivate to Move I will give you tips and tricks on how to stay active and live a healthy lifestyle. You will learn about heart rate, Body Mass Index (BMI), building lean strong muscles, losing those few extra pounds and being overall physically fit. Whether you are a beginner or a super fit get up and workout at 5am type of person, everyone will benefit from learning how to stay healthy or how to get healthy.

As with any new life change always consult your doctor so your individual needs will be met. We want to get you healthy and keep you healthy.



Peggy Lister and Lydia Schillinger at the gym. Noon fitness classes are a staff favorite! Photo Credit: Taylor Davis

### This Month's Tip: Get Moving

Today is a good day to start moving. **Change.** Go for a walk and enjoy nature before work, on your lunch hour, or after work, whether alone, with a friend, or with a four-legged animal.

Take the stairs instead of the elevator; I work on the fifth floor in my building and I can tell you, when I get to the top I am breathing heavy but I feel invigorated! What a great way to start your day! Park a little farther and walk - you can even try this at the grocery store. Get off at an earlier stop if you take the bus and walk the rest of the way.

Volunteer to assist at an event on campus or in your community. Putting yourself to work will be great for the community and for your waistline. Join an activity you have never done before, [pickleball](#) anyone? Anything that gets you up and moving is great for your overall well-being.

Join a fitness class at the recreation center. All instructors should know modifications if this is your first time doing the class or if they are medically needed. Don't be afraid to tell the instructor it is your first time taking that particular class or what your needs may be. In my experience instructors always seem happy to help!

Make sure to drink lots of water to keep yourself hydrated during your activities.

Write to us and let us know what activity or new experience you tried. We may feature your story in our newsletter. ■

## NOURISHING YOU



READ TIME:  
1 MINUTE



CONTENT SOURCE:  
[CLICK HERE](#)

# Turkey Taco Taters

This quick and delicious dinner recipe will surprise your taste buds! The combination of turkey taco meat with sweet potato will get rave reviews, and these taste even better the next day for lunch.

### Ingredients:

- 1 lb. lean ground turkey
- 1 10oz. can Rotel Diced Tomatoes & Green Chilis - Mild
- 1 Tbsp. & 1 tsp. chili powder (used separately)
- 1 Tbsp & 1 tsp. cumin (used separately)
- 1 can black beans
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 large sweet potatoes
- Salsa

### Instructions:

1. Wrap sweet potatoes in foil and bake at 350° until done, approximately 45 minutes to one hour. If pressed for time, sweet potatoes can be cooked in the microwave on high until tender, about 4-5 minutes on each side (pierce the potatoes several times with a fork before cooking). Let potatoes cool for a few minutes before handling.
2. Brown ground turkey in a large, non-stick skillet.
3. When turkey is browned, add a can of Rotel, 1 Tbsp. chili powder and 1 Tbsp. cumin and heat until warm.
4. In a separate sauce pan, combine black beans, 1 Tbsp. olive oil, 1 tsp. chili powder, and 1 tsp. cumin until warm.
5. Add turkey taco mixture and ¼ cup black bean mixture to one half of a large sweet potato and top with salsa.
6. Enjoy! ■



Photo Credit: WineandGlue.com

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

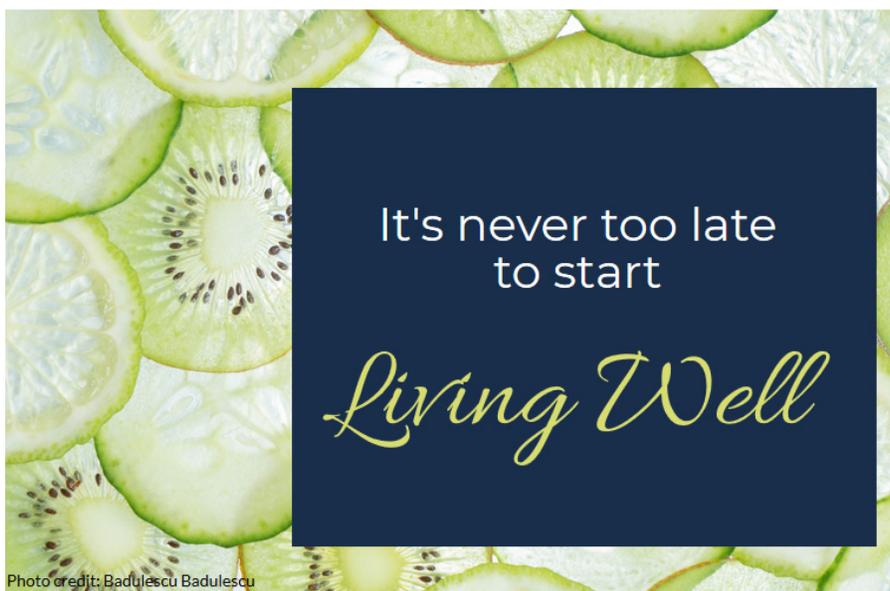


Photo credit: Badulescu Badulescu

READ TIME:  
5 MINUTESCONTENT SOURCE:  
[CLICK HERE](#)

# Five Ways to Achieve a Better Work-Life Balance, Build Resiliency

It is important to be aware of how your current state of wellbeing is affecting your work/life balance. Are you feeling overwhelmed with responsibility at work or at home? Are you feeling easily angered, frustrated or impatient? Does life in general have you feeling stressed out, worn out or unmotivated?

With the holidays upon us, it is understandable to feel all of these things and more. Studies show that stressed out employees tend to make more mistakes, take more sick days and have lower productivity.

The good news is there are **FIVE** things you can start doing **TODAY** to improve your resiliency during times of stress:

## Sleep

Did you know according to the [National Sleep Foundation](#), adults should be getting 7-9 hours of sleep per night? **Getting enough sleep is a biological necessity for physical and mental health.** If you are currently not getting enough sleep, commit to going to bed 15-30 minutes earlier each night. If you are someone who struggles with insomnia, check out these [tips](#) on how to beat it.

## Exercise

We spend a majority of our day sitting in traffic commuting to and from work, sitting at a desk, and sitting at home watching TV. **Physical activity can boost energy, mood, cognition and performance.** Take action to change at least one thing in your daily routine! There are many small steps you can start today towards being more active. You can take the stairs at work, park farther away at the grocery store or simply stretch your body for 5-10 minutes before going to bed at night.

## Mental Recovery

Staying attentive and focused is critical to high performance. Cell phones, email, apps, and technology can be a constant mental distraction. Commit to take 10-15 minutes during your workday to allow your mind to regain focus and clarity. Simple, easy mindfulness exercises can be practiced anywhere and anytime! An example is to focus on your breathing, taking a deep breath and closing your eyes. Focus on your breath as it moves in and out of your body. **You can train your brain to be better focused, resulting in clearer thinking.**

## Social Recovery

Connecting, caring, and sharing with others can lower stress levels and boost moods. Make lunch plans with a friend, compliment someone on a cute outfit, and talk to the person next to you in the elevator; if anything, say 'Have a good day!.' Make an effort to smile at someone each day. **Finding ways to encourage positive social interactions on the job and outside of work will go far to improving your overall wellbeing.**

## Gratitude

Be intentional about having a positive attitude. Think of a mental checklist of all of the ways you are grateful today. Thank someone for the positivity they contribute to your life. **Incorporating gratitude in your daily routine can increase energy and creativity and enhance your mood.**

If you practice these **FIVE** things every day, you will build your resilience as an employee and a human being! Resiliency allows you to adapt to situations and crises, and builds positive beliefs in your abilities. Nurturing yourself through physical activity and mindfulness plays a large role in developing a strong network of support so that when stressful situations arise, you are able to handle anything that comes your way. ■

*Physical activity can boost energy, mood, cognition, and performance.*



READ TIME:  
3 MINUTES



CONTENT SOURCE:  
[CLICK HERE](#)

# Flu Shots Can Keep You Healthy

It's that time of year again!

Flu shot clinics are popping up around our communities in workplaces, pharmacies, and doctor's offices. Health care professionals are working hard to make sure that getting a flu shot is quick and convenient for the general public. If you're an individual who gets the flu shot each year, but haven't yet, there's no better time than the present! Maybe you're one of those people who has never gotten a flu shot and have managed to avoid catching the flu. Each year the Center for Disease Control and Prevention share some benefits of receiving the flu vaccination. Hopefully, after reading about its benefits, each one of you will consider protecting yourself and others from the flu by getting the shot.

## Flu vaccination can keep you from getting sick with flu.

This is the first and most obvious benefit of the vaccine. In seasons when the vaccine viruses matched circulating strains, flu vaccine has been shown to reduce the risk of having to go to the doctor with flu by 40-60%.

## Flu vaccination can reduce the risk of flu-associated hospitalization for children, working-age adults, and older adults.

If you don't get the flu shot to protect yourself, at least get it to protect those around you who may have weakened immune systems! Flu vaccine prevents tens of thousands of hospitalizations each year. For example, during 2016-2017, flu vaccination prevented an estimated 85,000 flu-related hospitalizations.



## Vaccination helps protect women during and after pregnancy.

Vaccination reduces the risk of flu-associated acute respiratory infection in pregnant women by up to one-half. Getting vaccinated can also protect a baby after birth from flu by allowing the mom to pass antibodies to the developing baby during her pregnancy.

## Information and Additional Resources

For more information on flu vaccinations including Frequently Asked Questions, please visit the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website](#).

As a benefit-eligible, system office employee you're eligible for a free or reduced cost flu shot! [More resources available at each university](#).

If these resources are not convenient for you, please check with local pharmacies and health providers in your area. ■



READ TIME:  
3 MINUTES

## Q&A with Brenda Hixson

Brenda Hixson, Director of the OBFS Business Solutions & Support, recently sat down with the Wellness Connection to talk about her healthy habits, and a fun community wellness opportunity coming up around the holidays.

### Question:

Can you tell me about how you incorporate health and wellness into your professional life?

### Answer:

I try to inspire others by encouraging them to be active. For lunch I try to get out of the office setting to clear my mental space and to get some fresh air. Additionally, I frequently ask colleagues to take our shorter meetings outdoors to grab a cup of coffee or just to take a walk. I often find that the change in scenery helps us take a new approach to a subject that we may be having a challenge with. I also make it a goal to take the stairs once a day (100 steps).

### Question:

What type of impact do you see in your professional life as a result of incorporating these healthy habits?

### Answer:

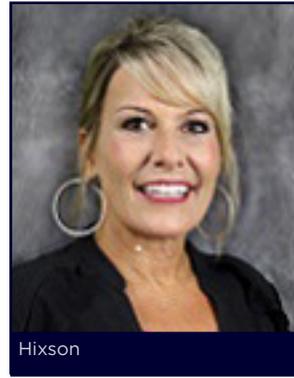
I find that I am less stressed and when I do get confronted with stressful situations I am better prepared to take on those challenges. Most importantly I find myself with a much more positive outlook on the work which leads to greater productivity.

### Question:

Do you have any tips or recommendations you could provide to someone interested in incorporating more healthy habits into their professional life?

### Answer:

Be realistic about your health goals. Don't try to take on a challenge too big at first. In the beginning try to concentrate on smaller wins, this approach often leads to greater outcomes in the long run. I'm also a firm believer that if you start the day off with a workout you will take that motivation into your day. It gives you a positive frame of mind the moment you step in the office. Regular physical activity can also impact your perspective on challenges so you don't keep focusing on a situation through the same lens.



Hixson

### Question:

Do you participate in any types of health and wellness activities outside of work?

### Answer:

I lead an exercise program with 25-30 participants focusing on strength, core, and cardio. I love to run, bike, and swim for fun, charity, and competition. I am most proud of participating in the St. Jude Hospital Campaign to Peoria Run annually.

### Question:

Are there any upcoming health and wellness events that you are excited to be involved with?

### Answer:

I'm looking forward to the St. Joseph [Santa 5k run/walk](#) on December 21. This is the second annual event, and last year it really got us into the holiday spirit! ■