

WELLNESS CONNECTION

Live well. Work well.

JANUARY 2020

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► 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](#)



Pictured: Members of the OTM Chicago office with the inaugural UI Stride Trophy! Bottom row (L-R): Lauren Segal, Kim Wright, Melissa Maderia, Tamira Davis. Middle row (L-R): Jon Gortat, Anne Burkhardt (standing in for Pamela Parker), Hyunjin Kim. Top Row (L-R): Svetlana Kurilova, Veronica Havwood

Striding for Victory: Q&A With OTM Chicago

The Wellness Connection recently sat down with the Office of Technology Management (OTM) in Chicago to discuss the team's victory in the inaugural UI Stride competition.

The OTM crew easily surpassed the goal 859,500 steps - the distance between each of the three U of I System universities - by averaging 499,420 steps during the six-week competition!

Did you have a strategy to make sure everyone was active and logging their activity on a daily basis?

Having regular conversations about physical activities and holding each other accountable. The fitness goals started before UI Stride. We sent an email every Monday to remind everyone to get in their activities. Most people in the office have Fitbits and help each other to use those Fitbit trackers.

Did you coordinate activities, or do activities independently?

It was a combination of both: a group of OTM employees were already going to the gym and doing other activities, and when the UI Stride started the group really started to coordinate our efforts.

► **READ MORE: [CONTINUED ON PAGE 5](#)**

► FEEDBACK



Contact the System Office Wellness Committee:

SOWellness@uillinois.edu



READ TIME:
5 MINUTES



CONTENT SOURCE:
[CLICK HERE](#)

How to Get Started Working Out at Home

By Lydia Schillinger

It is a New Year and a chance for a new and improved you. Working out at home can be just as effective as working out at a gym. There are several ways in which you may get started.

A colleague found this great website called [livestrong.com](#). Take a few minutes to check out this article entitled [How to Get Started Working Out at Home for Beginners](#) by Lauren Bedosky. This article has step-by-step moves for each of the exercises it suggests as it takes you through the process of beginning a workout routine.

First make sure there are no hazards nearby. Find an area that is safe to move around in without hitting anything. I have a friend that did a back kick right into her stereo! Your area may be indoors or out, there are no limits to where you need to be to get started. In January it is a bit chilly to be outside for me, so I choose to be indoors. I find my perfect spot in my basement or living room and I begin with a warmup. You always want to warm up your muscles first. This will help prevent injury. Warming up your muscles literally means to warm them up by moving around. Doing jumping jacks is a great way to get your body warm. You will feel this starting to happen as you progress with each warmup exercise.

Follow the warmup and exercises in the article for instruction on how to do each move.

- Jumping Jacks
- Body-weight squats (you do not need weights to work out, using your own body weight is very effective)
- Push-ups
- Alternating front lunge

When your warmup is complete you will want to pick a series of exercises that target specific muscle groups and repeat them in what is called a circuit. A circuit is one completion of all the exercises in your workout section. I like to have multiple circuits in my workout routine. I like to a variety of exercises to target specific areas and work opposing muscle groups each day of the week. Monday I work my arms (biceps and triceps), Tuesday I do cardio (jog, go for a brisk walk, take a kick boxing class, run up and down the stairs in your house for 5 minutes, rest and repeat, whatever gets your heart rate up), Wednesday I work my legs (hamstrings and quadriceps), Thursday I do cardio, Friday I work my core (abs and back).

The article recommends the following basics to get started, but any exercises will work. (Detailed explanations of each exercise are [in the article](#)).

Circuit 1:

- Triceps dips -you can use your couch for this or simply do them on the floor.
- Alternating side lunge
- Knee to elbow plank
- Jump squat -these are a challenge, not going to lie, but they are extremely effective in getting your heart rate up and that burns calories.

Circuit 2:

- Crunches
- Plank

It doesn't mention this in the article but after every workout you MUST cool down your muscles. You just worked them out hard, now you need to let them stretch and cool down. Yoga moves - check out [VeryWellFit.com](#) - are a great way to do this. Holding poses for 10-15 seconds is a great way to help stretch your muscles making them longer and leaner, while also preventing injury. (Never bounce while you are holding a pose). A few cool down exercises I enjoy will depend on the groups of muscles I just worked. If it was arm day I like to do:

- Triceps stretch - Do a [triceps stretch](#) with your arm toward the sky, elbow bent trying to touch the middle of your back, then switch arms and repeat.
- Cross body arm stretch - Hold your arm across the front of your body, then switch arms and repeat

There are a lot of great ways to cool your body down. The point is, you want to get your heart rate back to a normal beat before you end your exercise session. Slowing back down the heartbeat gradually is key. After you have been exercising for a while your heart rate will be elevated. You will want to walk for a while to slow down your breathing and your heart rate. You want to avoid sitting down after a workout, you need to walk it off first. Stopping any exercise cold turkey could cause you to pass out. You need to keep moving around so your muscles can pump the blood back to your heart which keeps your blood pressure from dropping too quickly.

If you try any new workout moves that you love, or have a success story, please share them. You may be featured in an upcoming newsletter. ■

► NOURISHING YOU



READ TIME:
3 MINUTE



CONTENT SOURCE:
[CLICK HERE](#)

Healthy Breakfast Egg Muffins

Ingredients:

- 1 cup lightly packed baby spinach chopped
- ¾ cup finely diced red bell pepper
- ¾ cup finely diced green bell pepper
- ¾ cup quartered cherry tomatoes or ¼ cup chopped sun-dried tomatoes
- 6 large eggs
- 4 large egg whites
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon dried basil
- ¼ teaspoon dried oregano
- Pinch ground black pepper
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese
- Optional toppings: avocado

Instructions:

1. Place a rack in the center of your oven and preheat to 350 degrees F. Lightly coat a standard 12-cup muffin tin with nonstick spray. Divide the spinach, red bell pepper, green bell pepper, and tomatoes among the cups (they will be about two-thirds of the way full).
2. In a large bowl or large measuring cup with a spout (it makes the mixture easy to pour), briskly whisk together the eggs, egg whites, salt, basil, oregano, and pepper until well combined. Carefully fill each muffin cup three-quarters of the way to the top with the egg mixture. Sprinkle the feta evenly over the tops of the cups.
3. Bake for 24 to 28 minutes, until the egg muffins are set. Let cool for a few minutes, and then run a butter knife around the edges of each muffin to loosen. Remove them from the pan and enjoy immediately, or let cool on a wire rack and refrigerate or freeze for later.

Recipe Notes:

Store leftover egg muffins in an airtight container or ziptop bag in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or individually wrap and freeze for up to 3 months. Reheat gently in the microwave (once thawed

or directly from frozen) until hot and warmed through to the center, about 30 seconds (from thawed) or 1 or so minutes (from frozen), depending upon your microwave.

This recipe is incredibly flexible. Feel free to swap the listed veggies for the same amount of any other diced vegetable or cooked, diced meat. If the vegetables are very firm, such as carrots or sweet potatoes, I recommend cooking and cooling them first before adding them to the cups.

Nutrition Information:

Amount per serving (1 muffin) -
Calories: 70, Fat: 3g, Saturated Fat: 1g,
Cholesterol: 96mg, Sodium: 148mg,
Carbohydrates: 3g, Fiber: 1g, Sugar: 2g,
Protein: 8g ■



Photo Credit: WellPlated.com

► FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"I DON'T COUNT MY SIT-UPS; I ONLY START COUNTING WHEN IT STARTS HURTING BECAUSE THEY'RE THE ONLY ONES THAT COUNT." -MUHAMMAD ALI

READ TIME:
4 MINUTES

Six Steps: Make This YOUR Year

By Jackie Billhymer

Welcome to the New Year! There is a passage in T.S. Eliot's "Little Gidding" that reads:

*"What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from."*

The New Year brings a sense of renewal with new beginnings and anticipation for all of the wonderful possibilities the next 365 days may offer. It can also be a time of reflection over the last year, recounting the good and the bad and putting the year 'to rest', so to speak. Whether your focus is the beginning of the year or the end, there are several things to consider as you ponder the New Year.

A resolution by Merriam-Webster's definition is 'a position arrived at after consideration' or a 'firm or unwavering adherence to one's purpose'. And maybe you don't like to call them resolutions. You can decide to set a goal, have a renewed sense of purpose, right a wrong or decide to say goodbye to old habits and ways of thinking. Whatever your feelings are - each new day is an opportunity to make positive changes. THIS is the year!

Whether you call it a resolution, a goal, a purpose or a priority, the intent is that you are willing to change something in order to accomplish another. Studies of human behavior tell us there is often a gap between intention and behavior. We intend to exercise more, give up smoking or soda, eat better or save more money. It is our behavior that dictates whether we take action towards accomplishing the goal.

Here are steps you can take to make this YOUR year:

1. In the words of Zig Ziglar, **start** with a checkup from the neck up. Get real with yourself! Think about the things you want to do, improve upon, or change. What do you want to accomplish? Why is it important to you? Take time to **envision** what effect this change will have on your life.
2. **Write down** what you would like to accomplish the most. It is important to write your goals down to see them, not just think of them. Be specific! If your goal is to become more active in your community, narrow it down to the specific area(s) you want to get involved in.
3. How are you going to make it happen? **Create** an action plan. For each goal, think of one to three **actions** that will support your goal. Using the example from above, you have decided you want to become more involved in the community by volunteering at a local hospital. An action would be to contact the organization and ask about how to become a volunteer and take the required steps.
4. You have your goal(s) and you have a few actions set towards the goal. Now, **set a time frame** for accomplishing your goal(s). Be realistic! If your goal is to run a marathon and you consider yourself a couch potato, then give yourself time to train. Look at your action plan and break it down by what you want to accomplish in a week, a month, 90 days, whatever a realistic length of time is for YOU.
5. **Commit** to following your action plan. Keep it fresh in your mind by posting your list somewhere that can serve as a daily reminder - the fridge, the bathroom mirror, your office, the dashboard of your car. Seeing your goal(s) every day will help remind you of WHY it is important.
6. Lastly, be prepared to **adjust**. You may have setbacks or obstacles pop up that catch you unprepared. When this happens, go back to your action plan and make changes if you need to. Maybe a goal is going to take longer than you hoped, and that is okay. Keep at it!

Setting goals requires consistency and patience. Take it one day at a time and celebrate or reward yourself when you do accomplish a goal. Have a mindset that anything is possible! This IS the year you achieve your goal(s). May the New Year bring you happiness, peace and prosperity! ■

GOOD DECISIONS



READ TIME:
2 MINUTES



CONTENT SOURCE:
[CLICK HERE](#)

Staying Safe, Active During Winter

Don't let cold weather throw a wrench into your exercise routine! Winter weather can often act as a deterrent for those who enjoy outdoor activities as part of their exercise routine. Staying safe and warm during these colder, darker months of the year can help to keep your physical activity from going dormant. Check out these tips to keep you safe during cold-weather exercise, **but as always, check with your doctor first to review any special precautions you need based on your conditions or your medications.**

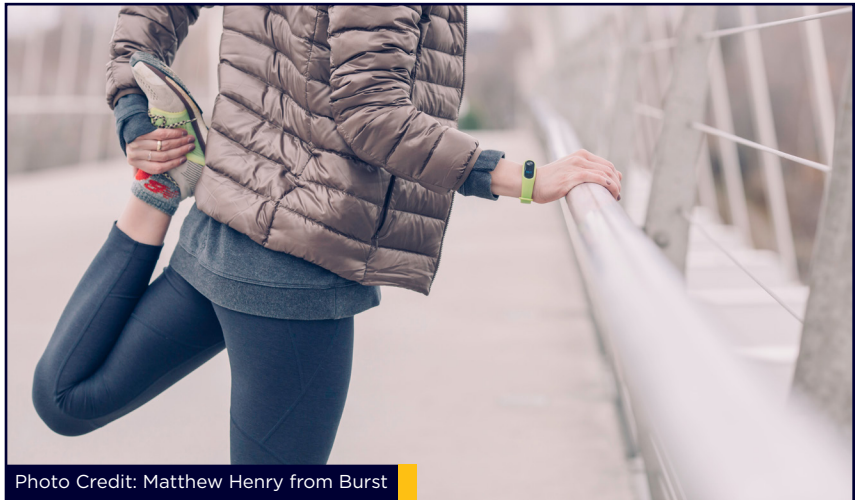


Photo Credit: Matthew Henry from Burst

Check weather conditions and wind chill. This may seem obvious but weather can change at a moments notice. Temperature, wind and moisture, along with the length of time that you'll be outside, are key factors in planning a safe cold-weather workout.

Dress in layers. Dressing too warm in cold weather can actually cause a person to overheat. Dress in layers that you can remove as soon as you start to sweat and then put back on as needed. You may need to experiment to find the right combination of clothing for you based on your exercise intensity. Keep in mind that stop-and-go activities, such as mixing walking with running, can make you more

vulnerable to the cold if you repeatedly work up a sweat and then get chilly.

Don't forget safety gear and sunscreen. If your physical activity takes place during winter's dark hours, be sure to wear reflective clothing and use an illuminated signal like the light up zipper pull given as UI Stride swag, a blinking light on a bicycle or lighted running belt. It's also just as easy to get sunburned in winter as in summer — even more so if you're exercising in the snow or at high altitudes. Wear a sunscreen that blocks both UVA and UVB rays and a lip balm with sunscreen.

For more information and additional tips, please visit the [Mayo Clinic's website](#). ■

► STRIDING FOR VICTORY: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

What types of activities did you all largely participate?

Competition dancing, tennis, ice hockey, jujitsu, boxing, aqua therapy, running. The conversion chart really helped ensure OTM staff members could log their activity no matter what sport or exercise they were involved in.

You mentioned that the group was trying to be more active before UI Stride began. Does your group plan on working together to stay active?

We spend a lot of time sitting in the office and the group decided to start going to the gym. At first it was just a few, but the group started to grow. The UI Stride really gave the group motivation. OTM has found the UI Stride competition to be a great source of motivation and plans to continue to push one another to reach our fitness goals.

What recommendation would you give units that may want to prepare for the next UI Stride?

Making sure there is a sense of accountability. Hearing from other staff that they want you to hit your goals and helping staff who may not be good with the technology.

What would you like to see in the next UI Stride?

It would be great to see more public recognition for the winners of the UI Stride. The trophy is nice, but if the winning team received chair massages, or a celebration lunch, or some other type of award, that would really incentivize teams to get involved. It would really help get teams more active! ■



READ TIME:
4 MINUTES

Spotlight on System Office Employee Volunteering

By Jackie Billhymer

What better way to kick off the New Year than a spotlight on volunteering? In September 2019, the System Office wellness committee sent out a survey to gauge what areas of wellness you were interested in receiving information on and having coordinated activities around. Volunteering accounted for 48.8% of responses, making it one of the top five activities. We then sent a survey out in December 2019 specifically to find out how employees are [currently volunteering](#).

Of the 105 responses we received, 63.8% of respondents currently volunteer! You volunteer in your churches, schools, local communities and organizations, serve on boards and coach sports teams. All of these things go far in supporting our local communities. Volunteering can provide a sense of purpose and be beneficial in developing leadership skills and learning how to work in teams.

There are several resources for employees to learn about volunteering at each of our universities. In Urbana, the [Office of Volunteer Programs](#) in the Illini Union hosts donation drives, such as the Thanksgiving Meal Drive and Holiday Toy Drive. The office also coordinates a campus and community day of service event, which occurs in April. While their office focuses primarily on student volunteering, UIUC faculty and staff are welcome to volunteer as well. Another resource for Urbana is the [CU Volunteer Portal](#) that serves as a data warehouse of volunteer activities moderated by the Office of Volunteer Programs. The [Illinois Administrative Professionals](#) have philanthropy events and activities. In February, they have invited community members to a mini-expo to share information in the area that could benefit from the group's involvement.

In Chicago, a [volunteer portal](#) lists opportunities for volunteering at the university or in the community. The portal allows UIC students and employees to locate and sign-up for volunteer opportunities, as well as track the number of hours they volunteer. The [President's Volunteer Service Award](#) provides recognition for volunteer efforts. For those that complete 4,000 hours or more of volunteer service over their lifetime receive a certificate, memento and a congratulatory letter from the President of the United States. In addition, the [UIC Center for Literacy](#) and [UI Health](#) have their own volunteer services and resources.



Springfield has many opportunities to volunteer through the Volunteer and Civic Engagement Center. The [Center](#) works with many of the student service organizations, lists [news and events](#) for opportunities to volunteer and has specific resources for [faculty and staff](#) to get involved and volunteer. The [Performing Arts Center](#) also has volunteer opportunities for their entertainment and events.

In addition to these university-based volunteer resources, there are broader resources available to employees. [Volunteer Match](#) allows you to search for opportunities by location and [Serve Illinois](#) has resources for ways to volunteer across the state. Make sure to check out all of these resources and sign up to volunteer today!

The System Office wellness committee is committed to providing you with information and resources around volunteering. We appreciate the ideas you submitted in the survey about ways we can coordinate a volunteer effort at our universities and in our communities. We will be working on volunteering and so much more in 2020 so stay tuned for further updates! ■