2014 Entry Form (Complete one for each entry.)

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

Entry Name	Journey to Wellness – A Better Way of Living, One Step at a Time			
HFA	Virginia Housing Development Authority			
Submission Contact	Brian Matt			
Phone	(804) 343-5520	Email Brian.Matt@vhda.com		

Qualified Entries must be received by Tuesday, July 1, 2014.

For more information about Qualified Entries, click here to access the 2014 Entry Rules.

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page.

HFA Virginia Housing Development Authority

Entry Name Journey to Wellness – A Better Way of Living, One Step at a Time

Communications	Homeownership	Legislative Advocacy	Management Innovation
□Annual Report □Promotional Materials and Newsletters □Creative Media	□Empowering New Buyers□Home Improvement and Rehabilitation□Encouraging New Production	☐ Federal Advocacy ☐ State Advocacy	☐Financial ☑Human Resources ☐Operations ☐Technology
Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing	Special Achievement	Are you providing visual aids?
☐Multifamily Management ☐Preservation and Rehabilitation ☐Encouraging New Production	Combating Homelessness Housing for Persons with Special Needs	Special Achievement	⊠yes □no

"Without VHDA's Health & Wellness Centers and my awesome physical therapist, I'm not sure how I would have been able to continue my exercise regimen and strength training after several back-to-back personal injuries."

Karen Raab VHDA Sr. Systems Administrator

Brief Description

Health and wellness became an important Authority-wide initiative for VHDA, and several factors contributed to the decision to integrate this initiative into our organizational culture. We partnered with one of the top "health conscious" benefit vendors to administer our medical insurance plans, surveyed our associates to gather their insights around health and wellness, formed a Health & Wellness Committee, and embarked on our "Journey to Wellness." VHDA's health and wellness strategy includes several exciting programs and initiatives.

When/Why It Was Undertaken

VHDA employs 317 associates, and over half of our workforce is female with an average overall associate age of 50. The decision to integrate health and wellness into our organization came at time of continuous rising healthcare costs, high utilization among our associate population, and several looming changes surrounding healthcare reform. Change was inevitable if we were to remain insurable and continue offering competitive benefit plans to our associates.

What VHDA Has Accomplished

Strong leadership support

VHDA's leadership strongly supports the efforts of the Health & Wellness committee, known as "Journey to Wellness." Our Executive Director invited associates to "Zumba" with her during our evening exercise classes. She also initiated a friendly competition with another leadership team member during our most recent workplace challenge – "Half Ton of Fun." This challenge offers the opportunity to lose 1000 pounds as an organization as well as other wellness initiatives to encourage healthy lifestyle choices.

Meeting associates where they are on their journey to wellness

Since we realize that every associate may be in a different place on his or her own journey to wellness, an associate volunteer-based committee, "Journey to Wellness," helps decide the programs and initiatives that we offer. Also, VHDA offered biometric screenings and health assessments in 2012 and one in 2014. Over half of our associates participated in both screenings. Participation creates awareness of our risk factors as an organization and highlights areas that need to be addressed.

Free Annual Flu Vaccine Clinics

Associates enrolled in our medical plans and their covered dependents are eligible to receive a flu vaccine free of charge during our annual flu vaccine clinics. We usually administer over 150 vaccines each year.

Lifestyle Management Programs

Our medical vendor offers several online programs to assist associates with areas they may need assistance with – tobacco cessation, weight and stress management, and other online resources. Our vendor also provides coaches to help associates stay on track through regularly scheduled telephone calls.

On-site Health & Wellness Centers

VHDA has three Health & Wellness Centers and offers classes at two of our locations. Each center offers treadmills, elliptical training machines, weight machines, and other work out equipment. We have 264 associates enrolled in our Health & Wellness Centers, and challenges are offered throughout the year to encourage friendly competition among associates. More than 200 associates are enrolled in our "Half Ton of Fun" challenge, and so far we have lost 412 pounds as an organization.

Lunch & Learns

Lunch & Learns are offered frequently and attendance varies by topic (10-20+ associates per session). We currently have 25 associates enrolled in a 3-week detox program with a focus on eating properly and ridding the body of toxins. Our new café vendor offers healthier food options and strongly advocates for nutritional education.

On-site Weight Watchers meetings

Two onsite Weight Watchers sessions have been held and a subsidy was offered to encourage participation, with 23 associates participating in the first Weight Watchers session, and 15 associates participating in the second session.

10k/5k participation subsidies

Associates are reimbursed for their participation in select 10k/5k events. There have been as many as 15 associates at a time participating in these walks, and close to 50 associates have participated in total.

"Caught in the Act!" Program

Associates nominate co-workers "caught in the act" of making healthy lifestyle choices, such as going for walks, working out in the gym, or eating properly. Nominees receive prizes for their health and wellness efforts, and to date we have had 20 associates chosen as winners in the program.

Blood pressure monitors at all locations

Blood pressure monitors are located at each of VHDA's three locations, and tracking sheets and educational sheets are provided for associates.

Why it is Meritorious and Meets NCSHA Judging Criteria Innovative

We seek feedback from our associates to provide guidance on planning wellness initiatives – we found that if they ask for it, they are more likely to participate in it.

Replicable

Our initiatives can be easily replicated by any HFA; however, seeking input from your associates might better meet the needs of your HFA, as your culture may be different. The takeaway is to follow our process, but develop programs that work for you.

Responds to a management challenge or opportunity

Management strongly supports health and wellness and plays an active role in our initiatives. This makes program implementation a much smoother process. Based on the success of our wellness journey thus far, we are clearly making strides in a positive direction given the challenge set before us by management.

Achieves measurable improvements in agency operations

VHDA's health and wellness efforts have been quite a success. Our medical vendor's clinical advocacy programs identified 71.2% of our population as needing assistance and they have engaged 43.9% of them. This means associates are using our Lifestyle Management programs and our vendor offerings to manage their health. Well visit completion rate for adults increased from 46.0% to 50.5%, compared to the norm of 34.1%. We are above the norm on all of our cancer screenings. Also, 97.5% of our associates have indicated a desire to improve their health over the next six months.

Provides benefits that outweigh costs

VHDA has a wellness fund to cover some of the program costs outside of our wellness budget. We give much thought to our benefit offerings and employer paid costs to encourage our associates to get preventive exams and tend to their healthcare needs.

Demonstrates effective use of resources

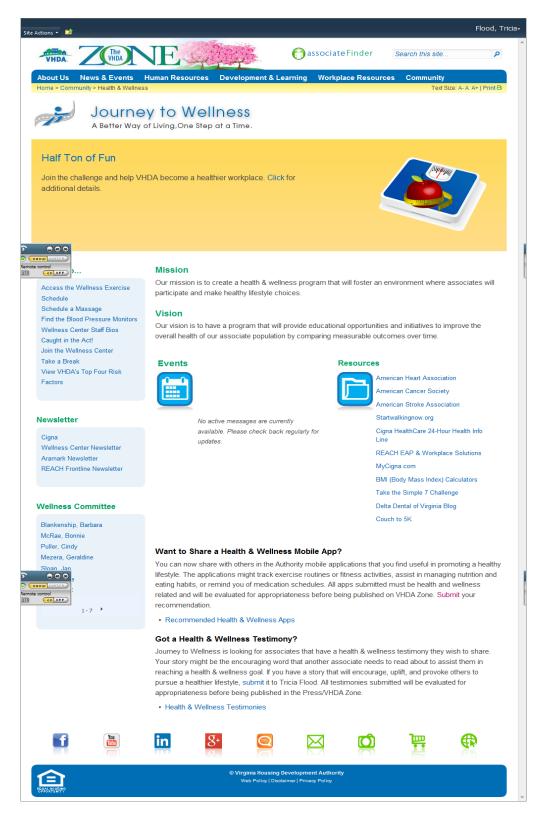
By stressing preventive healthcare, VHDA's leadership helps ensure a workforce that is healthier, happier, and more productive. Also, "Journey to Wellness" members play a huge role in developing programs, sharing associate feedback, and being advocates for health and wellness in the workplace.

Achieves strategic objectives

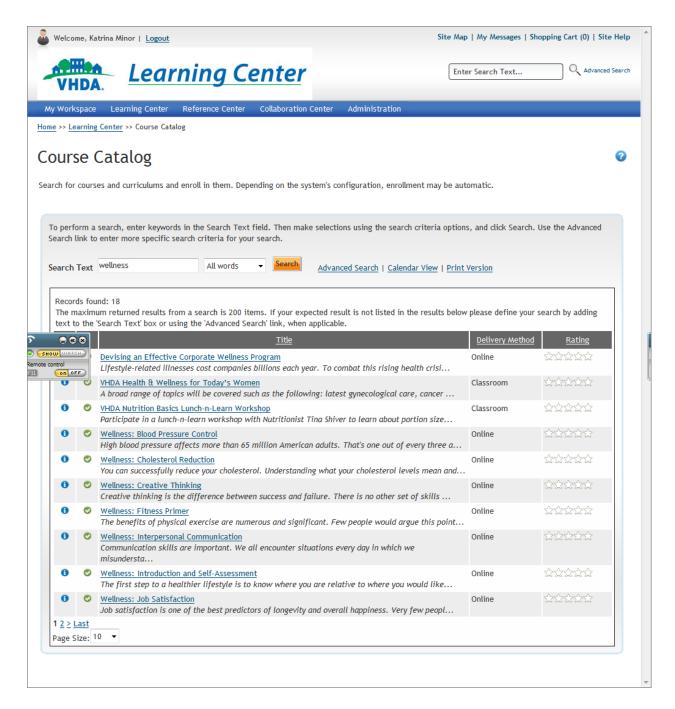
The partnerships formed with VHDA's health benefit vendors and our associates, combined with all of our health and wellness efforts, supports VHDA's strategic goals by fostering an environment that embodies VHDA's guiding principles. These principles include being collaborative, creative, and customer-focused. If our associates are healthy and happy, then they are better able to accomplish VHDA's mission and vision.

Conclusion

VHDA's biometric screenings and health assessments "tell a story" about our risk factors and indicate what areas to target with education. Knowing the issues helps us to engage our associates in relevant programs and provide improved health outcomes over time. Several associates have joined our Health & Wellness Centers and they are finding buddies and forming workout teams for support. Associates are playing an active role in their healthcare, and we are clearly making a difference and helping achieve a better way of living, one step at a time.



A dedicated Health & Wellness intranet page – the page is dedicated to all things health and wellness related, and serves as a one-stop shop for our associates.



Associates can take online health & wellness classes on our Learning Center and print certificates of completion.







VHDA provides full Health & Wellness Centers to its staff. VHDA employees are able to access each center, free of cost. We provide daily group classes including Boot Camp, Zumba, Yoga, and Pilates.



Cooking Light with Carlo – Associates had the opportunity to watch our chef prepare a healthy meal, discuss the ingredients, and sample the final product. Yum!



VHDA reimburses associates for participation in local 10k and 5k races. Several associates (pictured above) participated in the Virginia War Memorial's 5K.



On Febuary 22, 2014, all

employees were provided a free health screening. The Health Screening provided employees an opportunity to have their blood lipids checked and meet with a personal health coach to review their results.



Blood pressure monitors are located at each of our locations for associate use. Tracking sheets and informational sheets are available for associates as well.



VHDA was awarded the Fit Friendly Worksite Award from the American Heart Association for its health and wellness efforts in 2013 and again in 2014.



A VHDA associate getting his ride on!



Chair massages are available on a weekly and bi-weekly schedule at a nominal cost to our associates. Anywhere from six to 26 associates sign up for the weekly and bi-weekly massages.



Associates joining forces and getting a good walk in during their lunch break.