

# UT System Employee Advisory Council Wellness for Promoting Health Committee Fiscal Year 2011

Joel W. Helmke, EAC Chair

Dennie Clemons, WPH Chair



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Employee  
Advisory  
Council



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# UT System Background

Comprised of 16 component institutions

- UT System Offices
- Academic Institutions (9)
- Health Institutions (6)



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## Wellness Committee Recommendations

We are taking health to the next level (Living Well). A healthy culture shift takes time.

Wellness isn't just a mission – It's a message!

(Hard Return on Employee Wellness Programs, Harvard Business Review)

- Make health and wellness a strategic imperative.
- Elevate awareness of available health initiatives, resources and preventative care that is no cost to employees.
  - 24 hour Nursing Hot Line (888-315-9473)
  - early detection programs
  - health screenings
  - behavioral modification programs
  - Interactive Symptom Checker (powered by WEB MD)
- Greater sharing of health information resources across all of the U. T. institutions
- Ask the president of each institution to communicate their support for their local wellness programs as well as those programs facilitated by the U. T. System benefits.



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## Wellness Committee Members:

**Chair** - Dennie Clemons, UTHealth

**Vice Chair** – Marsha Zimmerman, UTHSC San Antonio

Laurie Thompson, UT Arlington

Michael Gannaway, UT Tyler

Adriana Hinojosa, UT Pan America

Glenda Bennett, UT Tyler Alternate

Patty Espinoza, UT Pan America Alternate



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## Planting EAC “Seeds of Success”

The Wellness for Promoting Health Committee invited all EAC members to share their personal and institutional success stories to help spread the word to others so that they can realize the importance of making healthy changes for life.

It is our hope that these “seeds of success” will be sowed as a resource and inspiration to encourage others to begin down their road to success.

EAC members were also asked to share their favorite healthy recipes

### Results to date:

Questions Answered – 10

Personal Stories – 3

Institutional Stories – 5

Healthy Recipes - 7



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## “Seeds of Success” - Institutional Success Story

### **Brownsville holds Guinness Zumba Record**

There is a new world record for the largest Zumba class ever and it belongs to Brownsville!

With 1,223 people participating, the city of Brownsville was officially recognized by Guinness World Records. Participants and sponsors acknowledged the world record attempt was a way to foster collective community pride and support healthy habits in Brownsville, where the rates of diabetes and obesity outpace the national average.

The event is part of the Brownsville Biggest Loser Challenge created by the city’s Public Health and Parks and Recreation departments in collaboration with the University of Texas School of Public Health. UTB/TSC Instructor Health and Human Performance Chair Dr. Zelma Mata, Helped coordinate and gathered Zumba instructors, Mata who is a certified teacher of the rhythmic Latin exercise, thought free Zumba classes to all UTB/TSC students, staff and faculty from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Recreation, Education and Kinesiology Center leading up to the big event. No dance experience was required.

“This event is important because it engages people in exercise,” Mata said. “Hopefully, it will inspire people to continue to exercise. Even though it is one event, it’s one of many others that are planned for the future. The underline is to give the community different types of modes to and help people engage in exercise. It’s for fun and the whole idea is to keep people moving.”

As things stand now, Brownsville is on top when it comes to having the largest Zumba class ever.

***Submitted by Olga Garcia, UT Brownsville and Texas Southmost College***



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## “Seeds of Success” - Institutional Success Story

### **Brownsville holds Guinness Zumba Record – Fun Times for All**



Health and Human Performance Chair Zelma Mata leads a Zumba practice in preparation for the Guinness World Records Largest Zumba Fitness Class April 30 at the Brownsville Sports Park. Mata taught free Zumba classes Tuesdays and Thursdays at the REK Center leading up to the potential record-breaking event.



Certified Instructor Dianna Rojas (foreground) practices Zumba with fellow certified instructors at Recreation Education Kinesiology Center.



Junior criminal justice major Bennis Gomez (left) and Mindy Reyes, a secretary for the South Texas Engineering, Math and Science program, practice Zumba at the REK Center Tuesday night in preparation for World Zumba Record Day, scheduled Saturday at the Brownsville Sports Park



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## “Seeds of Success” – EAC Institutional Success Story

### **UT Health Science Center San Antonio – Weight Loss Success**

These statistics were sent to all staff and faculty at a wellness fair. At the UTHSC SA Weight Watchers meeting, started 10/14/08, it was announced that an average of 27 members per session has lost 1,589 pounds!

1 session at the School of Nursing lost 284 pounds with 28 members!

Total number of pounds lost at UTHSC SA Campus thru Weight watchers.....2,195.

SERIOUSLY....that's over ONE TON! Equivalent to 20+ lbs per week or 90+ lbs per month!

This year UTHSCSA major focus will be in Financial Wellness.

***Submitted by Marsha Zimmerman, UT Health Science Center San Antonio***

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### **UT System – Wellness Breaks**

It's not much but several folks in the office of Employee Benefits and Employee Services get together for what we call wellness breaks. If someone is having a particularly rough day or just needs a mental break, they will call a “Wellness Break” in which all that would like to participate will congregate in the hall and proceed to line dance for about 3 minutes. This helps get the blood flowing and refocus the mind to finish out the day. This makes us happier and more productive...come to think of it...I think we need a “Wellness Break”.

***Submitted by Kimberly Sanders, UT System***



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## “Seeds of Success” – EAC Institutional Success Story

### **UT Permian Basin – Weight Watchers at Work Program**



UTPB is very proud of their results, considering how small they are. There are 22 members. Through the program they have lost 1,090 lbs. since the beginning of the series in November 2009.

***Submitted by Lisa Belue, UT Permian Basin***

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### **UT Arlington – Breathing is Easier at UT Arlington - Going Tobacco-Free in 2011**

Starting August 1, 2011 UT Arlington will be a tobacco-free campus. In order to provide students, faculty, staff and visitors with a health, welcoming learning environment all tobacco will be prohibited on campus property at all times. Resources and free private coaching is provided to assist in kicking the habit. UCanQuit2.org

**Online Resource:** <http://www.uta.edu/hr/wellness/index.php>



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## “Seeds of Success” – EAC Personal Success Stories

After the sudden loss of our teenage daughter, my wife and I were under tremendous stress and suffered from a significant depression. I needed tools to cope during an emotionally difficult time. I did not feel comfortable taking medication while at work, so on the advice of a very wise counselor I began walking every day to cope with the mental anguish while also having to maintain my performance at work. I purchased an iPod, loaded some fast paced tunes and began walking my stress away. I walked at a brisk pace for 30 minutes every day, indoors and outdoors when possible and it lowered my stress level and improved my ability to focus at work. I also lost 15 lbs. in two months. Five years later, if I am having a challenging day, I still try to find a block of time for a brisk walk to clear my head and help me focus.

We have a great Wellness program under the direction of Bill Baun, who has always encouraged employees to walk our campus to improve our health.

Goals: To be able to focus on my work and be a productive employee. My biggest obstacle is TIME!

Walking is easy and can be done individually if you want the solitude to think or it be done as a group with friends. Making it a priority in your day is the first step.

***Joel Helmke, UT MD Anderson Cancer Center***



# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## “Seeds of Success” – EAC Personal Success Stories



**Before**

**Current**

I am happy to say that I quit smoking 2 years ago. I did gain some weight but it truly was worth it. During that time candy, gum and many snacks became my new best friend which was a big contributing factor to my weight gain.

Weight being an issue even before that, I joined a gym and started working out. Before I knew it I was reducing my portion sizes and eating a little healthier. The next thing I knew, I was 30lbs down and feeling so much better. I have been working out in a gym for about 2 hours 4-5 days a week. I met a wonderful lady at the gym with the same body style as me and we have become tried and true workout buddies. We both have made great strides.

My goal is to reduce my weight by 20 more pounds and to get my lean body mass up. I now have a trainer who promises that we can do this together. Over the next year I will work hard to become a healthier me.

Thanks to a wonderful Calorie Counter application on my smart phone I don't mind counting calories and journaling my daily meals and exercise.

It's a large commitment but I feel worth it now! Every opportunity I get I encourage everyone around me to begin living a healthier lifestyle. Start out small and before you know it you too will have a success story.

***Dennie Clemons, UTHealth (Health Science Center at Houston)***



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## “Seeds of Success” – EAC Personal Success Stories

Stress is part of our everyday lives both at work and in our home life. How we deal with the stress is important and we all can develop a plan that works best for our needs. As I try to work through a busy day with multiple “plates” spinning around, anxiety creeps in and I find my heart rate increasing and my mind can get jumbled with too many thoughts to process at one time. When I cannot get away from my desk and take a walk or go climb a few stairs I try to create a simple wellness moment, sixty seconds of tranquility that seems to help me refocus and get my thoughts back in line. I close my door; silence the phone and computer and sit on the edge of my chair, up tall with good posture, hands at my side, eyes closed. I then focus on my breathing, slow deep inhales from the diaphragm, through my nose and soft flowing exhales through my mouth. I try to visualize a tranquil, warm place where I feel safe and relaxed. It only takes a few breaths concentrating on being slow and relaxed and once I open my eyes, I seem to be more centered and a little more in control.

Give it a try.

***Gerald Cleveland, UTMB Galveston***



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## “Seeds of Success” – EAC Personal Success Stories



### BEFORE PICTURE

I'm the one on the right, Carita was my weight watcher buddy and she lost 50lbs. This picture was taken in Feb 2009



### AFTER PICTURE

Picture of Carita and I (I'm on the left ) after we both lost our weight and became Weight Watchers life time member.

I retired from the United States Air Force Nurse Corps, in 1997 in relatively good shape and at a satisfactory weight. I've been working at UTHSCSA since that time and very slowly gained weight over the years. It wasn't until January 2009 that my normally low blood pressure elevated to 160/110. It was at this point, I realized I had ignored my health and weight for too long and that I would be facing catastrophic consequences if I did not totally change my lifestyle.

As luck would have it, just as I realized I let my health take second place to work obligations, a group of dynamic women here at the CTCR started an at work Weight Watchers program. I loved meeting days as the cross talk, camaraderie, wise food choice education and a dynamic leader kept me motivated to stay on program. I quickly watched myself lose 56 lbs between Feb and September 2009. I am now a Weight Watchers life time member and still continue to faithfully go to weight watcher meeting days as I know I will have a life long struggle balancing out portion controls and a busy social life. With Weight Watchers and the many close friends I have made, I know I'll be able to maintain this healthy new me. Oh by the way, my blood pressure is back down to 110/68 and all the numerous aches and pains I used to deal with on a daily basis are totally gone. I find myself, running up steps, and feeling really, really energetic. I'm in better shape now, then when I was at my prime in the Air Force Nurse Corps.

***Marsha Zimmerman***

Lt Col (ret), USAF Nurse Corps



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## “Seeds of Success” – EAC Personal Success Stories

I am working toward a healthier, leaner weight. One of the lifestyle changes I made is incorporate a reduced calorie diet and exercise into an already tight schedule. I am nearing the 30 lb. marker and feeling much more energetic. I am also in the process of completing my Bachelor’s degree. Just 10 more classes left and I will have completed two goals.

WOOHOO!

***Laurie Thompson, UT Arlington***

I joined Weight Watchers at Work on campus. A couple of my closest friends had the “lap band” surgery and I realized that it was time for a change for me – except I couldn’t afford the surgery or the time off! 😊

I was tired of feeling like a blimp; my snoring could be heard throughout my house. I was suffering more and more with minor knee and back pains. I was able to accomplish this by drawing support and encouragement from my Weight Watchers buddies and to get the help I needed at a price I could afford. It also allows me to have daily support and friendships with like-minded people.

Goals: Improve my health, stop snoring, and get into Misses size instead of Plus size clothing.

Obstacles: Sweets! Seriously, my old mindset about food and portions.

If you are a snacker, like me – who has a hard time with portion control and dislikes “rabbit food” – try snacking on fruit, low fat cheese, prepackaged 100 calorie snacks, etc.

***Lisa Belue, UT Permian Basin***



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## “Seeds of Success” – EAC Personal Success Stories

I now exercise at least two days a week at the gym on campus. I was encouraged by participation in the UT Tyler involvement in the Governor’s Texas Round-Up. My coworkers asked me to join their team for the Round-Up. As a team we encouraged each other to exercise at least 30 minutes per day five days a week.

The UT System “Living Well: Make It a Priority” reinforced my healthy lifestyle change with encouragement and educational information about good health.

Its always a major challenge to make time to exercise. However, being that the University has a gym on campus and provides work out classes for aerobics, zumba, yoga, spinning and many other classes, it was very convenient.

My family, friends and coworkers have all contributed to supporting my decision to exercise. Friends share their success stories about exercising. Coworkers join me for classes on campus and my family always respect my time away from home when it is time to exercise.

I recommend to have a friend exercise with you so that you can encourage each other to attend and continue to participate.

***Glenda Bennett, UT Tyler***



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## “Seeds of Success” – EAC Personal Success Stories

I don't believe that I have a very interesting story to share, but I'll leave that up to you. I'm always open to help others. Within the past 5 years, like many individuals, I have gone through yo-yo health initiatives. Right now, I'm not at the peak of fitness. Although I'm not overweight, I do believe it's important to maintain healthy and active living. I am a little more motivated to commit to a fitness regimen because a coworker of mine is getting married and she wants us to devote time in the gym to ensure that she looks her best for her wedding. It helps to have a committed work out buddy.

For the most part, I have been utilizing the gym (sticking to cardio). I use the elliptical for 30 minutes and treadmill for 20 minutes. I don't have the best eating habits, I have attempted to eat out less or choose more healthy meal options. This has been my biggest struggle. After a doctor's visit, I was warned that my cholesterol should be lowered. I don't want to be put on medication so my physician encouraged a healthy diet and exercise should control advancement. I'm pretty good at keeping active and exercising but I really need to execute the healthy eating. I am a member of the UT Pan American: Wellness Recreational Sports Complex. The convenience of having an on campus, updated facility is a great tool.

Goals: Never hearing from my physician “We need to prescribe meds to lower your cholesterol”. So far, so good! (Knock on wood.) Obstacles: Certain times of the year work load increases or the gym is too full - which does not provide motivation to fight for exercise equipment. Its everyday commitment.

Moderation is important. Two summers ago I was really committed and went to the gym 6 days a week. Each time I would push myself to stay in the gym longer and beat last week's goal. At the end of the summer, I over did my workout and passed out at the gym. My arm got caught in between the handle of the elliptical machine and broke my arm. After that I stopped working out. However, after my arm healed I was paranoid to work out. The day I passed out, I ate a light lunch and didn't eat anything prior to working out. I now eat something prior to working out, even if it's a banana. I also put my competitive nature aside and workout in moderation. I don't always make the best choices but it's something I am working on.

***Ronnie Garcia, UT Pan American***



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## “Seeds of Success” Wellness & Health Questions:

- Have you had a healthy lifestyle change within the past 5 years?
- If no, do you believe that you could be encouraged to begin a plan in the near future?
- If yes, are you willing to have your story published in the OEB monthly newsletter and online at UT System?
- If yes, what did you change?
- Who or what encouraged you to make this change?
- Why did you decide to make this change?
- How did you accomplish your success?
- How did UT System “Living Well: Make it a Priority” or your institutions resources/tools help you?
- What goals and obstacles did you have?
- Who supported you during this experience?
- What advice do you have for others who want to make this change?
- Do you have a healthy recipe that you would like to share?
- Did you know that as a UT employee that you have access to a wellness coach at no cost to you?
- Any other suggestions or comments?



# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

## Some ways to begin living a successful healthier lifestyle.

- Cooking & Eating Healthy** (share your healthy recipes)
- Exercise** (develop a routine; doesn't have to be high impact)
- Stress Reduction** (financial planning, reading a book)
- Be Your Own Advocate - Educate Yourself on Individual Health Issues**
- Tobacco Freedom** (quitting, how did you do it)
- Health Screenings, Physical Exams and/or Immunizations**  
(mammography, well woman, prostate, BMI, osteoporosis, bone density, colonoscopy, diabetes, thyroid, glaucoma, dental checkup, influenza, pneumococcal vaccine, tetanus booster)
- Reducing Your Risk**  
(eat 5 or more fruits and veggies per day, limit fat intake to no more than 30% of the total calories consumed, exercise 30 minutes per day, maintain an ideal weight)



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

To submit a success story directly to the UT System, go to the “A Matter of Health” UT System newsletter web page <http://www.utsystem.edu/benefits/newsletter/> and click on the “See video testimonial...” as shown below.

Contact Us | Office of Employee Benefits | More UT System Health Newsletters >

## A Matter of Health *Connecting Work & Life*

News about Insurance, Retirement and Wellness Programs for The University of Texas System

Current Issue: **Archive**

April 2011

**Add color for good nutrition.**

Improve your health by adding colorful vegetables to your diet. Start the [Nutrition Lifestyle Improvement Program](#) to make healthy eating part of your daily routine.

**BE A WISE HEALTHCARE CONSUMER**

**Wait! Don't Throw That "EOB" in the Trash!**

In our busy lives, it's easy to get overwhelmed with too much mail and email. It can be tempting to ignore your Explanation of Benefits (EOB). But whether you get your EOBs in the mail or electronically, if you toss them out without giving it some thought, you could be throwing money away. Your EOB can help you track expenses, understand your benefits, and avoid paying too much. [Read More.](#)

**LEGISLATIVE WATCH**

**Stay up-to-date on the 82nd Legislative Session**

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, the 82nd Session of the Texas Legislature began in January and is now well under way. Over 5,000 bills have been filed and are moving through the legislative process.

At this early stage, very little is known about which bills may progress

Download entire Newsletter (PDF)

**FEATURES**

**A UT System Success Story**

**Bete Su Williams.**  
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

Learn what Bete Su did after being diagnosed with

**See video testimonial and read interview >**

**What are your Health Goals?**

The Living Well Health Manager powered by WebMD HealthQuotient (HQ) helps you identify your personal health risks, provides recommendations for improving those risks, and informs you of the easy-to-use tools to help make healthy lifestyle changes. Complete the WebMD HQ, go to [www.webmdhealth.com/ut](http://www.webmdhealth.com/ut).

Learn how to register!

**Gym Membership Discount**

The Gym Membership Discount program is available to all UT SELECT Members.

This will take you to the page below.  
<http://www.utsystem.edu/benefits/livingwell/>



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

Click on the “Do you have a story....” link

Contact Us | Office of Employee Benefits | More UT System Health Newsletters >

## A Matter of Health *Connecting Work & Life*

News about Insurance, Retirement and Wellness Programs for The University of Texas System

April 2011 [Archive](#)

April > UT System Success Story

### UT SYSTEM SUCCESS STORY

[Do you have a story to share? Tell us about it!](#)

**Name:** Bete Su Williams  
**Institution:** The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston  
**Email Address:** [betty.williams@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:betty.williams@uth.tmc.edu)

“Join a group and have some fun improving your health, you will love yourself so much more than you ever thought you could...  
... Don't ever think it is something you can't do unless you try!”

Bete Su Williams  
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

[Learn more about Bete Su's Health & Wellness Success Story.](#)

**1. What health behavior did you change?**  
I started doing fun runs/walks about 8 years ago to exercise while pushing my daughter in a buggy. I liked it so well and saw all the young

**Resources available to you and your dependents to**

You will then be directed to the page below.



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# EAC Wellness for Promoting Health Committee

Fill in your information and click next.

**UT System Health & Wellness Success Story** [Exit this survey >>](#)

1. Please complete the following form to provide us with information about your success story...

University of Texas System invites you to share your health & wellness success story. By doing so, we are able to educate our members of the importance of making healthy changes for life. Stories will be posted on the Newsletter. There they will be a resource and inspiration to help others improve their health.

**Success Story Guidelines**  
You may be wondering what qualifies as a "success" story. We are looking for any type of success in your physical or mental health. This could include losing weight, learning to control diabetes, managing stress levels, finding ways to include more physical activity in the day, or improved eating habits. Basically, if your efforts to improve your health and well-being were successful, we want to hear about them!

**Safeguarding Your Story**  
To ensure you are comfortable with your participation, we have set up the following guidelines:

- Use of your name is optional; your name will not be used without your permission.
- We will ask for your permission prior to sharing/posting your story. Contact information will not be published or shared in any way.
- You will always be in control about the amount of personal information that will be shared.

**Sharing Your Success Story**  
If you would like to share your story with us (and others!), simply complete the Success Story Submission Form.

1. Use of your name is optional; your name will not be used without your permission.

Name:

Institution:

Email Address:

Phone Number:

The next page will be the questions.