

All's Well That Ends Well: Passport To Wellness Benefits University, Individuals

By Kimberley Johnston
Contributor

You there, reading the newspaper. Yes, you. DROP and give me 50!

Okay, maybe there are better methods of promoting physical fitness and well being among UPEI's students, staff and faculty .

Barb Mullaly said not only can participants reap rewards the Passport to Wellness program has to offer; the university can also benefit from interest gained in the initiative.

The former athletic director said when people are healthy, they are usually happier. And a productive population makes any institution look good.

"We're going to be more successful because we are healthier. When you're sick you don't function as well. When we are well, we can take on the world."

So how does this work, you ask?

Well, each student, staff and faculty member are provided with a passport, much like one you travel with. When participants take part in activities that improve their wellness (spiritual, emotional, intellectual or social health, etc), they are given a stamp in their passport. Participants must write down the date and activ-

ity and put it under the heading they deem appropriate in their passport.

Participants aren't just limited to exercising and playing sports. In fact, various activities are encouraged. Other possibilities include going to poetry readings or attending music recitals. Volunteering is also a good way to obtain wellness points. Thirty-eight points can be earned

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just by doing some sort of physical activity three times a week. Completed passports (which have earned 50 points) can be turned into Mullaly by December 10.

If physical fitness and well being as a reward doesn't grab you, how about prizes? After the passports are turned in, there will be a draw for cool prizes like MP3 players, bikes, or other nifty gadgets.

Mullaly added that participants who fill their passports two semesters in a row will get a certificate at the end of the year. There will also be another draw for people who have completed the two semesters.

But wait, there's more.

The Wellness Department is currently working with ITEC to get the program in full

swing. In time, students will be able to log onto a computer database and type in their activities. They will still have to visit Mullaly for a stamp. This database will result in providing each student with an "adendum transcript" or self-development portfolio at the end of the program.

These portfolios can prove useful when applying for a job, said Mullaly. It will definitely set you apart from other candidates vying for the same position.

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As of yet, Mullaly and her crew have not found another program like this in Canada. Other universities have wellness centres and sporadic activities but none are as inclusive or interactive as the Passport to Wellness Program.

She added, if this program takes off, UPEI could set a precedent for other facilities, schools and communities across the country.

"If we jiggle with this enough, we might be able to set up a model that other universities, schools, and communities can adopt."

But participation is the key. Mullaly explained she is hoping to get about 25 per cent participation for the first year. She would like to see the numbers increase to 70 per cent by the fourth and final year of the project.

"It's something we're hoping will grow."

The wellness director could not stress enough how important taking an active role in different aspects of health is for individuals. She said if one aspect of ourselves is not functioning well, it is amazing how quickly other areas will follow suit.

"You have to be well in all of the areas. We're trying to get people to be healthier and happier. The challenge for us (as humans) is to become active managers in our own wellness."

Students don't have to shell out a ton of cash to stay active, she said. Just bring your campus card to a free skate or open swim at the CARI Centre. She added sometimes students are not aware they can exercise this right since they have already paid for it in the student fees.

"You paid for it," she advised. "Use it."

For more information about wellness or the Passport to Wellness Program, contact Barb Mullaly at mullaly@upei.ca.



MEN'S VOLLEYBALL

UPEI

VS.

UNBSJ

Saturday October 16

12:00 & 5:00

UPEI Chi-Wan Young Sports Centre

