UHA Work Well℠

Better Health Better Life

Q4 2021
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VAL'S MESSAGE

NEWS

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VAL'S MESSAGE

Valerie Davison
Workplace Wellness Manager
UHA Health Insurance

How are YOU doing? It occurred to me that I reply too often with “I’m good.” It could be a friend asking me how I’m doing or a colleague asking if I need help with something, “I’m good” is the easy response. In reality, I may have felt tired, worried, or stressed about something.

Being guarded at work, whether to be politically polite or because of my local upbringing, can hinder my relationships. As leaders, if we aren’t willing to be open and vulnerable, then neither will your employees or colleagues.

A Greater Good Magazine by University of California, Berkeley article cites research that when we put up a façade, we are likely to feel more depressed and end up less engaged and committed to work. Authenticity allows employees to share their differences that make them unique and with that, it creates the foundation of trust.

How can you create a space to fully express yourself and improve your employees’ wellbeing? At UHA, we got started by adopting the concepts and research in Gallup’s newest book, ***Wellbeing at Work***. Understanding your employees’ strengths is a powerful step to start individualized and meaningful conversations. By combining strengths and wellbeing at work, this can impact resiliency and mental health of your employees.

Here are my top 5 CliftonStrengths:
Maximizer|Achiever|Connectedness|Arranger|Learner

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Happy Holidays!
Wishing you health, joy and peace this holiday season and new year!
From Roland, Val, Kelii, Mike and Suzanne

NEWS

Wellness Leaders Roundtable

UHA's Wellness Leaders Roundtable promotes the value of workplace well-being both within the members' individual organizations and to other leaders in our community. They provide advisory support to the UHA Health Insurance CEO. Members of the Wellness Leaders Roundtable are wellness ambassadors – leaders who understand the critical need to include workplace well-being in their operating strategies to effectively support healthy habits for their employees. Meet our newest member, Amy Matsushima.

Amy Matsushima
Senior Associate and Human Resources Director
Bowers + Kubota

Amy Matsushima is a Senior Associate and the Human Resources Director for Bowers + Kubota Consulting, Inc, a local Architecture, Engineering, and Construction Management company in Hawaii. Amy has over 25 years of experience in Human Resources with a variety of companies ranging from start-up companies to large hospitality chains. She received her bachelor's in business administration from the University of Hawaii and holds the designation of Society of Human Resources Management – Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP). In her spare time, Amy loves spending time with her family, reading, and traveling.

Q: What has your personal journey to wellness look like?

I am honored to be a part of the Wellness Leaders Roundtable. My personal journey of wellness has been eye-opening, and I owe a lot of it to Bowers + Kubota Consulting, Inc. When you are young, you think you are invincible and your body can overcome anything, but as you get older you realize the importance of caring for your body and overall health.

Being a part of our firm's Wellness Committee for the past nine years has taught me so much about the importance of wellness and overall health. Education and awareness are the key; how a little bit of exercise and good nutrition can positively impact and improve your health. Wellness and overall health go beyond just physical but include financial, social, and emotional aspects as well. It has been a journey that I continue to learn and grow from.

Q: What does Bowers + Kubota's workplace wellness programs look like?

At Bowers + Kubota Consulting, Inc. we've been fortunate to have our wellness program active since 2010. There are several reasons for the sustainability of the program. First is the buy-in from top management. Senior management is actively involved in the program and the management team "walks the talk" when it comes to wellness. Wellness is also one of our core values, which shows it is foundational to our firm.

Another reason for sustainability is the Wellness Committee. The committee is made up of employees from different levels and areas of the company. The committee meets monthly and share ideas on how to keep our program dynamic and innovative. As mentioned, key areas are education and awareness, so the committee does monthly newsletters, quarterly events and challenges, as well as focuses on a new theme annually. In 2021, our focus has been on Mental Health.

Our wellness program is an individual-based program. The program's name is **Whip It!** (Wellness Health Individual Program). Each employee's health and wellness needs are different so having the program focus on the individual allows the program to impact all based on different levels of need.

Q: What can you share with other employers for developing a sustainable program?

The most rewarding aspect of the Wellness program is seeing employee's lives changed as they lose weight, get off medication, and feel better about themselves. Wellness is a lifestyle change and it has been amazing to see how many employees have been impacted by the program. Another key measurement worth tracking is health utilization. When employees are mindful of their health and wellness, it results in lower burnout, and higher employee engagement. UHA has been an instrumental partner through our firm's wellness journey.

Mental Health Awareness
10 tips to boost your mental health

According to a recent report by Mental Health America, mental health affects nearly 44 million adults in the United States and 24.6 million don't receive treatment. Metal health impacts every area of our lives. Sometimes we need a little help, and that's OK. Treatments vary from person to person, which is why the best first step is to contact your doctor. Whether or not you currently experience mental illness, it is important to educate yourself, know the warning signs, and learn what practices you can begin today to help improve your mental well-being.

What is mental health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. Our mental health therefore impacts how we handle stress, relate to others, make healthy choices, and respond to many of life's unexpected situations.

Early signs of illness

According to the Department of Health & Human Services, the following are all early warning signs of mental illness.

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Having low or no energy
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- Thinking of harming yourself or other
- Inability to perform daily tasks like taking care of your kids or getting to work or school

Maintaining our mental health is just as important as maintaining our physical health. Good mental health enhances our body's immune system and overall functioning, increases motivation, joy, and courage, fuels healthy relationships, and improves our home-life and work-life. In short, it frees us to experience our best self. Challenge yourself to engage in all 10 practices listed below to up your mental well-being this month!

1. Put **people before things**; focus your time more on quality time with friends and family. Nurture your relationships.
2. Focus your energy on **activities you really believe in**; hobbies, projects at home or at work, or a cause for your community.
3. Learn healthy coping strategies that help you **manage stress effectively**. Try a few to find out what works!
4. **Find a supportive rhythm** to your days this month. Schedule in priorities, but also block out breaks to relax, exercise, and connect with friends.
5. This month, aim to get **at least 7 hours of sleep each night**. Sleep and rest have been shown to improve mental wellbeing.
6. Set **challenging, but achievable goals**; set short-term and long-term goals. Celebrate your success along the way!
7. At the end of each day, write down **3 things that you are grateful for**. A clear link exists between mental well-being and practicing gratitude. Set aside a notebook to use each evening!
8. This month, **schedule in days to be active or get outside**. Write down in your calendar times that you will commit to a walk outside, exercise class, or heart-pumping activity!
9. Fuel your body with **healthy foods** including fruits, vegetables, fiber, protein, and healthy fats. Boost mental health by adding Omega-3 fatty acids to your regular diet!
10. Designate a few trusted friends or family members to confide in; **share and communicate often** with these people to help you work through difficult times.

RESOURCES:

- Contact your doctor and/or your health insurance provider for resources
- Check with your Human Resources department for Employee Assistance Provider (EAP) and other applicable employee benefits
- Support groups are available at https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/groups/hi/honolulu-county
- NAMI Hawaii https://namihawaii.org/
- Mental Health America of Hawaii https://mentalhealthhawaii.org/
- UHA's podcasts at uhahealth.com/podcasts
- Work Well resource hub at https://wellness.uhahealth.com/workwell
- Get a free trial for Sanvello at https://www.sanvello.com/
- Get a free trial for Calm at https://www.calm.com/
- Get a free trial for Total Brain at https://www.totalbrain.com/

Disclaimer: If you are experiencing mental illness, contact your doctor immediately to receive the proper treatment.

Lei’s Journey to Wellness

Lei and her grandson, Brayden

When UHA member Lei Wong-Dulatre was first diagnosed with pre-diabetes and high cholesterol she knew it was time for a change. She began her new healthy lifestyle by slowly cutting out junk food, substituting healthy foods for non-healthy ones, and getting active.

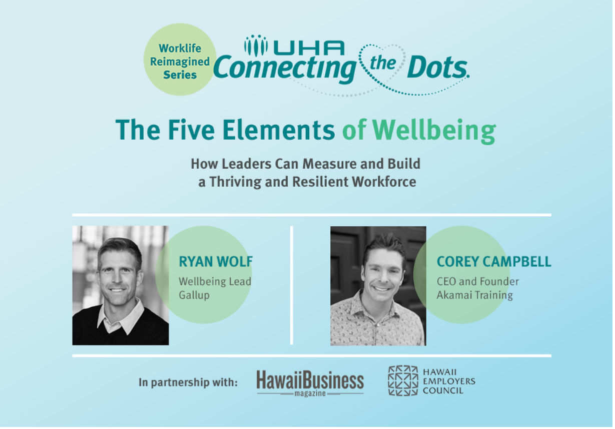
“My incentive for doing a lifestyle change is my 7 grandkids,” she explained, “I wanna be here when they graduate from high school until they’re married. That’s what I tell my grandkids, mama is gonna stay here till you get married.”

Our workplace wellness team worked closely with Lei and the Teamsters headquarters office to develop their first workplace wellness challenge, a step challenge where employees were encouraged to track the number of steps taken each day. Lei’s competitive nature pushed her to work out more, often visiting the gym twice a day to get an advantage over her peers.

Nine years after her diagnosis, Lei has successfully maintained her weight loss. She went from a size 14 to a size 10 since the beginning of her wellness journey. Now, her daily routine consists of overnight oats for breakfast, and alternating between turkey, chicken, and fish for lunch and dinner. After meals, she finds creative ways to move by walking as much as possible, to the mall, around the office, or on the treadmill.

“I’m thankful for UHA. We get to see you guys, work with each other and communicate with each other. That’s how it should be,” Lei continued, “With UHA you feel like family. You feel welcomed. To me, that’s how it should feel like with all companies.”

PAST EVENTS



Worklife Reimagined Series

UHA Connecting the Dots

The Five Elements of Wellbeing

How Leaders Can Measure and Build
a Thriving and Resilient Workforce

RYAN WOLF
Wellbeing Lead
Gallup

COREY CAMPBELL
CEO and Founder
Akamai Training

In partnership with: HawaiiBusiness magazine · HAWAII EMPLOYERS COUNCIL

What roles do leaders, managers, and culture play to impact employee wellbeing at work?

On the last Worklife Reimagined Series, *The Five Elements of Wellbeing*, we welcomed Gallup Wellbeing Lead, Ryan Wolf and Akamai CEO and Gallup Strengths Facilitator, Corey Campbell to the virtual stage.

According to a recent Gallup study, nearly 7 out of 10 people are struggling with mental health and the workplace is no exception. With most people spending their time at work, leaders and managers are now called upon to support to employees in new ways.

Moderated by UHA's Senior Workplace Wellness Advisor, Michael Story, Ryan and Corey discussed these topics.

- Key insights and takeaways to improve your employee's wellbeing using Gallup's Net Thriving score.
- The five elements of wellbeing and discover its effect on mental and spiritual health.
- Tools managers and leaders can use to find an employee's strengths
- The fastest road to improving Net Thriving scores

Get the highlights, recording, and more by visiting our website.

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