

HEALTHY EMPLOYEES HAPPY EMPLOYEES HEALTHY, HAPPY WORKPLACE



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By establishing, promoting and maintaining worksite wellness programs, companies are ensuring the ability of employees to be healthy while at the job, because healthy employees are happy employees. As the Manager of Operations at Carter BloodCare, Jacque Decker and her coworkers utilized their application for Fit City Tyler's "Healthiest Workplaces in Tyler Awards" to view their worksite health and safety policies as accomplishments that may have been previously taken for granted that then became milestones, which their employees are proud to possess at their worksite.

"It is important to inform the community that your company cares about your current and your future employees," Decker states a sentiment that every business strives to achieve, a distinction received by Carter BloodCare was not just being recognized within their industry but throughout the Tyler community as one of Fit City Tyler's Healthiest Workplaces award winners.

Carter BloodCare communicates its wellness policy to its employees vigorously, so much so that upper management directly contacts their employees to complete their annual wellness exams and their age-appropriate screenings. Employees who receive their preventative health exams then become eligible to receive a \$30 cost-savings that is included in their biweekly pay period. Employees at Carter BloodCare can receive reimbursement of half their fees at

Weight Watchers, while also enjoying discounts to local gyms and access to select fitness apps.

Rewriting their company's tobacco policy minimized the risks of exposure to secondhand smoke from traditional and newer forms of nicotine delivery devices and ensured that all forms of smoking became prohibited on company property and within company vehicles. "We are committed to employee well-being and worksite wellness," says Decker.

With the wide variety of supportive health resources, Carter BloodCare experienced the struggle shared at many companies, in that they have some employees who may not take full advantage of the free worksite wellness resources. "Real Appeal" is a mail delivery option available to their employees that delivers exercise equipment, healthy recipes, ingredients to prepare meals, online health coaches and additional resources available through Carter BloodCare's human resources department and their company's employee health insurance carrier. Weekly check-ins are made available to employees, yet some are not interested in utilizing this free service, and that is actually an expected outcome because toolkits possess different sizes, shapes, colors and dimensions of utility. A tool that greatly assists one employee to develop healthier daily habits may not have the same effect upon another employee who works in the same department.



Jessica Whitehead, the Special Programs Coordinator for Carter BloodCare, summarizes the situation into a succinct observation, in that the ability to develop healthy habits is “not just going to be given to you. You have to work for it.” Carter BloodCare was one of the companies with a small workforce who were recognized as one of the Healthiest Workplaces in Tyler, along with the St. Paul Children’s Foundation, The Diner, Carter BloodCare and the Alzheimer’s Alliance of Smith County. Companies with larger employee rosters who received the Healthiest Workplaces in Tyler Award included the Tyler Independent School District and CHRISTUS Trinity Mother Frances.

The workplace health strategies being used by all of the 2018 Healthiest Workplaces in Tyler will be used to encourage other companies to improve their existing worksite wellness program, as well as a tool for interested companies to create a worksite wellness program, regardless of the total number of employees who work at their location(s). Additional elements of a model workplace wellness program may include annual on-site health screenings, healthy food options being provided at company meetings and employee events, and notice of free or discounted disease management resources that are available to all employees.

Answering the questions listed within the Healthiest Workplaces in Tyler application motivated Jessica, Jacque and the employees of Carter BloodCare to consider future activities and health programs that can become easily implemented for increased employee health support, as one of the strongest benefits of achieving recognition is the ability to learn about evidence-based human resource strategies from like-minded companies in the Tyler area, and the learned lessons will motivate your company to develop wellness ideas that you may not have ever considered.

“We brought together those already working to improve personal health, encouraged collaboration and attempted to focus their efforts toward a collective impact on the community,” said Dave Berry, cofounder of Fit City Tyler. “Fit City Tyler is committed to help educate the public about the problems of chronic obesity and sedentary lifestyles, in order to implement possible solutions, many of which related to employee health, because the majority of a person’s waking hours are spent at their job.”



Fit City Tyler encourages any interested local business to celebrate their worksite health achievements and become recognized for their culture of health and wellness by submitting an application for the “Healthiest Workplaces in Tyler Awards.” The application criteria consisted of five categories:

1. DEMONSTRATE A COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
2. ACTIVELY PROMOTE AND SUPPORT HEALTHY NUTRITION AT WORK
3. PROVIDE AND ENCOURAGE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN THE WORK PLACE
4. LIFESTYLE AND DISEASE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ARE PROVIDED ANNUALLY
5. EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION WITHIN COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECTS THAT PROMOTE HEALTHY LIVING BEHAVIORS IS HIGHLY ENCOURAGED AND ALLOWED.

Companies of any size whose offices are located in the Tyler area may apply for the “Healthiest Workplaces in Tyler” by downloading the form on the home page of FitCityTyler.com.



Carter BloodCare recognized as one of the “Healthiest Workplaces in Tyler” by Fit City Tyler.