



Spotlight On . . . Muhlenberg JCC

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Larry King-Davis, Muhlenberg JCC's Food Service Manager, loves being able to provide students with fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the day. These healthy snacks help students stave off hunger while providing them with much needed nutrients. Like many center Food Service Managers, Mr. King-Davis has struggled with wasted fruit littering the center and the occasional orange turned projectile object.

Nine years ago, Mr. King-Davis began his quest to offer whole pieces of fruit in addition to fruit salads. He started by asking students to eat the fruit while in the cafeteria. Students responded by smuggling fruit out of the cafeteria. At that time, Mr. King-Davis estimates that about 75% of the fruit was eaten and the core/peel disposed of

correctly and 25% was wasted or littered around center. The center responded by removing the fruit from the cafeteria each time the waste and litter became noticeable. Every time they returned the fruit, students would treat the fruit appropriately for a while, then return to their old habits and then the center would respond by taking the fruit away.

After a 2-week fruit hiatus, Mr. King-Davis made an announcement at the Monday morning business meeting. In his final plea, he asked the students to hold each other accountable for eating the fruit and disposing of it appropriately. Then, after lunch as students were picking up fruit, he reminded them to take care of each other. The dorm leaders, SGA, and food committee members were especially vocal in reminding students to eat the fruit that they took and dispose of it appropriately. It took months to establish these norms, but now a piece of fruit on the ground is a spectacle and students don't let other students drop half-eaten pieces of fruit.

Mr. King-Davis ensures that every new student knows the rules when he or she arrives on center. During orientation, he asks the students what would happen if their mothers brought home some apples, and they took a bite of the apple, and then dropped it on the floor. The students predictably come back with a chorus of "My mom would kill me." Mr. King-Davis assures them that he will not kill them, but rather, if they waste fruit, they could make everyone lose their afternoon snack privileges.



Students chose fruit for a mid-afternoon snack (above). Fruit is a popular lunchtime dessert at Muhlenberg JCC (below).



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Let's Celebrate Job Corps

The HEALs program turned one in May!

During the past year, centers have found innovative ways to ensure students eat healthy, have ample opportunities to exercise, and live healthier all around. In this newsletter, we will look back at the past year of achievements and will look ahead to a healthy second program year.



Energize Your Program: Ready, Set, Go!

Like all programs, there is a good chance that your program has ebbed and flowed during the past year. The one year anniversary is a great time to see how far you have come and start planning for the next year.

Step 1

- **Schedule a committee meeting.** Summer break is a great time to catch up on committee meetings. Plan how to reenergize your program if there has been a lull.

Step 2

- **Reassess the "Making the Grade" tool.** Pull out your initial self assessment and check off your progress since then. Have you made 90%? Submit it!

Step 3

- **Plan a fun event.** Summer is a great time for a healthy-foods cookout or field day. Ask your students for ideas.

Step 4

- **Soak up the sun (with sunblock of course).** Get outside for walks, jogs, and sporting events while the weather is nice.

Move Your Body Video Follow Up

Every center that submitted a "Move Your Body" video of the September 23, 2011, dance performance became eligible for a drawing for \$500 to purchase additional exercise equipment. Montgomery JCC won the drawing at the 2011 National Health and Wellness conference on November 2, 2011, in Baltimore, Maryland.

"We couldn't have asked for a better response to the 'Move Your Body' effort," said Carol Abnathy, National Health and Wellness Manager for Job Corps. "The Job Corps community really got behind this, and the creativity and enthusiasm show when you watch all the different videos. We hope the excitement this generated will inspire everyone in Job Corps to lead a more healthy and active lifestyle."

A video compilation of the centers' "Move Your Body" videos was presented to First Lady Michelle Obama by Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis and is available for viewing on the Materials Marketplace.



Spotlight On . . . Muhlenberg JCC (continued)

If a new student ever forgets this warning, he's in for a rude awakening. When the half-eaten fruit hits the ground, another student is never far behind with the go-to correction, "We don't waste Mr. Larry's fruit here."

Students also learn early on that fruit should not be thrown at Muhlenberg JCC. The center started by removing the focus of problem away from food service. The issue was not that the student threw food, it was that he threw an object. All behavioral issues involving throwing any object carry a uniform, severe penalty.

After much work to change the norms, Muhlenberg JCC's 400 students now enjoy two cases of red apples, two cases of golden delicious apples, four cases of oranges, two cases of bananas, and various other seasonal fruits each week. Mr. King-Davis cannot remember when there was a recent incident with "Mr. Larry's fruit."

There's an App for That

Smartphone technology has seeped into every aspect of people's lives today, from sneakers that are equipped with GPS technology sent directly to the phone, to the ability to scan barcodes on food packages for nutrition ratings. With so many options available to assist with weight loss there is still very little known about the long-term effectiveness of Smartphone applications ("apps"). According to researcher Emily Breton, Internet-based approaches, including Smartphone apps, show promise in helping people lose weight.¹

Current apps range from the unconventional—one uses colors and sounds to help facilitate appetite restraint; another supposedly works by breaking fat cells through vibrations when the phone is placed on the users stomach—to the more conventional apps for weight monitoring and tracking food and workout routines.

Recently, the Surgeon General's Healthy Apps Challenge released a list of apps that "were assessed against a number of criteria including: usefulness; innovativeness; the quality of the evidence base underpinning the approach to healthy behaviors; usability; the ability to tailor and download personal data; and whether or not there was a "fun" factor."² The apps selected were also free of charge and available on multiple Smartphone platforms.



The Surgeon General's Healthy Apps Challenge Winners

- GoodGuide
- Fooducate
- Lose It!
- Fit Friendlyz
- MapMyFitness
- Healthy Habits

The next generation of apps may be best represented by Fitocracy (pictured to the left), which strives to turn fitness into social game. The user earns points for each workout. When he or she earns enough points, additional levels are unlocked, and more challenges are available to compete against others.

¹ Breton, ER, Fuemmeler, BF, and Abroms, LC. *Weight loss—there is an app for that! But does it adhere to evidence-informed practices?*. TRANSLATIONAL BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE. Volume 1, Number 4, 523-529, DOI: 10.1007/s13142-011-0076-5.

² USDHHS. *Surgeon General's Healthy Apps Challenge: About The Winners*. http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/news/2012/02/sg_healthy_app_challenge-winners.html



Marketing Healthy Foods to Students

Serve it and students will eat it, right? Not necessarily. While you may have a great skill-building nutrition program, how you brand these items may play a part in whether students choose certain foods.

Labeling a food “light” or “healthy”



What happens? The healthy label often backfires. Even people who try to eat healthy often feel that a food does not taste as good if it is labeled as such.

Examples: 1) McDonald’s McLean burger had terrible sales, even though in taste tests the McLean fared better than the regular burger. 2) New York City public schools added a salmon lunch to their high school menu. When it was labeled as healthy, very few students ate the salmon; when the healthy label was removed, it became a popular lunchtime dish.

If you do this: Make an optional healthy choices menu for students who want to know what’s “healthy.” Better yet, make all food healthy, with an occasional treat.

Adding calories or nutritional values to menus



What happens? Some people don’t notice it. Others notice it and ignore it. A small percentage of young people make decisions based on it.

Example: Calorie labeling has been mandatory in New York for several years. In a recent study, researchers found that nearly 60% of people noticed the labeling. Of those who noticed it, 27% of parents and 9% of teens made food choices based on labeling.

If you do this: Provide education along with the labeling. Label everything; if only entrees are labeled, people tend to eat more side dishes and dessert if they choose a lower-calorie menu item.

Using buzzwords (organic, natural) and health claims (may reduce risk of heart disease)



What happens? People choose the product more often.

Examples: 1) In 1985, after health claims were allowed on foods, intake of foods with health claims, including cereals increased. It is estimated that 2 million more American households now eat high fiber cereals. 2) A Cornell University study found that when study participants were given two identical products, one labeled “regular” and one “organic,” they overwhelmingly said that the organic products tasted better, were more nutritious, lower in fat, had less calories, and were worth more money.

If you do this: Label the products you want students to eat with the specific claim. Use claims from packaging, as many health claims are regulated by the FDA.



Team Challenge: It's a Way of Life

—Jeff Jarrell, Student HEALs Representative, Auto Body Collision and Repair, Springdale JCC

For the past year, Springdale Job Corps students have had the opportunity to build their strength and their teamwork skills in a program called Team Challenge. The program is headed by Karen Choquette, the Career Preparation Instructor. Team Challenge is a series of obstacles that Ms. Choquette puts students through to enhance their understanding of what teamwork is, including hiking and rock climbing. The team hikes up some beautiful northwest locations, including Multnomah Falls and Forest Park. According to Ms. Choquette, some of the positive aspects of the program are developing students' problem-solving skills and learning logic strategies to solve problems.

The program has not been without challenges. Ms. Choquette says the hardest things are getting students to follow through with the challenge and staying committed. She helps students stay committed by checking on them daily until she gets a yes or no answer. She's very persistent.

The students who have participated in Team Challenge have benefitted in many ways. One student remarked, "I thought it was pretty fun being with your friends outside of Job Corps doing something you don't usually do every day. Ms. Choquette pushes you to do your best and she still is always in the middle of the pack and sometimes leading everyone."

Ms. Choquette is devoted to fitness. Fitness and health are vital to living healthy and managing stress. She is dedicated to helping students learn about fitness, and even works out with the students on a regular basis, usually out bench pressing them, and can be seen playing basketball with her career preparation students after the training day.

A Team Challenge student had this to say about Ms. Choquette, "She is a good person to do this. She is very easy to talk to and easy to get along with. I think Job Corps is very lucky to have someone willing to work here and take the students out to do fun and challenging things.



Springdale JCC offers something for everyone—from a low-impact exercise and confidence-building event for female students (left), to high-energy hikes for students who want a challenge (right)



Kudos

Mayor Bob Foster of Long Beach, California, addressing the students, staff, and community members at the Let's Move Cities and Towns event at Long Beach Job Corps Center on August 19, 2011.



Denison Job Corps staff and students participating in a Community Wellness Walk in Denison, Iowa. The 41 participants all enjoyed the walk and the healthy lunch that followed.

Dayton JCC's "HEALS Walkers" have chosen to commit their time, energy, and efforts to making healthier choices. In addition to making healthier food choices the group walks every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm. In the group the students and staff talk about various issues that may cause them to make poor eating choices.



Oconaluftee JCC kicked off the HEALS program with a day of healthy food and activities. Yoga instruction was led by one of the center's very own staff members, Holly Krake. "Yoga is about body *and* mind. You can't have a healthy life style without engaging both to work toward your health goals" said Krake.



Oneonta JCC marked a half-mile walking course around center (left).

Students receive water bottles to promote drinking more water (right).



Kudos

Grafton JCC hosted a HEALS “Holiday Hysteria and Team Building Day” complete with a 5K road race; line dancing in the gym; a scavenger hunt; healthy snacks; and a push up, pull up, and sit up competition.



Students at the Cassadaga Job Corps Academy have discovered that there is no better way to enjoy a snowy winter day than by sledding down a hill and sipping hot chocolate. With all the laughing, sledding, and good times had students probably didn't realize they were burning calories; sledding and tobogganing, on average, will burn approximately 500 calories every 30 minutes. The event was organized by the center's Healthy Eating and Active Lifestyles committee.



The San Diego JCC hosted a Zumbathon to benefit Toys For Tots on December 3. Tiare LaBistre, Work-Based Learning Coordinator and Zumba Instructor, coordinated the event. Nearly 60 Job Corps students and members of the community participated in the 3-hour event. The center collected 105 toys and \$477 dollars in donations.

“Our first Zumbathon was certainly a success,” Ms. LaBistre stated. “I appreciate the support we received from our staff and students. These toys will bring joy to a lot of children this holiday season.”

Does someone on your center deserve kudos? Submit information to julie.luht@humanitas.com.

News Briefs

Obesity Seems to Dim Women's Job Prospects. “Obese women are more likely to be discriminated against when applying for jobs and, once hired, receive lower starting salaries than their slim colleagues.” – Janice Wood, Psych Central

Obesity-Linked Diabetes in children Resists Treatment. “As obesity rates in children have climbed, so has the incidence of Type 2 diabetes, and a new study adds another worry: the disease progresses more rapidly in children than in adults and is harder to treat.” –Denise Grady, The New York Times

Autism Linked to Obesity in Mothers. “Researchers said mothers who are obese are significantly more likely to have a child with autism or another developmental abnormality. The finding adds to the increasingly complex picture of possible factors that contribute to the disorders.” –Shirley S. Wang, The Wall Street Journal

