

PHOENIX BUSINESS JOURNAL

HEALTHIEST EMPLOYERS®

Lauren's Institute For Children

SMALL FIRMS

What it does: Provide services for people with developmental disabilities.

Local leader: Margaret Travillion, co-founder & CEO

Who leads health and wellness initiatives: Justin Travillion and Noel McCluney, chief financial officer and program director

Year company was founded: 2007

Number of employees: 250

Why did your company decide to start a health and wellness program? We provide services for people with developmental disabilities. Often providing this support takes a tremendous toll on a caregiver, resulting in lower levels of well-being and even burn-out. We wanted to have a wellness program that could support our staff to counter this compassion fatigue. We believe that taking care of the people that take care of our consumers is important to the longevity of our company and the success of our mission.

Why is health and wellness important to your company and how do you encourage participation? We believe in

the importance of taking care of the people that take care of our consumers. Just like we believe in a whole-person approach to care for our consumers, we believe the same is important for our staff. To foster participation, our company medical plan includes a wellness initiative that provides rewards and premium discounts for people who participate in wellness activities. We promote monthly challenges for staff to engage in different wellness opportunities from simple breathing exercises to fun outings with coworkers. We also hold two events on-site; a biometric screening and a vaccination clinic.

What has been your company's most successful program, and explain briefly what it involves? Our annual Run, Walk and Roll for Your Heart event has been very successful. All our classrooms and staff participate in a 30-minute heat of walking, running, or wheelchair propelling with music and cheerleaders. Prior to the heat, we provide brief heart health education and post-activity we provide healthy snacks. Another successful event is our very well-attended annual biometric screening. It involves employees coming to the event for an overall wellness

screening—height, weight, glucose—and earning points that can go toward prizes or insurance premium discounts if they have the company health plan.

What's your top tip for other employers as to how they can support their employees in eating healthier and leading a healthier lifestyle? We believe a great way to support employees in eating healthier and leading a healthier lifestyle is to provide flexible opportunities to engage in wellness activities. Every person is different and has different needs so having different options, from employer-sponsored challenges to medical plan wellness activities that provide incentive rewards, to supporting healthy food options at the company snack shack – all support our staff and our efforts to have a wellness culture that meets people where they are.

How has your health and wellness program impacted your company's productivity overall? We believe our wellness program has helped our staff reduce their need for physical and mental health days. It has also helped our staff remain more engaged with our consumers and their coworkers, supporting a healthy company culture.