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New wellness program offered to employees

By **Jeff Samoray**, *OU Web Writer*

Oakland University faculty and staff who are searching for ways to gain optimal health and enhance their overall well-being can take advantage of the many free or low-cost activities through OU's new wellness program.

Called **Building a Better U**, the program begins in October and sets out to heighten awareness of all the free or low-cost opportunities available to faculty and staff that can help you lead a balanced life.

"The goal of the program is to bring all the great wellness workshops and activities at Oakland together under one umbrella," said University Human Resources Manager of Professional Development and Training Aldona Sonta, who also is chair of OU's Wellness Committee. "Everyone can benefit by choosing from the available programs collected together on our new Building a Better U Web site."

Wellness involves the harmony of physical, spiritual, social, intellectual, occupational and emotional well-being. It enables individuals, families and communities to function to the best of their ability within their environment.

The **Building a Better U** Web site allows you to explore different activities and workshops in each of the six areas — physical, spiritual, social, intellectual, occupational and emotional. Many of the workshops do not require enrollment. For others, simply click on the enroll button for the class you'd like to attend and enter the requested information. Your request will be logged into the training enrollment database. The activities and workshops are available only to OU faculty and staff. Your involvement is voluntary.

The Building a Better U Web site is being updated all the time, so be sure to check it regularly to see what's new.

Some of the highlighted programs include:

- **Food for the heart** – These classes teach how to lower your blood pressure, cholesterol or triglycerides, better manage diabetes, or lose weight.
- **The Practical Coach** – View a film that demonstrates good coaching skills in action and learn tips for inspiring, encouraging and challenging your team.
- **R.A.D. Self Defense Course for Women** – The 18-hour Rape Aggression Defense System is a comprehensive program that teaches women to take an active role in their own self-defense and psychological well-being.
- **Beat the Holiday Blues** – Find out ways you can maintain your balance, keep things in perspective and enjoy your holiday season.
- **10K-a-day walking program** – This program challenges you to improve your health by increasing your exercise activity. Walk or jog daily or add steps to your usual routine so you are walking 10,000 steps per day. A special pedometer available for purchase is used to help track your progress. Weekly informational/motivational e-mail messages also will be sent to help you reach your goals. The program costs \$10 and runs from Oct. 20 to Nov. 28. As an added bonus, those who enroll in the program and are not members of OU's **Recreation Center** are invited to work out at the center for free between Oct. 20 and Nov. 30.

You can join the 10K-a-day program and learn more about all the other Building a Better U programs by visiting the wellness table in the Oakland Center Oct. 6-7 and 9-10 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. You also may register at the Wellness Wednesday program, titled "Step Over to Wellness," on Oct. 8 at 12:05 in the Recreation Center's Pioneer Room. For more information, visit the **Building a Better U** Web site or e-mail wellness@oakland.edu.

SUMMARY

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