



Serving Up The Next Winners In Health Promotion

RACHEL DRUCKENMILLER

Awarded Top Health Promotion
Professional In The Country

Dishing It Out

ABOUT

DISH

DISH is where big ideas can become winning ideas! DISH is all about competition, learning and recognizing the best of the best. By being a part of DISH, members of the health promotion community can keep their fingers on the pulse of what is happening in the field. At dish.welcoa.org, DISH members and guests can read what others are DISHING out about the industry's best practices, new ideas, and innovative thoughts, then vote for the best entries or DISH out their own ideas and reap the rewards.

ABOUT

WELCOA★

The Wellness Council of America (WELCOA) was established as a national not-for-profit organization in the mid 1980s through the efforts of a number of forward-thinking business and health leaders. Drawing on the vision originally set forth by William Kizer, Sr., Chairman Emeritus of Central States Indemnity, and WELCOA founding Directors that included Dr. Louis Sullivan, former Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Warren Buffet, Chairman of Berkshire Hathaway, WELCOA has helped influence the face of workplace wellness in the U.S.

Today, WELCOA has become one of the most respected resources for workplace wellness in America. With a membership in excess of 5,000 organizations, WELCOA is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of all working Americans. Located in America's heartland, WELCOA makes its national headquarters in one of America's healthiest business communities—Omaha, NE.



The Top 100 Health Promotion Professionals

About The Contest

COMPETITION LAUNCH: September 2014

ENTRIES: 210

WINNER: Rachel Druckenmiller



THE PRIZES

- The Top Health Promotion Professional won an all-expenses paid trip to the 2015 WELCOA National Summit in San Diego where she will be formally recognized.
- The Top 10 received a full WELCOA membership for 1 year.
- The Top 100 received a certificate and were featured on WELCOA.org and Well Informed.

HOW WINNERS WERE CHOSEN:

The best health promotion professionals are often not recognized for their constant tenacity and dedication to the people they help. WELCOA set out to change that with the Top 100 Health Promotion Professionals awards.

In September of 2014, The Wellness Council of America (WELCOA) launched DISH, a platform that

allow members of the Health Promotion industry to share ideas, vote on their favorite idea submissions, and be rewarded for innovation. The first DISH contest was an effort to identify the Top 100 Health Promotion Professionals in the country. The 210 entries were scored by an elite panel of judges who, along with peer voting, determined who should be considered one of the Top 100 Health Promotion Professionals in the country. Rachel Druckenmiller, featured in this edition of DISH Winning Ideas, was awarded the number one spot on the list.

The WELCOA Faculty and Judging Panel including industry leaders, Judd Allen, Brian Luke Seaward, Bill Baun, and Sean Foy, were blown away with the volume of talented professionals and their incredible stories. DISH judges spent weeks reviewing all applicants and ranking them based on 5 major criterion: commitment to professional development, demonstrated success, innovation, leadership and compelling vision. The contest served to recognize and celebrate the great work that the field of health promotion is turning out every day, and to set the bar even higher for those practitioners who are still developing their skills and setting career goals. Visit dish.welcoa.org to read winner submissions and get involved in the next contest.



ABOUT

RACHEL DRUCKENMILLER,
MS, CHC

TITLE: Wellness Director

ORGANIZATION: Silberstein Insurance Group

INDUSTRY TYPE: Benefits Consulting/Insurance

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE: 8

DEGREES/CERTIFICATIONS: B.A. Psychology, M.S. Health Science, Certified WELCOA Faculty, Integrative Nutrition Health Coach (Institute for Integrative Nutrition), Certificate in Plant-Based Nutrition from the T. Colin Campbell Center for Nutrition Studies, Certified Wellness Culture Coach through the Human Resources Institute, Culinary Nutrition Expert in training through the Academy of Culinary Nutrition.

A Quick Serving...

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF IN YOUR CAREER SO FAR?

The changes in leadership support, growth of our wellness team, and integration of wellness into our company culture.

WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT THE PROGRAM YOU HAVE CREATED?

Our program is based on the idea that everything we offer is an opportunity to “spark” someone on to change and that being healthy means coming alive. It’s about what health allows us to do and who it allows to be; it’s not just a box to check. The energy that was infused into our program after that time has been incredible.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO GO INTO THE FIELD?

Early in my career, I was mentored by a worksite wellness colleague and took an interest in the field of corporate wellness. In 2007, I created the role of Wellness Coordinator at Silberstein Insurance Group (SIG) and started our wellness program.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE WHO WANTED TO BE A LEADER IN HIS/HER FIELD?

I’ve sought out people who are successful in the field and who seem to be doing things differently, and I’ve committed myself to learning as much as possible from them.

WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE HEALTH PROMOTION INDUSTRY?

I’m thrilled to see the shift away from ROI and back to VOI—focusing on well-being for its inherent value because “it’s the right thing to do” and moving away from the formerly strong tie to health care costs. Focusing on WHY health is important to each person will be critical going forward. We have to give up the notion that we can force people to change their health behaviors and shift our thinking to how we can equip them with the skills and tools they need and surround them with a supportive environment that makes it easy to be well.

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID:

“I am so impressed with what she has done and...the quote about moving away from ROI to VOI... Excellent.”

“Rachel sounds like a powerhouse and she’s doing absolutely amazing work! I find her truly inspiring.”

“Rachel is spot on... Wellness is not something we can simply “do” to people. We need to find what motivates them in order to get them to MOVE and really seek change.”

Rachel's Story

Over the past 7+ years in my role as the Wellness Director at Silberstein Insurance Group, I've learned how to "do wellness" differently - supporting employees to be healthy and having fun doing it. With training and expertise in corporate wellness, building health-supportive cultures, and health coaching, my ultimate goal is to help people live healthier, happier and more energized lives.

I work for a dynamic, vibrant, and innovative 40-person benefits and wellness consulting firm in Baltimore, Maryland. I've been with the company since 2003 when I started serving as a college intern and came on full-time in a Wellness role in 2007.



Professional Development

I graduated summa cum laude from McDaniel College with a bachelor's degree in Psychology and co-authored several academic journal articles about health and nutrition. Early in my career, I was mentored by a worksite wellness colleague and took an interest in the field of corporate wellness. In 2007, I created the role of Wellness Coordinator at Silberstein Insurance Group (SIG) and started our wellness program. I relied heavily on guidance from WELCOA and the certification series during that time, jumping in on any webinars and trainings I could to learn as much as possible about how to "do wellness" well. One of the first things I learned

has stuck with me ever since, "Wellness is something we do with and for people, not something we do to them." In the early part of my career and in subsequent years, I've benefited tremendously from what I've learned both through WELCOA webinars and training summits, especially the Communication Summit in 2013. By 2011, I had achieved WELCOA's Well Workplace Practitioner Faculty Status, and in 2012, I earned my Master of Science degree in Community Health Education and Health Administration. In 2013, I trained to become a Certified Health Coach through the Institute for Integrative Nutrition and a Wellness Culture Coach through the Human Resources Institute. Pursuing my passion for food and nutrition, I earned a Certificate in Plant-based Nutrition through the T. Colin Campbell

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Center for Nutrition Studies in April 2014 and am currently completing a certification program to become a Culinary Nutrition Expert, a designation I will earn in December 2014.

As the daughter of two Baltimore-based entrepreneurs, I grew up believing my father's words about work, "It's not work if you're doing what you love." My dad is an inspiration in what he does through his work but also through his lifestyle. At the age of 64, he's a 5-time Ironman triathlon finisher and on zero medications! What an inspiration he is for my life. He has shown me that we can age, be well, and get paid to do what we love.

I've learned that living a healthy, thriving life is not only what I strive to help others do through my job, but it's also something that defines how I live my life personally. My purpose is to help others be well and a job in corporate wellness enables me to do this every day.

Demonstrated Success & Innovation

I lead both SIG's internal wellness efforts and our clients' programs. What I'm most proud of are the changes in leadership support, growth of our wellness team, and integration of wellness into our company culture.

After returning from the 2013 WELCOA Summit, I knew I had to make some tweaks to our program to take it to the next level, engage leadership, and brand our program – something we had never done! I met with our CEO and asked him 5 questions that David shared at the Summit and it transformed the way I approached our program. Our CEO said he wants to lead by example, have a

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My favorite place to be—in my nourishing kitchen

“Our program is based on the idea that everything we offer is an opportunity to “spark” someone on to change and that being healthy means coming alive.”

program that changes people’s lives and health, and that it must be FUN! I had been missing the final part. We restructured our wellness committee, brought in some new energy, and went through the branding process using the Dan Heath video from the summit. In one meeting, we came up with our branding (SIGSpark!), tagline (Come alive!) and mission statement (“To help people get healthy and have fun doing it.”). We rolled out our new branding, and everyone loved it. Our program is based on the idea that everything we offer is an opportunity to “spark” someone on to change and that being healthy means coming alive. It’s about what health allows us to do and who it allows to be; it’s not just a box to check. The energy that was infused into our program after that time has been incredible.

Wellness isn’t just something we “do;” it’s become part of who we are. We went from having to pull teeth to get leadership involved (including almost cutting my position in 2009) to seeing our CEO and receptionist work out alongside each other in the parking lot during our daily fitness classes. Our CEO now leaves voicemails, sends emails, and makes announcements

at company meetings praising our wellness efforts and encouraging everyone to join in on what we’re doing. We are approved for almost anything we want to do, if we can show how it will benefit our employees and give us an opportunity to “test drive” something for our clients and lead by example.

Our wellness team has “come alive,” too, and the energy and creativity has boosted our program beyond what I would have thought possible five years ago. Our wellness champions even celebrated our recent WELCOA award



Proud of all we’ve accomplished and being honored as a WELCOA award recipient!

by spending the day at a local fitness center, doing a team-building workout, sharing a healthy lunch and then enjoying a manicure. We celebrate our successes and are proud of who we are and what we do.

We strive to be innovative, engaging, and relevant in our approach. We are pleased to offer such a wide range of wellness initiatives to our employees and their families—from onsite health education workshops and seminars to healthy cooking demonstrations, potlucks (It's 5:00



Showing my peers how to make healthy donut holes!

Somewhere Smoothie Happy Hour; Make Your Own Trail Mix Bar and Salad Bar; Soups & Stews Cook-off, etc.), fitness challenges, healthy catered meals, free onsite fitness classes four days a week, a points tracking portal, community 5Ks, Real Food challenge, financial education seminars, health screenings, quarterly chair massages, wellness lending library, monthly Well Street Journal newsletter, free thank you notes, and an annual gratitude challenge, we truly “walk the walk” and “talk the talk.” We recognize that good health is good business and do our best to demonstrate that mantra in how we operate as an organization.

The shifts in our culture over the past eleven years when I first started here as an intern have been remarkable. The pretzel barrels, sodas and jars of M&Ms have been replaced by filtered water, nuts and seeds, and fresh fruit and vegetables. When an employee asks, “Are you going to the 4 o'clock?” everyone knows they're referring to a fitness class. Company refrigerators are filled with coconut milk, flaxseeds and hummus instead of soda and donuts; employees use the company Vitamix to make healthy smoothies; and Pizza Thursdays were replaced with healthy potlucks. Smoke breaks are a thing of the past, as nearly everyone has quit smoking. When I meet with a new employee for orientation, he or she already knows about our wellness program because it was already mentioned as one of the recruitment features in the hiring process. I'm no longer the “only” person talking about wellness—everyone is.

We've learned to engage leadership from the start, to find out what's important to them as a business leader and an individual. We've built a wellness team of people who genuinely care and want to help. They are creative,

social, and fun. We ask our employees what they want, surveying them annually and after each initiative, holding focus groups to learn how we can improve and taking in the water cooler comments, so we can keep learning and growing. We offer variety and give people choices. We want people to commit for the long haul, not just comply for the short term. We know that creating a supportive environment that makes the healthy choice the easy choice is key to our success. WELCOA's benchmarks have guided us to make all of those steps priorities.

We've won numerous awards for our efforts over the past few years in particular. SIG has been recognized three times as an American Heart Association Gold-Level Fit Friendly Company, twice as one of the Baltimore Business Journal's (BBJ) Healthiest Employers, and as a Wellness Council of America Well Workplace Small Business, an honor shared by no other benefits consulting firm in Maryland. We're proud of where we've been and excited about where we're headed.



Leadership

Even though I've been "into" health and nutrition since middle school—exploring the aisles of health food stores and farmer's markets, perusing nutrition books, and cooking with my mom—I haven't always been the picture of health. I was sick a lot—from countless sinus and respiratory infections that prompted half a dozen surgeries as a kid to excess weight, allergies and chronic acid reflux as a young adult.

Over the past four years, sparked by a wellness program that we offered at SIG in 2010, I've learned to heal my

From leading health education workshops and cooking demonstrations for my coworkers and our clients' employees to teaching leadership teams about creating a culture of health in the workplace, I aim to bring what we've done at SIG to our clients.

body and optimize my health. From losing 20 pounds and healing my body's childhood illnesses to ending my 10-year battle with acid reflux and now being medication-free, I've learned through my journey that we can transform our health and heal. My mission is to make healthy living positive, doable, fun and delicious. I do this by helping people upgrade their diets to "add in" more of what is nourishing, fueling, and energizing to "crowd out" what isn't.

From leading health education workshops and cooking demonstrations for my coworkers and our clients' employees to teaching leadership teams about creating a culture of health in the workplace, I aim to bring what we've done at SIG to our clients. I've delivered regional and national wellness trainings with one of the top wellness experts, Dr. Steven Aldana, as a guest lecturer

at my alma mater, and as a keynote speaker to a group of over 100 business leaders in Washington, DC.

I've always liked to write and knew that the information I had learned over the years throughout my healing journey would inspire and help others, so I started a blog—Rachel's Nourishing Kitchen—in January 2014. I also guest blog for two other local companies and recently had a picture from my blog featured in a Huffington Post article. It's only a matter of time until I write my own!

I've sought out people who are successful in the field and who seem to be doing things differently, and I've committed myself to learning as much as possible from them. I've been fortunate to connect with some remarkable mentors over the years. I wasn't afraid to ask questions. I never assumed someone would say "no" and not want to talk to me because I was "just a wellness coordinator." I've remained optimistic when

many people could have become discouraged and jaded. I'm so committed to devoting my life to improving the health of others, that I'm willing to go outside of my comfort zone, make that intimidating phone call, and try something new, even if it's not "popular." My training has benefited me tremendously, but the key is to do something with the training – to take action. You'll never know what you can do until you try. So just start doing something instead of waiting until you know everything.

Compelling Vision

We have tremendous opportunity to change and grow as an industry. I'm thrilled to see the shift away from ROI and back to VOI—focusing on well-being for its inherent value because "it's the right thing to do" and moving away from the formerly strong tie to health care costs. Focusing on WHY health is important to each person will be critical going forward.

We have to give up the notion that we can force people to change their health behaviors and shift our thinking to how we can equip them with the skills and tools they need and surround them with a supportive environment that makes it easy to be well. I hope to see a shift toward functional medicine where we focus not just on getting people to comply with their medications but to heal and even reverse their chronic health conditions, many of which are rooted in nutrition.



SIG's team for the Electric Run in Baltimore

I plan to continue my efforts to drive change at the organizational level while still teaching, training and educating employees, especially on the nutrition front. I plan to integrate myself more closely with our clients who want to take it to the next level and bring me onsite more frequently to meet with employees as a personal health coach. I will continue to focus on leading leaders who want their employees to be well but don't know where to start. I look forward to being more active as a teacher, speaker, culinary guide, and blogger, so I can disseminate this message of health to as many people as possible.

Many of us dream, few of us "do." When we have been called to help people heal and optimize their health so they can live amazing lives, we have an obligation to do something about it. We can always listen to another webinar, read another book, or go to another class. The people who make a difference are the ones who DO something with the information.

You know all those things you've always wanted to do? You should go do them! 

When we have been called to help people heal and optimize their health so they can live amazing lives, we have an obligation to do something about it.



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