



FOR RELEASE September 30, 2008

CONTACT: Janet Franz, Council Chairwoman, (802) 985-9929; (802) 238-8182

janetfranz@verizon.net

PHOTOS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Council Honors Employers for Wellness Programs

Burlington -- 48 Vermont work sites will receive awards October 7 from the Vermont Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. The awards honor employers that support staff access to physical fitness activities and promote good health on and off the job. The council and Governor Jim Douglas will present the awards in a ceremony at a Work Site Wellness Conference at the Hilton Hotel in Burlington.

The following work places will receive honors:

1-25 Employees

Otter Creek Conservation District - RECOGNITION

Employees recorded the number of steps they walked each day for a "Walk Around Hawaii," and they try to make healthy food choices.

Rutland Housing Authority - BRONZE

Nine of 12 employees participated The Vermont League of Cities and Towns “Keep It Off Challenge,” weighing in weekly for six months with a goal of losing pounds and keeping them off through the winter. Three days a week, all employees are allowed to use the last half-hour of the day for exercising.

26-75 Employees

Burlington Schools Food Service - RECOGNITION

Food service employees attend trainings on cooking with whole, fresh foods and report a better understanding of eating healthy. Several partnered on a share at a CSA farm, and others say they now are more likely to purchase from farmers’ markets.

Milton CAT – GOLD STANDARD

Each morning, Milton CAT employees, including managers, participate in a 10-minute stretch to limber their muscles and warm up for their workday. A wellness coach visits Milton CAT each week to provide biometric screenings and help employees set personal health and fitness goals.

Stantec, South Burlington - SILVER

Stantec encourages employees to track their own daily physical activity in return for reduced insurance premiums. The South Burlington site includes shower facilities to make it easier for people to bike, walk or run to work or during breaks. A summer golf

league, hiking program, group ski days and office relay teams for the Vermont City Marathon entice employees to participate in sports year-round.

Stantec, North Springfield- SILVER

In addition to tracking their physical activity for reduced insurance, Stantec's Springfield employees participated in a company-wide Bike To Work challenge, a friendly competition between offices. The company is flexible when workers need to adjust their schedules to accommodate coaching, officiating or other sports-related activities.

Vermont Housing Finance Agency - BRONZE

More than half the staff participated in a walking program, using complimentary pedometers and keeping walking logs for eight weeks. Each participant's steps were charted on a map showing the route from VHFA to the coast of Maine. The map was posted on a bulletin board for all to observe. During Health Awareness Day, employees enjoy healthy meals, seminars, chair massages and health screenings.

Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) - GOLD

The VLCT Health Trust offers a health promotion incentive program to its member organizations. The program, called Leader Program, gives members a monetary credit on their health insurance for encouraging and promoting healthy behaviors among their employees. VLCT participates in the Leader Program, encouraging its own employees to get health screenings, do 30 minutes of exercise four times a week, quit tobacco and

participate in community fitness events. The League received a credit of \$24,662 over two years, which it shared 50 percent with employees.

Town of Milton, Vermont – RECOGNITION

The town's participation in VLCT's Leader Program resulted in a \$9,017 health insurance credit. Some of the money was used to purchase pedometers for an employee walking challenge and to pay for flu vaccinations. Monetary incentives motivate staff to join health clubs, participate in town recreation programs, enroll in weight loss and smoking cessation classes and attend confidential health

76-150 Employees

Cathedral Square Corporation – RECOGNITION

The company offers free monthly class on healthy living and also provides employees and their family members discounted memberships to health clubs. In a summer walk challenge, employees choose a course based on their fitness level and record their steps each week. Those who complete 12 weeks are entered into a prize drawing.

Town of Colchester – RECOGNITION

More than half of the town's 115 employees and their families joined a Hawaiian pedometer challenge, keeping track of their steps during a 12-week period. They celebrated their success with a healthy luncheon Luau. The town distributes wellness

newsletters, provides health screenings and flu shots. It received a \$16,296 insurance credit through participation in VLCT's Leader program. The money went to new exercise equipment and employee rewards.

Town of Hartford – RECOGNITION

About one-quarter of the town's 116 employees participate in VLCT programs promoted by the town Wellness Coordinator, who distributes weekly wellness newsletters. Many employees maintained their weight through the VLCT Keep It Off Challenge. The town is building a gym and pool to which employees will have access, and nutrition and smoking cessation programs are planned.

Peoples Trust Company of St. Albans – BRONZE

Employees are reimbursed up to \$50 annually for gym memberships, weight management or smoking cessation programs. They also may participate during work hours in the Cardiovascular Health Improvement Program (CHIP), where a nurse provides health screenings and helps create health improvement plans. A nurse also checks customers' blood pressure each month in the lobby. Nearly half of the employees participate in a walking club, committing to walk at least 3 hours a week. An after hours exercise class meets onsite.

Ben & Jerry – GOLD

Onsite fitness rooms with state-of-the-art equipment, free weights and space for fitness classes make it easy for employees to exercise. Employees have flexible schedules

so they may participate in fitness classes or meet with personal trainers or massage therapists. In a “Zen Den” a television with exercise tapes is always available. The company purchased a wii game to get employees moving. A community shared garden space encourages outdoor exercise and healthy eating. The company covers membership costs of employees at local health clubs and reduced rates for spouses and children.

Rhino Foods - SILVER

Rhino rolled out a new debit card program that provides cash incentives to employees to achieve specific health results. The funds can be used for health-related expenditures, thus allowing rewards for healthy behaviors to be reinvested to promote and maintain good health. Company meetings frequently feature wellness topics and employee newsletters always include wellness articles. A wellness team develops a calendar of wellness themes and events to keep employees motivated and informed. Four of Rhino Foods’ seven leaders have lost a lot of weight during the past year, which has energized many employees to take advantage of company-subsidized health club memberships, nutritional and smoking cessation programs.

Huber + Suhner North America - RECOGNITION

An onsite gym, massage therapist and yoga and Pilates classes make participation in physical fitness activities easy. To help employees eat nutritiously, the company provides a subsidized healthy lunch in which local restaurants cater a weekly company meal with healthy soups and salads. Employees who participate in a year-long ScoreHealth program receive \$10 gas cards after their first two visits with the nurse,

followed by a raffle for prizes that encourage activity: snowshoes, camping gear and certificates for sporting goods.

Northfield Savings Bank- RECOGNITION

The bank's Recreation & Health Committee develops activities and disseminates health news, tips and recipes. Activities include an exercise challenge, fruit and vegetable puzzle and walking program. Participants earn Virtual Health Bucks or scratch-off cards with winners receiving \$50 gas cards, \$25 grocery certificates and hand-sanitizing soap. A wellness library at the bank's main branch provides all employees with access to books, magazines, videos and pamphlets on health topics.

Rock-Tenn Company: Missisquoi Mill – RECOGNITION

Health club memberships and sports classes are fully funded by the company. Monthly telephonic wellness seminars provide a wide range of wellness topics such as alternative medicine, personal fitness and dealing with stress. An online health risk assessment gives employees continual access to health information and resources. Medical insurance is reduced for those who do not use tobacco. An annual health fair provides biometric screenings and wellness education to employees and their spouses.

151-500 Employees

Tivoly Inc – RECOGNITION

Tivoly pays for any program or product to help an employee stop smoking and pays

half for employees and their family members to join a gym, take swimming lessons, going skiing and other exercise. Posters with wellness messages hang prominently.

Green Mountain Power – SILVER

Money and free water bottles entice employees to join onsite yoga and nutrition classes, biometric testing and wellness workshops. A 1% health insurance discount rewards employees who exercise three times a week and have a physical exam. An additional 1% discount rewards tobacco-free lifestyles and maintenance of healthy weight. Interest-free bike loans, gym discounts and free healthy snacks round out the wellness program. Weekly scorecards track accidents and sick time use, with analysis of causes and proactive corrective actions.

Vermont Composites, Inc. – RECOGNITION

A nurse and a physical therapist visit the workplace biweekly to do health screenings, present wellness information and assess employee ergonomics. The company sponsors employee teams in the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center 8 Week Trek for Health pedometer tracking event and local volleyball, softball, basketball and ski leagues. Gym memberships are subsidized and all employees receive a \$25 per month bonus for a workplace free of lost time accidents.

Engelberth Construction, Inc. – GOLD STANDARD

Employees and spouses receive free health screenings and complimentary coaching, and those working at construction sites also receive free on-site physical therapy sessions. A

new online health risk appraisal system helps workers track their health. Employees receive discounted health insurance for participating in wellness initiatives.

Trapp Family Lodge – SILVER

The resort followed the Six Steps to a Worksite Wellness Program from the Vermont Department of Health, resulting in a methodical needs assessment, goal creation and evaluation. Employees may use all exercise facilities, equipment and classes at the resort, including ski trails and rentals, water aerobics, meditation, rock climbing and fitness center. Awards are given for using the fitness center. Smoking cessation classes and health screenings are provided. The employee dining room includes healthy food choices.

Franklin County Home Health Agency, Inc – GOLD

Employees receive up to \$100 per year for fitness equipment, gym memberships, wellness classes and ski passes. A staff library includes myriad resources on health topics. Speakers at staff meetings give wellness tips. Rehab staff evaluates workspaces, including vehicles, for proper body mechanics. The agency regularly updates employees on opportunities to be active, eat better and stop smoking.

Husky Injection Molding Systems – BRONZE

Husky's cafeteria, catered by New England Culinary Institute, provides nutritious meals. Husky subsidizes 50% of food costs to encourage employees to dine healthfully. The chef teaches healthy cooking sessions. An onsite fitness center is open 24 hours daily

for employees and spouses. The campus includes running/walking trails, volleyball and basketball courts. A weekly newsletter provides healthy lifestyle information.

Simon Pearce, US – RECOGNITION

For six months prior to becoming tobacco-free, Simon Pearce provided smoking cessation programs for employees and spouses. A focus group addressed employee's concerns. The result: Now 22% of employees smoke, down from 53%. A monthly newsletter informs on wellness news. Employees receive onsite biometric screenings and a wellness reimbursement of up to \$100 for gym memberships, classes or wellness products.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont – GOLD

Employees may earn \$50 each time they complete a wellness program component, up to \$250 total. A regular schedule of wellness events includes lunchtime speakers, random rewards placed inside healthy snacks in vending machines and subsidized fitness classes. Onsite facilities include a fitness center with showers, a lactation room for nursing moms and a wellness library. Maps illustrating walking routes and fresh apples are available in the HR office. An online wellness center provides customized health assessments. Flexible work schedules allow participation in wellness activities.

Northwestern Counseling & Support Services, Inc. – RECOGNITION

The center uses ScoreHealth to identify and address employees' health risks. Employees may participate in a walking challenge and join a team in the Vermont

Corporate Cup Challenge and State Agency Race. To bring support healthy lifestyles in the community, the agency partners with the Center for Health and Wellness and with area health clubs to offer wellness workshops and group exercise.

Champlain College – RECOGNITION

Employees may use the on-campus fitness center and take fitness classes. The wellness center leads a weekly summer walk series and noontime wellness seminars and discounted massages are offered year-round. Subsidized gym memberships, ski passes and Weight Watchers programs are provided.

Community Care Network / Rutland Mental Health Services – GOLD STANDARD

A regular series of workshops and classes for employees includes line dancing, cardiovascular health, stress reduction and strength training. It partners with UVM to offer employees VTrim, a behavior modification weight loss program, at a reduced cost. Data from free onsite health and fitness screenings are analyzed to track and evaluate wellness programs. Employees who meet fitness requirements receive financial rewards.

America's Gardening Resource, Inc. – RECOGNITION

Monthly visits with physical therapists and weekly chair massages help employees avoid full-blown injuries. A Preventative Body Maintenance program allows employees to discuss health issues and make lifestyle changes. An active “Bod Squad” of employees trained in ergonomics helps employees maintain proper body mechanics.

Mack Molding Company – BRONZE

All three Vermont sites are equipped with fitness facilities including weight rooms, racquetball courts, group exercise studios and showers. Financial rewards helped encourage 58% of employees to join in a walking program. Participants included the company owner, CFO, president and senior managers. Monthly blood pressure screenings are offered to all shifts. The company pays entry fees for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure, and this year it fielded the largest team in that event.

Greater Burlington YMCA. – RECOGNITION

Free YMCA memberships for all staff encourage the use of fitness facilities and programs. YMCA leaders participate in Y programs, maintain healthy weight and do not smoke. A full-time Wellness Educator works with local companies to help them start and manage work site wellness programs.

The Vermont Country Store – GOLD STANDARD

A Marathon Health For Life nurse splits 20 hours per week among each VCS location, providing free health screenings and coaching. A record 85% of employees participated last year. One employee says the program saved her life, by the nurse encouraging her to schedule an exam that turned up a life-threatening issue. Company owner Gardner Orton, a certified Holistic Health Coach, provides educational forums to employees. Staff may use onsite fitness facilities or receive \$25 quarterly for gym memberships. VCS realized a healthcare savings of \$150,000 in 2007 for lowering medical care usage.

Brattleboro Retreat - RECOGNITION

Employees are informed about health and wellness topics via email, posters and a newsletter. At Employee Quick Clinics, staff can be seen by nurse practitioners for illnesses and injuries. Wellness workshops last year focused on heart health with sessions on nutrition, exercise and medical treatments. A schedule of fitness activities for staff includes snowshoeing clinics, hiking, biking, skiing, sing-alongs and noontime meditation sessions.

General Dynamics Armament and Technical Products - RECOGNITION

Free cholesterol screenings are given at an annual health fair and employees may complete free health risk assessments. Seminars, workshops and newsletters educate about healthy eating and smart exercising. Employees and spouses use an onsite fitness center equipped with cardio machines, weights and a group exercise studio. A personal trainer and a nutritionist are available for one-on-one counseling. Work schedules allow for participation in wellness activities.

Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Inc. – RECOGNITION

Walkathons, pedometer challenges and a Biggest Loser contest pushed employees to join fitness activities, and participants were rewarded with prizes and mentions in a staff newsletter. Biweekly nutritional lunches are provided on site, and two free health club memberships are given by lottery. Staff may use work time to partake in health screenings, chair massages and flu shots.

501-999 Employees

Dept. of Exercise Science & Dept. of Intramurals, Lyndon State College -

RECOGNITION

A campus-wide initiative provides undergraduate majors with opportunities to serve as health and fitness promoters, providers and managers. Faculty, staff and students participate in health screenings and fitness activities with weekly self-reporting. Guest speakers motivate and educate. Bulletin boards, newsletters and radio announcements keep everyone informed.

Northwestern Medical Center – GOLD STANDARD

Free wellness workshops, free counseling with a dietician, nutritious food “tasting” events, newsletters, email tips and a wellness website are among the resources that educate employees about their health. “ScoreHealth” provides health risk assessments and one-on-one counseling and allows NMC to track outcomes. Employees receive \$130 per year health insurance discount for participating, and free sneakers, magazine subscriptions, sports equipment and cash for additional wellness activities. Indoor and outdoor walking paths and free loans of Nordic walking poles and snowshoes encourage daily physical activity.

Green Mountain Coffee Roasters – SILVER

Employees who completed four activities last year received a discounted health

insurance premium this year: They had to walk 10 miles in 30 days, track food intake for 5 days, try a new physical activity and take a health risk assessment. In addition, employees are reimbursed 50% for fitness activities including ski tickets, gym memberships, horseback riding and rental equipment such as skates, skis and kayaks. An onsite physical therapist treats and educates employees. Yoga is offered onsite. Plant and distribution staffs participate in daily mindful stretching sessions at the beginning of each shift.

National Life Group – RECOGNITION

Participants in the Life Program have access to an onsite exercise room with cardio and strength equipment, group fitness classes and showers. Points are earned for attending brown bag luncheons on health related topics and for physical exams, dental visits, weight loss and smoking cessation. The employee cafeteria promotes healthy, local foods. Executive staff participates in the Vermont Corporate Cup and Vermont City Marathon, and sports and fitness successes are shared in a company newsletter.

Goodrich Corp, Fuel & Utility Systems – GOLD

Employees who complete an online Health Risk Assessment earn \$100, and \$50 more if their spouse does so. Three days each week, a physical comes onsite to evaluate workstations for ergonomic safety. Each employee receives personal recommendations for stretching and strengthening, with encouragement to participate in work area stretch classes. Wellness prizes and cash are given for participation in stretching sessions, onsite monthly wellness seminars, Weight Watchers and group walks. Employees, spouses and

the community may use an onsite fitness center with cardio and strength equipment and group exercise studio. Discounted memberships to outside gyms are provided, and the company subsidizes fees for the Vermont Corporate Cup Challenge.

1000+ Employees

Rutland Regional Health Services (Medical Center) – SILVER

Employees earn \$50 for meeting each of five health goals for a possible total of \$250. ScoreHealth provides health risk assessments and one-on-one counseling and allows for tracking outcomes. Educational resources include a Health Library stocked with books, videos and journals, a display board in the food court and email blasts with healthy tips. RRMC pays registration for community running and walking events and team sports. Tobacco cessation, weight control, strength training, health seminars and walking programs are offered onsite. The Biggest Loser competition created a healthy buzz throughout the organization, with 46 teams and 204 competitors.

Hannaford Bros. Co. – GOLD

85 percent of eligible employees participated in a healthy behavior incentive plan, each receiving \$20 weekly for completing a health risk assessment and meeting with a health coach. Company-wide wellness initiatives include walking challenges, preventative care and nutrition campaigns. Nurses and dieticians are available to all employees and dependents, providing personal advice, motivational coaching and steerage to community resources. Programs are targeted to stores whose employees

experience greater incidence of heart disease and illness. Healthy snack options are available in employee break areas and regular “health huddles” keep employees informed on wellness topics.

Vermont Automobile Dealers Assoc. – GOLD STANDARD

More than 90 auto dealerships across the state are eligible for onsite wellness screenings for employees and spouses. Participants receive counseling at the screenings, followed by a health report with recommendations for follow-up. Employees that complete 8 of 10 wellness criteria receive a fleece jacket and are entered into a drawing for 20 \$500 cash prizes. Each year, dealerships compete in physical activity challenges to motivate employees and their families. Last year, 20 dealerships competed in a 354-mile virtual walk through New Hampshire during a 10-week period. 69 % of participants said the challenge motivated them to continue walking after the challenge period.

IBM Burlington – BRONZE

A wellness website promotes physical activity with activity logging, progress tracking and professional support, with webcasts on health topics and live chats with exercise coaches. Online tools also include food tracking, meal planners, quit smoking tips and health risk assessments. Onsite initiatives include health screenings, chair massages and wellness coaching. Vending machines are stocked with healthy options, with icons identifying low fat, sugar free and organic items. A \$150 Children’s Health Rebate helps families aid children in the maintenance of healthy weight.

Fletcher Allen Health Care – SILVER

Fletcher Allen’s comprehensive wellness program includes tobacco cessation incentives, 10,000 steps pedometer program, “Get Moving!” calendar, nutrition/weight management resources and free depression screenings for employees and family members. The “Know Your Numbers” campaign provides biometric screening with one-on-one counseling and motivational interviewing to encourage stress management, weight loss, smoking cessation and lowering blood pressure and cholesterol. Incentives to participate include gift certificates, wellness products and subscriptions to Eating Well magazine.

State of VT, Dept of HR, Div of Workforce Development and Wellness – SPECIAL RECOGNITION

State employees and retirees receive onsite wellness screenings including a one-on-one appointment with a nurse and completion of a health risk assessment. An annual Activity Program provides a free pedometer and materials to log steps over an 8-week period. Participants are encouraged to team up for the Vermont Corporate Cup Challenge and State Agency Race. At the end of the 8-week program, a closing ceremony is held to recognize and reward participants. Raffle prizes are drawn and award winners have their picture taken with Governor Douglas. Healthy living workshops and CPR classes are offered to employees, and a web-based tracking tool allows employees to monitor their physical activity and engage in friendly competition with coworkers.

The Vermont Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports is a physical activity promotion and advocacy group, comprised of volunteers appointed by the Governor to represent a broad spectrum of Vermonters. The Council's mission is to promote wellness through physical activity for people of all fitness and ability levels.

###