

# Journey to the WELL



## Upcoming Wellness Events

- **EVERY FRIDAY**—  
 11:30am-1:30pm Friendly  
 Friday lunchtime experience  
 in your site's lunch area.
- Sunday, May 15 1:00 pm  
 NAMIWalks Northwest
- Tuesday, May 17 4:15pm  
 Yoga @ Wheatley School
- Friday, May 20—National  
 Bike to Work Day
- Friday, May 20 noon—  
 Ainsworth Healthy Eating  
 Together potluck—Mexican  
 food
- Tuesday, May 24 4:15pm  
 Yoga @ Wheatley School
- Tuesday, May 31 4:15pm  
 Yoga @ Wheatley School
- Sunday, July 10—OEBB  
 Fitness Rewards Qtr Reim-  
 bursement Request
- Monday, Aug 22 noon-4pm  
 MESD Wellness Summit

## Inside this issue:

Growing Transit 2  
 Communities

OEBB Program 2  
 Highlight

Incorporating 2  
 Yoga Into Your  
 Daily Life

Dig In. It's Time 3  
 To Plant Toma-  
 toes

Eat Together 3

Wellness "Under 4  
 Construction"

Volume II, Issue IV

May 11, 2016

## It works for me!

*A highlight each month about what one MESD employee enjoys doing for wellness.*

Damon Micheau is our colleague at Wheatley School. He has been practicing Yoga for 7 years, and for the past 3 years has been making an effort to go to classes 3-4 times per week. The first time he tried yoga was when a friend suggested he go to a class. He was hesitant because he thought it was meditation, but it turned out that yoga was more than he expected. **"Every time I do yoga, I'm glad I did and I feel better afterward."** The benefits of yoga for Damon are: full body strength, stability, balance, and mindfulness. He finds that when he is gardening, he can extend himself farther and with balance. He is more mindful about his movement and breathing.

Damon integrates physical activ-

ity into his daily life. He combines yoga with working in the yard and house, and with walking or jogging outside 2-3 times per week. He tries to turn chores into activities by building in more movement.

Damon's thoughts on MESD Employee Wellness: When employees are healthy, they can do better work. "I feel that for me, there is a connection between exercising regularly and feeling good about myself and my work."

Suggestion: Damon says, "I would encourage people to give yoga a shot. It's a really accessible form of exercise. People shouldn't worry about it being complex." Yoga at MESD is currently available at Wheatley on Tuesday afternoons at 4:15 (through May 31) for a \$5 drop in fee. It will expand to Ainsworth this coming fall. MESD's



**Pictured above:**  
 Damon Micheau, Wheatley School

yoga is suitable for all body types and levels of experience, and it is *fun*.

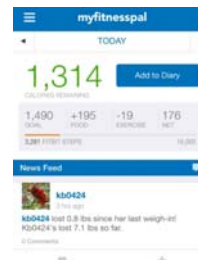
*Submitted by Elana Emlen*

## App of the Month: MyFitnessPal

We live in a world of temptation, cheap pleasures, stress, and convenience—all of which can affect our diet and health. MyFitnessPal is a mobile app and website that gives you a wealth of tools for tracking what and how much you eat, and how many calories you burn through

activity. Of all the calorie counters available, MyFitnessPal is by far the easiest one to manage, and it comes with the largest database of foods and drinks. With the MyFitnessPal app you can fastidiously watch what you eat 24/7, no matter where you are.

Free for Android, iOS, BlackBerry, Windows Phone and Web.





Above is the city's plan to improve the area around MESD for growing transit communities

## Growing Transit Communities

Walking or biking is a great way to get regular physical activity and stay healthy. Although the area around the Ainsworth Building isn't the most conducive today, the City of Portland is planning some big improvements to our neighborhood. There will be a new Columbia Slough Trail right across the street (it could be great for a lunchtime stroll) and improvements to the intersection of NE Airport Way and Ainsworth Circle. They are also going to add a missing

piece to the Columbia River Trail (a beautiful peaceful ride I'd highly recommend trying some warm summer afternoon).

You can see what is planned for our neighborhood here:

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/571659>

You can learn more, add comments, join a project mailing list

and help make sure the new trails connect to MESD here:

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/68193>

**Contributed by:**  
**Ovid Boyd,**  
**Synergy Team**  
**Technology Services**

***“Going at your own pace, in the comfort of your own home”***

## MoodHelper—Depression Management

MoodHelper is an online program for adults to help manage depression. Going at your own pace, in the comfort of your own home, you can learn skills to overcome depression that have been effective for millions of people. OEGB members and dependents age 18 or older enrolled in an OEGB medical plan can participate at NO COST.

Learn more or get started now:  
[www.MoodHelper.org](http://www.MoodHelper.org) (Invitation Code: OEGB227)



**Offered by OEGB**



## Incorporating Yoga Into Your Daily Life

Inspired by our interview with Damon Micheau about yoga? Here are some resources that can help you incorporate yoga into your daily life.

<http://living-yoga.org/events/low-cost-free-yoga-classes> lists places where you can take yoga classes that are low cost on a donation basis.

Instruction on poses and sequences is available at [www.yogajournal.com](http://www.yogajournal.com)

If you only have a set amount of time to spare, you can go to YouTube and search, for example, for “yoga 20 minutes” and you’ll see a large number of options. They might be great, they might be terrible! But it’s a good resource to explore, to find what works for you.

MESD has been using the OEA Choice Trust grant to support yoga classes at Wheatley. Yoga

classes will be offered at Ainsworth, too, starting this Fall. Elana Emlen would love some participation in a small Yoga Committee to help her get that going. Please email [eemlen@mesd.k12.or.us](mailto:eemlen@mesd.k12.or.us)

## Dig In. It's Time To Plant Tomatoes! By Suzanne Briggs

If we are lucky, May is the time to plant tomatoes in the Willamette Valley. The tomato is a tropical plant. Therefore, tomato plants like warmth – warm soil and air – and lots of sun. Consequently, growing tomatoes in the Willamette Valley can sometimes be a challenge, but the reward of flavorful tomatoes motivates gardeners to find ways to succeed!

The best way to succeed is to choose varieties that require a lower number of growing degree-days to ripen fruit. Gen-

erally descriptions of tomato varieties include an estimate of the number of days to maturity.

For example, a dependable early ripening variety is Early Girl, which ripens in 57 days. In contrast, long season varieties, such as Brandywine, which requires 85 days to ripen, frequently fail to fully ripen in the Willamette Valley. Our favorites include: New Girl (62 days), a good slicing tomato; and Juliet (60 days), a good large grape tomato.

But cherry tomatoes are by far

the easiest and most productive tomatoes to grow. We like Sweet Million (65 days); Sun Gold (65 days); and Sun Sugar (62 days).

For more information about tomato varieties, see the Portland Nursery list: <http://portlandnursery.com/docs/tomatoes/ TomatoMaster.pdf>

For more information about growing tomatoes, see the Portland Nursery brochure: <http://portlandnursery.com/docs/tomatoes/ TomatoTips13.pdf>



## Eat Together By Elana Emlen

Leaving your desk to eat lunch can seem like a “no go”, especially when you don’t know who else might join you.

There’s always too much work to do, and it’s easy to take a pass on a potluck. But it turns out that there are many benefits to eating with others, and research backs it up!

Dan Beuttner, founder of the Blue Zones, writes “Elevating the act of eating to a social event may help you enjoy and

digest your food better by making your meals a time of sharing and being together with friends and family.”

Kevin Kniffin, a researcher at Cornell, found that firefighters who ate together also worked better together. Other researchers found that it has the potential to improve productivity and happiness at work.

We all know that eating together is a good idea, it’s just a

matter of making it happen.

MESD Wellness is making it easier by setting up potlucks. Ainsworth has a healthy potluck every third Friday. We are hoping that champions at other sites will organize potlucks monthly or even quarterly.

Try it – and share your impressions with [mesdwellness@mesd.k12.or.us](mailto:mesdwellness@mesd.k12.or.us) Our hunch is that you’ll like it and enjoy the food and new connections at work.

**“There’s always too much work to do”**

## Get Out This Month Around Portland

- ◆ People in the street: May 15, 2016, 11am-4pm. 7.2 miles SE of Portland. Walk, bike or roller-skate on 7 miles of streets when most cars are banned for East Portland Sunday Parkways.
- ◆ June 3-14, 2016: Festival of Flowers - See a giant design made from 20,000 flowers at the Pioneer Courthouse Square.
- ◆ June 4, 2016: Starlight Parade & Run - the Starlight run 5K begins at Lincoln High School.
- ◆ Kids’ run: June 4, 2016- 13.4 miles south of Portland. The Blender Dash for kids age 6-15 includes color, mud, foam, obstacles and zombies at Tualatin Community Park.
- ◆ Adventure Race: June 10, 2016-12.8 miles East of Portland - “Questival” is a 24-hour adventure in Gresham.
- ◆ Sandcastles at the ocean is June 10-12, 2016. 79 miles NW of Portland—See dozens of elaborate creations on the Pacific Coast at the Sandcastle contest in Cannon Beach.
- ◆ Dragon boat races: June 11-12, 2016 - Watch 80 teams compete in a series of races on the Willamette River at Portland Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race at Tom McCall Waterfront Park, south of Hawthorne Bridge.

MULTNOMAH  
EDUCATION  
SERVICE DISTRICT

11611 NE Ainsworth Circle  
Portland, OR 97220

Phone: 503-255-1841

More info on the  
MESD Wellness web pages  
[www.mesd.k12.or.us/wellness](http://www.mesd.k12.or.us/wellness)

◆ **NO TIME???**  
If you don't have time to exercise, check out this New York Times link with exercise routines in the categories "Got 10 minutes? Got 7 minutes? Got 4 minutes?"

[http://  
www.nytimes.com/well/  
guides/really-really-  
short-workouts](http://www.nytimes.com/well/guides/really-really-short-workouts)

MESD  
Employee Wellness Initiative

Suzanne Briggs—  
Co-Coordinator  
[sbriggs@mesd.k12.or.us](mailto:sbriggs@mesd.k12.or.us)

Elana Emlen—Co-Coordinator  
[eemlen@mesd.k12.or.us](mailto:eemlen@mesd.k12.or.us)

## MESD Employee Wellness

The MESD Employee Wellness Program promotes a culture of holistic, proactive and self-directed wellness for employees. The program will offer resources and support to encourage a healthy lifestyle, while also making an impact on the school community as a whole.

One of the main goals of this program is to act as a role model and catalyst for change within the culture of MESD and to encourage others within our community to pursue healthy habits.

The success of our program will depend largely on a collaborative effort of participants across a wide variety of departments and work sites. All employees are encouraged to take part in wellness programs but also to serve as change agents through volunteerism, participating within committees and modeling a healthy lifestyle.

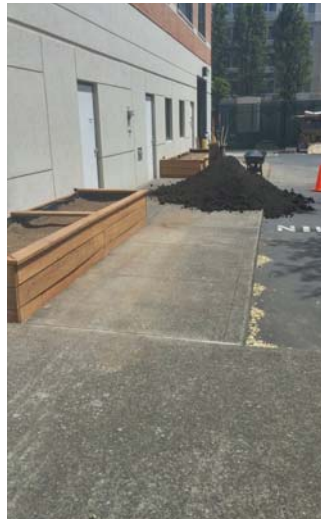
Join us on Sunday, May 15 for the 14th Annual  
NAMI Walk! Sign up here!:

<http://bit.ly/IWcaOuf> #NAMIWalks

## Wellness Initiatives “Under Construction”

The Wellness team is working hard behind the scenes to bring our staff more opportunities and creative ways to incorporate healthy lifestyles into our everyday work lives. The following are some recent initiatives that have been incorporated and possible things to come:

- ◆ Gardening beds installed for MESD employee gardening efforts
- ◆ Friendly Fridays at your location—we are still looking for interested individuals to take the lead at locations other than Ainsworth. If you are interested please email: [eemlen@mesd.k12.or.us](mailto:eemlen@mesd.k12.or.us)
- ◆ Healthy Eating Together—healthy potlucks monthly at your location—we are still looking for interested



A big “thank you” to Rich, Joni, Jeff and Anna for filling the raised beds at the Ainsworth building in prep for the

individuals to take the lead at locations other than Ainsworth. If you are

interested please email:

[eemlen@mesd.k12.or.us](mailto:eemlen@mesd.k12.or.us)

- ◆ Plans are in the works to finalize all the details of the “New Beginnings Wellness Summit” that will take place Monday, August 22, 2016 from noon to 4pm. Keep an eye out for more details to follow. This will be a great event to kick off the 2016-17 school year as an MESD employee community.
- ◆ MESD Wellness is tweeting! Check out the feed on the MESD homepage. Find a tweet that has been reposted to follow MESD Wellness. You can also go directly to @MESDWell to follow us. Help us get to 30 followers by the end of the month!