



March 17, 2011

Dear Community Partner,

On behalf of the Mayor's Fitness Council (MFC), thank you so much for your interest in becoming certified through the MFC Partner Certification Program. The Partner Certification Program is a mutually beneficial inclusive alliance program targeted at Austin-based organizations of all types and sizes. Its purpose is to further the vision of the Mayor's Fitness Council for Austin to be the fittest, healthiest city in the United States.

People spend a significant amount of time at work throughout their lives. This makes the workplace a major influencer of lifestyle behaviors in employees and, consequently, their families. That's why the Mayor's Fitness Council is committed to successfully engaging worksites across Austin in order to impact as many people as possible, with a proven methodology, which improves their health and ultimately the health of the city.

Lifestyle choices greatly impact the prevalence of chronic diseases, illnesses and other health conditions. Currently, nearly fifty percent of Americans have one or more chronic health conditions. It is also estimated that eighty percent of heart disease and diabetes, as well as forty percent of cancers are preventable. Did you know that tobacco use remains the number one preventable cause of death in the United States? It's true. The economic burden of cigarette use alone includes more than \$193 billion annually in health care costs and loss of productivity. More generally, at least seventy-five percent of all health care spending is on those with one or more chronic illnesses. We must make changes in our everyday lives and behaviors in order to reverse these negative trends. The MFC believes that reaching our citizens through their workplaces is a great way to do this.

The benefits of a healthy organization are extraordinary. They are demonstrable in attitude, productivity, individual and organizational performance, and through a long-term return on investment of up to \$6 in return to every \$1 on investment in comprehensive wellness programming. Aside from these direct benefits, as a certified partner, you will receive regular positive recognition and support for your efforts. You will also join a growing network of leaders in Austin who have come together to share best practices and advocate for healthy change in a larger, more impactful way.

By becoming a certified partner through the implementation of comprehensive, promising practices and evidence-based worksite policies, your organization will promote healthy lifestyles and help reduce the rates of preventable disease and disability in our community. I strongly thank you for your efforts.

We are very excited at the opportunity to have your organization become a part of the Mayor's Fitness Council Partner Certification Program and feel confident that with your help and support we can become the fittest, healthiest city in the US. The organizations and worksites in which our citizens participate represent a critical environment in supporting health and fitness initiatives that can change the lives of our citizens. Your organization can play a crucial role in realizing this change. Thank you in advance for your efforts.

Best Regards,

Lee Leffingwell  
Mayor