

Work/Life's "Beat the Boss" is Back

By Katherine H. Crawford, Staff Writer

Shawn Nickle, Defense Contract Management Agency's wellness/fitness coordinator, is on a mission to improve the health and well-being of DCMA employees. Nickle's program, Virtual Fitness @ DCMA, a component of the Work/Life Program, exists to help employees improve the quality of their lives through regular physical activity and good nutrition habits.



such a wide variety of programs also helps with recruitment and retention. Potential hires and "new employees see these programs, which show that DCMA cares about the health and well-being of its employees," Nickle noted.

This time of year Nickle is focused primarily on the agency's annual "Beat the Boss" event, now in its fourth year. This 1.5-mile run/walk is held at participating contract management offices across the agency from mid-March to July 1. Last year's "Beat the Boss" event drew approximately 1,350 participants, and this year an even greater number of employees is expected to compete.

On the day of each event, all participants — runners, walkers and volunteers — are allotted two hours of duty time to participate in the event and receive a commemorative medal and certificate signed by Keith Ernst, DCMA acting director. "Beat the Boss" is a great opportunity for employees



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"There is a heavy emphasis on health and wellness because a lot of times when you're overwhelmed with work, the first thing that goes is your focus on eating right [and] exercise. When you're busy, [those are] usually the first things that go out the window," Nickle explained.

The objective of all Work/Life programs is keeping personnel happy, healthy and productive by helping them to live a well-balanced life. "All of the Work/Life programs exist to ensure [each] employee is ... balancing all responsibilities such as family, work, [his or her] own health and to make sure DCMA's employees are going to be around for a long time and are healthy," Nickle said. Offering

(Top) A graphic depicting the commemorative medal being awarded to all participants in the 2007 "Beat the Boss" event. (Image courtesy of Shawn Nickle, DCMA Headquarters)

(Above) Shawn Nickle, DCMA wellness/fitness coordinator at his work station at DCMA Headquarters in Alexandria, Va. (Photo by Carolina Woods, BRTRC)

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to get out, get moving and spend time with co-workers. "There is an aspect of competition, but we also like to emphasize that it's important just to get out there and walk or run for the sake of fitness," Nickle stated. Once all the events are completed, all participants will be recognized on the "Beat the Boss 2007" Web site.

The goal of the event is for employees to run or walk to beat the fitness rating of the "boss," Ernst. At the DCMA Headquarters event held May 16, Ernst set the bar high by running the 1.5 miles in a time of 10 minutes, 48 seconds. Only those participants who meet or surpass Ernst's fitness rating are able to claim that they "beat the boss."

Fitness ratings are calculated based on each participant's gender, age category, mode of participation (run or walk) and completion time. Comparing a participant's results with a fitness standards chart reveals the fitness rating achieved. For example, a female between the ages of 30 and 39 who runs the 1.5 miles in 12 minutes and 54 seconds or less would receive a fitness rating of "excellent." These fitness ratings are based on U.S. Air Force fitness standards. The fitness rating chart can be viewed at http://home.dcmamil/dcma-hr/Beat_the_Boss/2007/rating_chart.htm.

To help employees prepare for the event, Nickle posted eight-week training plans for both runners and walkers on the "Beat the Boss 2007" Web site at http://home.dcmamil/dcma-hr/Beat_the_Boss/2007/index.htm.

In addition to the "Beat the Boss" event, Virtual Fitness @ DCMA offers incentive programs and on-site fitness seminars throughout the year. To learn more about upcoming programs and events, visit the Virtual Fitness @ DCMA Web site at <http://home.dcmamil/dcma-hr/fitness.htm>.



Upcoming Autumn Events

Be on the lookout for the following programs occurring during the September – October time frame:

- Open enrollment for the Civilian Fitness Center Membership Program
- Upgraded Motivation Lifestyle Management Center (more features and articles)
- Flu shots (late October/early November)
- Health Fairs

More information to follow as the program dates approach.

(Above) Keith Ernst, DCMA acting director, running to complete the course during DCMA Headquarters' "Beat the Boss 2007" event. Ernst completed the course in 10 minutes, 48 seconds. (DCMA staff photo)

Did You Know?

DCMA allows all employees to use up to two hours of duty time per week for fitness-related activities. This is an incentive to foster a healthy and active lifestyle in members of the DCMA community.

Learn more at http://home.dcma.mil/dcma-hr/atf_faqs.htm.

Virtual Fitness @ DCMA Contact Information

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To learn more about the programs and activities offered by Virtual Fitness @ DCMA, visit the Web site at <http://home.dcma.mil/dcma-hr/fitness.htm> or contact your local fitness point of contact:

DCMA Aeronautical Systems Division fitness POCs:

http://home.dcma.mil/dcma-hr/fitness_pocs_aeronautical.htm

DCMA Ground Systems and Munitions Division fitness POCs:

http://home.dcma.mil/dcma-hr/fitness_pocs_ground.htm

DCMA Naval Sea Systems Division fitness POCs:

http://home.dcma.mil/dcma-hr/fitness_pocs_Naval.htm

DCMA Space and Missile Systems Division fitness POCs:

http://home.dcma.mil/dcma-hr/fitness_pocs_SpaceMissile.htm

DCMA International fitness POCs:

http://home.dcma.mil/dcma-hr/fitness_pocs_International.htm

DCMA Special Programs Division fitness POCs:

http://home.dcma.mil/dcma-hr/fitness_pocs_sp.htm



DCMA Safety and Occupational Health Summer Safety Tip: Avoiding Sunburn

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Sunburn

Sooner or later, that 'healthy tan' will become unhealthy skin damage if you don't start dodging the sun rather than welcoming it. If you fish, golf, hike or go to the beach, avoid as much exposure as you can. You'll still get plenty of sun.

Sunscreen: Use a sunscreen with a sun protection factor of at least 15. Some types are waterproof, but, even so, you should reapply the sunscreen every two hours. Use sunscreen on cloudy days, too. Remember that children's skin is even more sensitive than yours. They can start

wearing sunscreen by the time they are six months old; however, you should still minimize their exposure.

Protective clothing: It may be slightly uncomfortable in the heat, but you should wear a long-sleeved shirt and long pants. Also put on a hat with a large brim and sunglasses.

Shade: If you have a choice, stay in the shade. Beach umbrellas will protect you from some of the sun exposure. They are actually very comfortable on sunny days.

Other advice: Avoid tanning parlors.

The sun is strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.