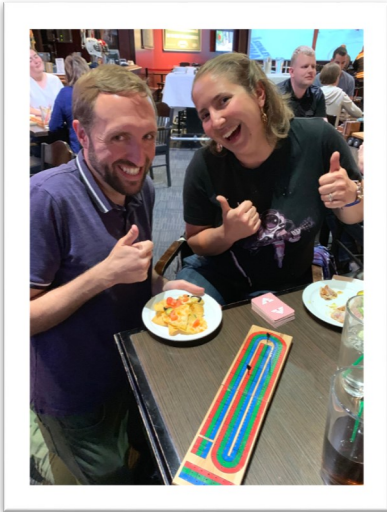


Summer 2019 newsletter



ECC. Cribbage 2019

Our **social wellness** is one of many interconnected components that makes up our total health. It is fueled by, and impacts, our physical and mental health. The World Health Organization has identified *social support networks* as one of twelve social determinants of health-factors that predict our overall well-being. Social wellness plays a vital role in our resilience toolkit and helps us to refuel, regroup and move through life stressors with more ease.

In this issue, we celebrate the social connection between colleagues at their weekly after-work golf league—demonstrating the importance of finding time to prioritize social wellness amidst our busy work and life commitments. These engaging and fulfilling moments provide examples of self-care, which helps us to recharge so we can face more challenges and be productive.

The more we invest into healthy social connections, the more likely it is we'll benefit when we need it most, thus improving our total health. Although some of us like less social time than others, we all need real social connection and sense of belonging to thrive. It does not need to be complex. It can be as simple as a walk at lunch time, skype call, book club or fitness class—the key is finding things that are meaningful to you and doing them on a regular basis to build a sense of community.

Employee Corporate Challenge (ECC) 2019 **Going Green** theme

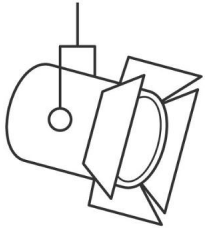


ECC, Bowling 2019

The 2019 ECC was a great way to experience social wellness in the workplace! We held over 20 ECC events in May and June, providing an opportunity for all City employees to create connections with colleagues and build comradery with teammates. These events would not have been possible without the tremendous time and dedication from our volunteer event champions, our Employee Wellness Ambassador Network (EWANs) and the leadership of our Wellness Coordinator.

Thanks to all of you for your hard work! We would like to give a big kudos to our communications analyst who worked collaboratively with CSC and IT to create an online registration process that helped increase participation in almost all ECC events. *This year we saw 42 participants come out for axe throwing, 34 played cribbage and 44 battled it out in laser tag.* A representative team from each event will now go on to represent The City at the Calgary Corporate Challenge (CCC), which runs from September 6-21, 2019.

If you would like to be a part of The City's CCC team, sign up for the Heart & Stroke's Big Bike, happening at Eau Claire on September 6, 2019 at 5pm. Please contact wellness@calgary.ca for more information.



Wellness spotlight: Social wellness in full swing

Written in collaboration with: Teryn Gafos & Cheryl Biggs

Cheryl and Teryn are active members of the Lakeview Business Ladies golf league. The pair are highlighted in this photo (right) along with two other City of Calgary colleagues, Laurie and Callei. They participate in a weekly 9-hole round of golf at the Lakeview Golf Club. They described some of the benefits to playing in the league, including: a weekly opportunity to get outside in nature and be immersed in a sport they love in a social environment; meeting new people and challenging themselves; participation in the league ensures that they leave work on time and prioritize work-life balance and self-care. One of the reasons they enjoy Lakeview so much is that the league is open to women with a range of abilities and ages and it is renowned for being accessible (with minimal course hazards), making it easy to navigate.

Participating in a golf league has also opened up other social connections for Cheryl and Teryn—including planning yearly trips with friends and family to golf destinations and special events, such as a year-end dinner celebration and weekend trips to other local golf courses.

Employee & Family Assistance Program (EFAP) 1-800-663-1142 and homeweb.ca

Nurture yourself and your relationships. Everyone faces challenging and stressful events in their lives. Most of the time we can handle these situations ourselves; other times we could benefit from support. You and your family have access to free and confidential services through EFAP. EFAP offers short-term counselling and Life Smart coaching services to help support all types of relationships as well as online resources through **Homeweb.ca**.



City of Calgary employees modelling work-life balance and social wellness (from L-R): Teryn Gafos (Compensation, HR), Laurie Vandean (Payroll, HR), Callei Barrett (CI Asset Info & Map, Water) and Cheryl Biggs (Compensation, HR)

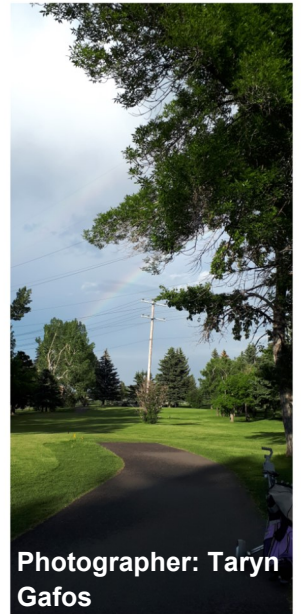
Looking to find ways to **build your own team and have your own adventures?** Here are some tips:

- Look online with search term for sport or team you are seeking.
- Word of mouth—talk to your colleagues and friends to link in with connections and get active.
- Sign up for training courses and enlist a coach to help you improve your game or hone in a skill.
- **Golf 12 Packs:** if golf is your game and you are a permanent City employee, you have access to the Golf 12 pack for City golf courses, including the option of using payroll deductions. Visit calgary.ca/golf for more information and call HR Support Services at 403-268-5800 to determine your eligibility and arrange payment.

Building social opportunities this summer

With warmer weather and longer days you can spend more time outside. Spending time in nature can renew and restore your energy. Here are some tips to help you .

- **Get active.** Try out some City fitness classes. To learn more, see the 2019 summer fitness class schedule and call **403-268-3800** to register.
- **Bike or hike city pathways and parks.** Tune up your bike and try some of the great city pathways and parks. Try an urban hike in fabulous green-space with a friend or pet.
- **Keep it simple.** Get outside and have fun. This can be as simple as tossing a frisbee, going to a community outdoor pool or reading.
- **Grab a bite on the patio or impromptu picnic.** Opt for a patio over indoors or share a picnic at a place with a great view.
- **Unplug.** Turn off your technology at night so your sleep is not affected and your brain can recharge and replenish.
- **Catch some z's.** Try an eye-mask or air conditioner to ensure you are getting good quality sleep when the days are longer and temperatures are warmer. A good night's sleep is essential to your overall health.



Photographer: Taryn Gafos

Vacation time and your total health are interconnected—here's why!

With busy schedules and competing priorities, it is important to take your vacation to maintain work-life balance. Prioritize time to unwind, destress, and enjoy the time away from work with friends and family. Below is an excerpt from Homewood Health's Lifelines magazine (05, May), entitled *Vacation: relax, refresh, reconnect*.



Do you really *need* to take a vacation? Yes!

Over time, with everything we take on in our regular routines, we experience stress, and our brains become more cluttered and inefficient. As employees, we need to recharge. Taking a vacation is like helping your body reset its operating system. But skipping vacations will “wreak havoc on your health and well-being” (Degges-White, 2018).

Cardiovascular health: a woman who hasn't taken a vacation in six or more years is eight times more likely to develop heart disease. Men who don't take vacations have a 32% greater risk of suffering a serious heart attack.

Ways to get connected this summer

The United Nations highlights the importance of friendship, stating “Through friendship...and developing strong ties of trust, we can contribute to the fundamental shifts that are urgently needed to achieve lasting stability, weave a safety net that will protect us, and generate passion for a better world where all are united for the greater good.”

Family fun month is in August. Need ideas on what to do? Check out this comprehensive list of over [75 family friendly free events in Calgary this summer](#).