

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

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Point Park sees overwhelming employee buy-in for its OnPoint wellness program

PITTSBURGH, PA – One key decision in the development of a new wellness program at Point Park University helped stabilize costs for both the school and its employees at a time when political volatility has brought great uncertainty to the health care market.

Two years ago, Lisa Stefanko, Vice President of Human Resources at Point Park, and her team developed OnPoint, which started with a simplified buy-in: If employees picked up a Garmin VivokiFit device and activated it, they would not see an increase at all in their health care premium for the next calendar year.

“That is not something most companies will do. Typically, you have to meet other goals and criteria, but we felt it was worth foregoing any rate hike at all if we could see a large increase in the participation level,” she said. “As a result, 73 percent of Point Park employees signed up, a number that was both shocking and unexpected in all the best ways.”

One of the primary goals of OnPoint was to be supportive and positive, making it fun for employees by offering special programming and activities.

“Health care has always been a huge cost driver for companies and a great burden for employees, particularly those with families,” Stefanko said. “We wanted to develop a wellness program that would entice employees to take part in a way that felt positive and inclusive.”

A 100-point system was created, and employees who reached that level would see a discount on their health care plans for this enrollment period. Employees can earn points by getting physicals, biometric screenings, attending lunch –and–learn events, and syncing their Garmin Vivofit device so their steps can be tracked through MyInertia. The HR Department also offers group activities like bike rides to give employees more opportunities to stay active.

In year two of the OnPoint program, the participation rate rose to 89 percent, with 53 percent getting annual physicals and 65 percent taking advantage of a free biometric screening. Forty-nine percent of the registered participants reached the 100 point threshold to earn a discount.

“OnPoint made it easy to track my cardio activity on my phone or computer, and the activities Point Park created helped to keep the program interesting and fun,” said Paul Abbott, a technician in Information Technology Services who lost 55 pounds through the program.

In addition, employees can earn points by taking part in community service programs, and employees logged hundreds of hours by volunteering at places like the Jubilee Soup Kitchen, Humane Animal Rescue and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

“While most wellness plans focus on physical activity and how many steps you take, we thought it was just as valuable to focus on different aspects of overall health and well-being,” Stefanko said.

“Supporting the desire of employees to give back to the community is a critical component of that.”

NOTE TO MEDIA: Lisa Stefanko is available to talk about the OnPoint wellness program and related health issues, including using a wellness program to create trackable New Year’s resolutions.

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Founded in 1960, Point Park University, a [College of Distinction](#), is a dynamic, urban university with a strong liberal arts tradition. Located in Downtown Pittsburgh, Point Park enrolls more than 4,000 full- and part-time students in more than 100 undergraduate and graduate programs offered through the School of Arts and Sciences, Rowland School of Business, School of Communication and Conservatory of Performing Arts. Visit PointPark.edu to learn more.