

5,000+ EMPLOYEES  
U-HAUL INTERNATIONAL INC.



**PBN** PROVIDENCE BUSINESS NEWS

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— 2021 AWARDS



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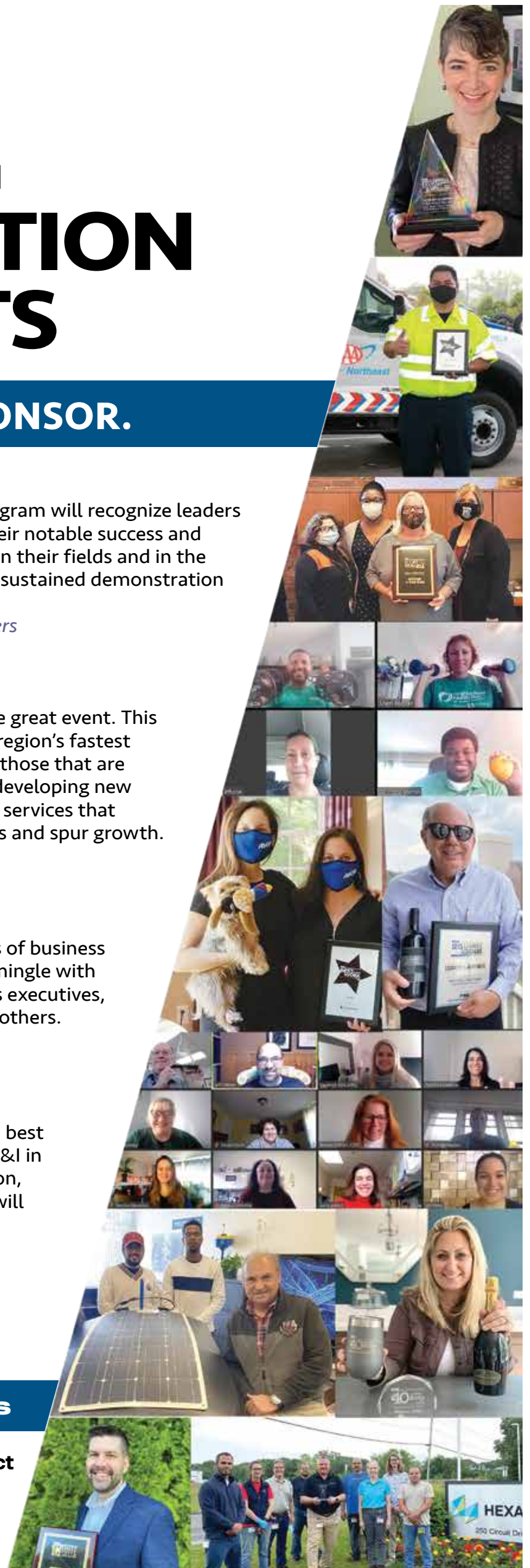
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FROM THE EDITOR

Holistic wellness programs taking hold



**INCENTIVIZING EMPLOYEES** to curb smoking, eat better and exercise remains a key goal of employee wellness programs of all sizes. But as companies shift to more holistic wellness programs, they're increasingly turning to outside partners and services.

South County Health, this year ranked first among PBN's Healthiest Employers in the 500-1,499 employee category, turned to Simplicity Health for a program that focuses on such diverse staff needs as career development, community, financial and emotional well-being, along with nutrition, physical activity and preventative care.

South County Hospital utilizes the Schwartz Center to offer its popular Schwartz Rounds program to employees as an outlet for managing social and emotional issues they face as caregivers. The latter has been especially important during the pandemic, with discussions that include health care ethics and how to help patients and families with difficult health decisions.

AAA Northeast, ranked first among companies with 1,500-4,999 employees, has turned to the Livongo online health platform for a specialized

diabetes program for employees and dependents. AAA also offers another Livongo program focusing on employee mental health that includes coaching and tools for managing stress and anxiety.

The trend continues with another No. 1-ranked company, U-Haul International Inc. in the 5,000-plus employee category. It utilizes Springbuk, a health analytics platform, to help direct services where they're needed most. One result has been the hiring of a physical therapist to design tailored fitness programs.

When it comes to employee wellness, if you want to be the best, getting help developing specialized programs to meet a range of needs is a great place to start.

Healthiest Employers again surveyed and judged this year's competition.

And we'd like to give special thanks to partner sponsor Tufts Health Plan for its support of this year's Healthiest Employers program.

*Michael Mello*

Michael Mello  
Editor

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**PUMPING IRON:** U-Haul International Inc.'s Travis Ambrose, right, lifts weights while General Manager Corey Perry, left, and Assistant General Manager Will De La Cruz look on. PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY



# U-Haul wellness program gets employees moving

BY MARY HOWE | Contributing Writer

1

**U-HAUL INTERNATIONAL INC.** founded its Healthier You Wellness program in 2016 with absolute determination to not guess about the health and wellness needs of employees.

The national moving and storage company has 120 employees in Rhode Island.

Company organizers wanted a program that measured health needs and met those needs with pinpoint accuracy and individuality. One tool to achieve that goal was to bring on board the services of Springbuk, a health analytics platform.

Springbuk has been leading U-Haul's wellness programs exactly where managers hoped to go with it, said Monique Harty, wellness program manager for U-Haul International.

There is no shortage of examples. One was when Springbuk data noted a high incidence of health claims pertaining to muscular and skeletal problems – not surprising in a business full of employees doing lots of lifting and hauling.

The company responded to this information by adding a physical therapist to its on-site medical clinic at U-Haul Arizona offices. This person will, over time, visit, shadow and observe workers in every job category, with the goal of designing fitness programs tailored to each type of worker. When the job-specific programs and exercises are created, this information is forwarded to U-Haul employees throughout the United States and Canada, Harty said.

Another example of Springbuk's usefulness was when it discovered through data analysis that employee expenditures on prescriptions

were very high. U-Haul met this news by hiring Rx Savings Solutions. This company disseminates information to U-Haul employees about where to find lower-cost prescriptions and what medicines may be safely replaced by generic drugs.

Harty and Sandra Gardner, marketing company president with U-Haul Rhode Island, emphasized that U-Haul takes the well-being of employees to an individual and personal level.

Harty said top executives at U-Haul have said that health and wellness initiatives should mimic "how you would treat your own family."

For instance, Gardner said, CEO and President Edward J. "Joe" Shoen has asked that company-provided food served at monthly meetings or occasional in-office celebrations must be healthy food. Cake, muffins, soda, chips and all foods of that ilk have been replaced with salads, fruits and other healthy options.

Gardner said employees were a bit leery when the healthy-food policy landed, but she secured a caterer that served delicious meals without relying on flour, oils and sugar.

"It's a case of leading by example," Gardner said of Shoen and his interdiction of sugar. "And I have seen people changing their eating habits since this began."

When the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting lockdowns hit in spring 2020, U-Haul quickly



**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Edward J. "Joe" Shoen, CEO and president  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:** 13,262

revised some of its fitness offerings to make it easy for workers at home to keep going. The company has long offered employees a \$75 reimbursement for personal gym memberships, Harty said. During lockdown, the company came up with about 20 apps that offer guided exercise classes that people can do at home. Cost of using the apps was borne by U-Haul. The apps were so popular, the company has continued the reimbursement even though most gyms are now open.

Gardner said the company has begun to offer a \$400-a-year reimbursement for employees on the company medical plan to use the services of a registered dietician. Thereafter, benefit managers learned that access to a professional dietician was difficult for some workers, depending on where they lived. So, about five months ago, the company extended the \$400 benefit to allow workers to apply it to a Weight Watchers app.

In 2019, U-Haul created its employee You Matter program, which offers referrals for help with legal, financial, family relations or other problems, Harty said. Use of the program tripled from its first to its second year. An additional element of the program is one that provides counseling, amounting to five sessions a year for any specific problem.

"These benefits mean more to some people than the paycheck they get," Gardner said. "They know they are reaching out to someone who is truly there to help them." ■

**A HEALTHY  
THOUGHT**

*'We have a **totally individualized approach** [to wellness]. Team members are reaching out to someone who is truly there to help them.'*

SANDRA GARDNER, U-Haul Rhode Island marketing company president



# Plethora of programs available for workers

BY MARY HOWE | Contributing Writer

2

CVS HEALTH CORP., the national chain of pharmacies and health services based in Woonsocket, with 8,800 workers in Rhode Island, uses a wide lens to envision wellness for its employees. The company’s stated “six dimensions of health” include the words “purpose, social connectedness and character strengths.”

Moreover, CVS employee health programs emphasize variety to accommodate all types of people and needs.

“There is really no silver bullet when it comes to a well-being program,” said Lauri Tenney, senior director of health and welfare benefits. “What works for me might not work for you.”

One unifying factor during the pandemic was the need to move many employees to remotely work from home. The company shut down its fitness centers but quickly developed live exercise classes with existing center instructors that employees could do online from home.

During the pandemic year, CVS also created telemedicine opportunities for mental health counseling. The offering was so appreciated that it will continue after work life returns to normal. ■



A HEALTHY THOUGHT

*‘We know when we come to work, we **don’t** leave our troubles in the parking lot, and it’s OK to experience that.’*

...

LAURI TENNEY  
CVS Health Corp.  
senior director of health and welfare benefits

CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):  
Karen S. Lynch  
CEO and president

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:  
300,000

# Partnership provides employee child care

BY MARY HOWE | Contributing Writer

3

VERY SOON AFTER MOST businesses – except health care – shut their doors to the public in March 2020 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, executives at Lifespan Corp., based in Providence, realized they had to come up with some quick help for doctors, nurses and other health care workers.

Clinical workers on the 12,211-person Lifespan staff could not work remotely, but the parents among them couldn’t leave young children at home alone. So, Lifespan quickly ramped up its relationship with Bright Horizons, a company that vets child care providers and provides referrals to them.

“It was a huge success for us during the pandemic when people were stressed out about having someone to take care of their kids,” said Greg Salgueiro, Lifespan director of well-being.

Online help with wellness remains a priority. Even in the summer of 2021, with many Lifespan employees still working remotely, the company instituted a virtual wellness program. From any location, workers can get guidance on exercise, nutrition, stress reduction and other topics. ■



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A HEALTHY THOUGHT

*‘The pandemic has elevated the need to emphasize a culture that **supports all employees’ health and well-being.**’*

...

GREG SALGUEIRO  
Lifespan Corp.  
director of well-being

CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):  
Dr. Timothy J. Babineau  
CEO and president

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:  
12,211



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**SPECIAL DELIVERY:** AAA Northeast driving instructor Sharon O'Brien delivers meals for Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the past 15 months, AAA has shifted from holding its wellness challenges to focusing on employees' mental well-being by supporting the community. COURTESY AAA NORTHEAST

# Financial well-being key part of wellness at AAA

BY MARY HOWE | Contributing Writer

1

**PHYSICAL PAIN CAN AND DOES** keep people awake at night, but another major stressor that keeps many of us thrashing in the wee hours is worrying about money.

Over the past few years, financial well-being has been one of the big elements in the employee health and wellness programs of **AAA Northeast**, headquartered in Providence.

The Northeastern sector of this national company, comprising about 2,700 employees from New Jersey to New Hampshire, recently has put in place several initiatives that put cash into workers' pockets for the purpose of enhancing their health, said Gina San Giovanni, supervisor of benefits and human resources services.

For instance, AAA Northeast paid a \$125 cash bonus to employees who declared they had been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, a benefit that about two-thirds of the workforce has claimed, San Giovanni said. Also, the company offers \$125 per year toward any costs that support employees' mental health, including things such as counseling, psychological care, meditation classes and relaxation apps.

"The fun part," San Giovanni said, "is that the employee doesn't have to be on the company health plan to claim these cash benefits. You could be a new hire, or on a spouse's health plan and you can still qualify."

She said the range of uses to which workers have put the mental health and COVID-19 cash benefits are individual and creative, such as yoga classes, aromatherapy or weighted

blankets.

Other ways AAA Northeast is easing workers' financial strains are by paying a living wage of not less than \$15 an hour; hiring a new 401(k) vendor and increasing the company's 401(k) match to 6% from 4%; and having the company pay all 401(k) administration fees.

Kristen Botelho Pires, director of total rewards and systems, said she had never been in a business where the "mantra" of putting employees first was taken as seriously and actively as at AAA Northeast.

"Our president is very much aware of what employees are asking for," Botelho Pires said. "This has made it easy to develop wellness programs. We are listening and we are delivering."

Many of AAA Northeast's health and wellness offerings were in planning or in place before the COVID-19 pandemic hit and sent people all over the world online for essential needs.

As if anticipating the retreat to home computers, AAA Northeast initiated two major health offerings using the online health platform Livongo. One of them, the Livongo for Diabetes program, is paid for entirely by the company, for use by employees and their dependents with Type 1, Type 2 and gestational diabetes.

About 41% of employees who have diabetes are using the Livongo diabetes program, San



**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
John Galvin, CEO and president  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:** 2,690

Giovanni said. It offers guided resources, free testing materials, blood glucose meters, test strips, personalized supports, 24/7 expert help and custom alerts.

Second, AAA Northeast is offering employees Livongo's myStrength unit, a resource for mental health care. MyStrength provides coaching, education and tools to help employees with stress and anxiety, as well as sleep problems and other mental health problems, using any smart device. It is open to all employees, whether they are enrolled in the company's health insurance plan or not. Eleven percent of employees have used myStrength.

San Giovanni said the company decided to offer help with diabetes and mental health problems after examining the overall employee health claims data.

"That is the smoke that tells us where there is a fire," she said. "We saw some of this [stress and anxiety] before the pandemic."

Health and wellness programs are not only beneficial to workers and the business overall, but they can even contribute to loyalty and longevity by workers.

"In these times, it is hard to recruit and retain. But we have a lot of employees who have been here 10, 20, 30 years," San Giovanni said. "I attribute that to continual improvement" in benefits such as the health and wellness programs. ■

**A HEALTHY  
THOUGHT**

*'We have to meet employees on all fronts to have a holistic approach to any health program.'*

...

GINA SAN GIOVANNI,

AAA Northeast supervisor of benefits and human resources services



# CBIZ rallies team to focus on self-care

BY HUGH MINOR | Contributing Writer

**2** DURING THE COVID-19 pandemic, the executive team at tax preparer **CBIZ & Mayer Hoffman McCann PC** in Providence recognized the need to provide additional support to promote the health and well-being of its staff.

With employees facing change and uncertainty, the company focused on developing strategies to enhance their mental health and self-care.

As Elizabeth Newman, chief of staff, explained, “CBIZ is about people, and we view investments that support our team’s health as investments in our business.”

To help staff lead a healthier lifestyle, CBIZ launched Rally, a digital, personalized health experience. Rally provides customized health and wellness recommendations for each individual, focusing on physical and mental health.

Rally promotes personal responsibility and accountability. As an incentive, employees who participate are given a discount on their health insurance premium each year that they enroll in the program.

With support from Rally, CBIZ employees weathered the pandemic and built healthy habits that will remain with them long into the future. ■



**A HEALTHY THOUGHT**

*‘We view investments that support our team’s health as investments in our business.’*

...

ELIZABETH NEWMAN  
CBIZ & Mayer Hoffman McCann PC chief of staff

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Scott A. Wragg  
Senior managing director

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
4,691

# Holistic health behaviors rewarded

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

**3** WITH 3,240 EMPLOYEES – about 250 of whom are in Rhode Island – **Gilbane Building Co.**, based in Providence, is moving toward a holistic approach to wellness, one that incorporates physical, behavioral, financial and social health.

Working with StayWell, Gilbane created a Wellbeing Champion Network and simplified the requirements to earn the 40% annual medical discount off employees’ medical premiums.

“Almost 70% of eligible employees earned this discount [during each of the last three years],” Gilbane Senior Benefits Manager Lynn Gillis said, “which supports Gilbane’s culture of rewarding behavior as we continue our journey toward holistic health.”

The Wellbeing Champion Network engages employee volunteers who promote wellness initiatives to their colleagues, including financial workshops, a sleep challenge and brief daily brain breaks away from one’s worksite. An executive-led committee is evaluating the overlap between safety and wellness.

“Our goal is for our employees to start thinking of well-being as more than physical,” Gillis said. ■



**A HEALTHY THOUGHT**

*‘We must take care of ourselves before we can support others.’*

...

LYNN GILLIS  
Gilbane Building Co.  
senior benefits manager

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Michael McKelvy  
CEO and president

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
3,240

# Spicing up wellness for staff, residents

BY JAIME LOWE | Contributing Writer

**4** BRIGHTVIEW SENIOR LIVING’S wellness program is deeply rooted in the company’s culture.

“Our award-winning culture is based on being a great place to work for our associates so they will create a great place to work for our residents,” said Jessica Sheffield, Brightview’s wellness manager.

Brightview has focused its sights on wellness by having a full-time wellness manager and integrating its wellness efforts into company operations, as well as health plan management. This includes a Manage Your Chronic Condition Program through the company’s navigation vendor, Quantum Health, which also features a Patient Assurance Program for diabetics.

“One word to summarize Brightview’s wellness program is SPICE, which is our model for wellness initiatives and stands for spiritual, physical, intellectual, cultural, and emotional wellness,” Sheffield said. “SPICE represents our holistic approach to well-being and also reflects the integration of associate wellness into company operations, as we use the same SPICE model for both associates and community resident programming.” ■



**A HEALTHY THOUGHT**

*‘Brightview recognizes wellness as an opportunity to create a culture that fosters strong associate engagement and retention.’*

...

JESSICA SHEFFIELD  
Brightview Senior Living  
wellness manager

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Tom Grape  
Founder and CEO

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
2,525

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## Partnerships key to wellness mission

BY JAIME LOWE | Contributing Writer

**5** THE KEY TO THE WELLNESS program at Ocean State Job Lot lies in community and partnerships.

"The innovative way we tie our philanthropic efforts into our wellness program is special. When you think of community, you think of partners, and the ability to leverage great partnerships is an example of how we continue to grow and develop our associate-focused wellness mission," said Bob Selle, Job Lot's chief human resources officer.

Wellness partners include Care New England Health System, Bradley Hospital and Ocean State Community Wellness, to name a few.

Job Lot further expanded its partnerships in response to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Employees were provided access to free resources such as a benefits hotline, a health care concierge service, telemedicine, a substance abuse and mental health services hotline and a crisis text hotline.

Future goals include partnering with Care New England to open an on-site wellness center at the retailer's North Kingstown headquarters. ■



### A HEALTHY THOUGHT

*'Associates were provided with access to free resources that would personally benefit them during an extremely unpredictable time.'*

...

**BOB SELLE**  
Ocean State Job Lot chief human resources officer

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Marc Perlman  
Principal owner and CEO  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
3,894

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*winner*

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## Activities, challenges get results at Tufts

BY JAIME LOWE | Contributing Writer

**6** ONE WORD THAT DESCRIBES Tufts Health Plan's Wellness Program is "inclusive," says Jennifer Mangiaratti, senior manager of benefits and wellness.

"Our medical clinicians, wellness coach and fitness center staff work together to develop our robust annual plan, which encompasses all the ongoing activities, challenges and incentive programs to be held in a given calendar year," she said. "This approach offers employees a holistic, well-rounded way to positively improve their overall health."

The program provides incentive programs that incorporate more than one service. It also offers on-site and remote offerings for all employees – from younger adults to those over the age of 65 and for people with a variety of physical disabilities – for their physical, mental or emotional health needs.

The positive outcomes of the wellness program are vast. With a more than 95% participation rate, Tufts employees have reported an increased energy level, improved body mass index, and they are embracing healthy lifestyle options. ■



### A HEALTHY THOUGHT

*'This approach offers employees a holistic, well-rounded way to positively improve their overall health.'*

...

**JENNIFER MANGIARATTI**  
Tufts Health Plan senior manager of benefits and wellness

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Cain Hayes  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
2,969

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HEALTHIEST EMPLOYERS OF RHODE ISLAND

(based on companies with 5,000 or more employees)

2021 rank	Company   Website CEO/President	Address Phone	Type of business	No. of employees	Top health programs offered
1	<b>U-Haul International Inc.</b>   uhaul.com Edward J. "Joe" Shoen	56 Technology Way West Greenwich, R.I. 02817 (401) 623-8509	Moving and transportation	13,262	Encompassing health, fitness, nutritional and financial wellness under single umbrella
2	<b>CVS Health Corp.</b>   cvshealth.com Karen S. Lynch	1 CVS Drive Woonsocket, R.I. 02895 (401) 765-1500	Pharmacy retail and insurance benefits	300,000	Aetna Lifestyle and Condition Coaching, Aetna Maternity Program, MinuteClinic tobacco cessation, MinuteClinic weight management
3	<b>Lifespan Corp.</b> <sup>1</sup>   lifespan.org Dr. Timothy J. Babineau	167 Point St. Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 444-3500	Health care	12,211	Virtual Living Well platform provides targeted education along with specific participation incentives

<sup>1</sup> Lifespan Corp. includes Emma Pendleton Bradley Hospital, Newport Hospital, Rhode Island Hospital/Hasbro Children's Hospital and The Miriam Hospital.

HEALTHIEST EMPLOYERS OF RHODE ISLAND

(based on companies with 1,500–4,999 employees)

2021 rank	Company   Website CEO/President	Address Phone	Type of business	No. of employees	Top health programs offered
1	<b>AAA Northeast</b>   cluballiance.aaa.com John Galvin	110 Royal Little Drive Providence, R.I. 02904 (401) 868 2010	Automobile servicer	2,690	Ergonomic workstations, health programs, on-site catering
2	<b>CBIZ &amp; Mayer Hoffman McCann PC</b> <sup>1</sup>   cbiz.com/newengland Scott A. Wragg, senior managing director	1 Citizens Plaza Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 626-3200	Accounting	4,691	Personal and professional growth programs
3	<b>Gilbane Building Co.</b>   gilbaneco.com Thomas F. Gilbane Jr., chairman; Michael McKelvy, CEO and president	7 Jackson Walkway Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 456-5800	Construction	3,240	Gym membership and equipment reimbursement, mindfulness, stress and yoga programs
4	<b>Brightview Senior Living</b>   brightviewseniorliving.com Tom Grape, founder and CEO	57 Grande Ville Court South Kingstown, R.I. 02873 (401) 789-8777	Senior living facility	2,525	Health, lifestyle and nutrition coaching; meditation classes; wellness programs
5	<b>Ocean State Job Lot</b>   oceanstatejoblot.com Marc Perlman, principal owner and CEO; Alan Perlman, principal owner; Steve Aronow, principal owner	375 Commerce Park Road North Kingstown, R.I. 02852 (401) 295-2672	Retail	3,894	Fitness Thursdays, Wellness Ambassador program
6	<b>Tufts Health Plan and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care</b> <sup>2</sup>   tuftshealthplan.com Cain Hayes, CEO	75 Fountain St. Providence, R.I. 02902 (401) 272-3499	Health insurer	2,969	Co-ed recreational leagues, mindfulness sessions, wellness coaching

<sup>1</sup> Also known as CBIZ & MHM Inc.  
<sup>2</sup> Tufts Health Plan and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care became a combined entity in January 2021. The entity will be rebranded as Point32Health.





**OUT FOR A RUN:** South County Health employees participate in the hospital's Centennial 5K event in South Kingstown. The charity run benefited cancer care services at South County Hospital. COURTESY SOUTH COUNTY HEALTH

# Incentives allow workers to earn money while keeping fit

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

1

**WHILE SOUTH COUNTY HEALTH** provides its patients with the highest-quality care, the organization is laser-focused on the health of its employees.

South County Health, based in South Kingstown, is comprised of South County Hospital, South County Home Health, South County Medical Group and South County Surgical Supply.

"Seeing COVID patients in the community [was] extraordinarily stressful, especially in the beginning at a time of uncertainty about the disease and treatment," SCH Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer Maggie Thomas said.

While learning appropriate COVID-19 treatments, putting on gowns to enter isolation rooms and obtaining personal protective equipment were all managed well, those new obligations created tremendous organizational stress, she said.

"We provided additional support to the staff, [including] respite areas, peer support and encouraging time off to avoid burnout and increase resilience," Thomas said.

The company's longtime wellness program addresses diverse aspects of health. By engaging with an outside partner, Simplicity Health, SCH's Well Beyond Program addresses career development; community, financial and emotional well-being; nutrition; physical activity; preventative care; and well-being coaching.

Financial incentives can play a powerful role in strengthening employee engagement. By volunteering for a local nonprofit: participating in biometric screenings – evaluating body mass index, blood pressure, cholesterol; visiting their

primary care physician; and engaging in physical activity, benefits-eligible employees earn incentive points that top out at \$300 annually per person. Serving on the Wellness Council, for example, equals 50 incentive points, while running/walking a 5K or 10K equals 25 incentive points for a benefits-eligible employee.

Employees earn incentive points by working with the Simplicity Health well-being coach to address their goals. Before COVID-19, the coach came on-site regularly. Employees engaged with the coach by telephone during the pandemic.

"We are working hard to make sure this opportunity is sustained ... to support [each employee's] overall wellness journey," Thomas said.

Employees enrolled in the company's health insurance plan who obtain their health care through the organization – from routine primary care and diagnostic services to inpatient treatment – incur no out-of-pocket charges.

"We're really encouraging great medical care for our staff and their enrolled family members with no financial barriers," Thomas said, adding staff members who are earning less than \$50,000 a year have not seen an increase in their employee contributions to the health insurance premiums in 10 years.

Through the Coastline Employee Assistance Program, employees can participate in any of dozens of informational sessions. The sessions range from resilience, communication and con-

  
**SOUTH COUNTY HEALTH**

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Aaron Robinson, CEO and president  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:** 814

flict management, to managing change, mastering Medicare, and humor in the workplace.

Recognizing that busy medical professionals often feel they lack the time they need to address their own health care needs, South County Health brings many of its health and wellness programs on-site, such as the employee assistance programs, biometric screenings and Schwartz Center Rounds.

South County Hospital is one of hundreds of hospitals hosting Schwartz Center Rounds, which offer health care professionals regular opportunities to "openly and honestly discuss the social and emotional issues they face in caring for patients and families," according to The Schwartz Center website.

Thomas said SCH's Schwartz Center Rounds focus on employees' emotional and mental health, which has been especially meaningful during the pandemic. Topics have included health care ethics and accessing help for difficult decisions; compassion matters and the challenges of alcohol use treatment; care and self-determination; and pandemic perspectives and COVID-19 stories. The programs are open to all employees, include lunch and provide incentive points for participation.

Sixty-seven percent of benefit-eligible employees participate in SCH's Well Beyond Program, which is 11% above the national benchmark, according to the National Business Group on Health, Thomas said.

"Our commitment to our staff [health] is unparalleled," Thomas said. "We are so proud of [our] committed and incredible employees." ■

**A HEALTHY  
THOUGHT**

*'Employees must **care for themselves first** to be in the best position to care for the community.'*

...

MAGGIE THOMAS,

South County Health vice president and chief human resources officer



## Virtual resources integral to wellness

BY KIMBERLEY EDGAR | Contributing Writer

2

**BLUE CROSS & BLUE SHIELD** of Rhode Island boasts that it “passionately leads a state of health and well-being across

Rhode Island.”

That begins with helping its own 750 employees access better health across physical, emotional and other areas.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Blue Cross leaned heavily on virtual resources, equipping associates with custom personal training, live strength and conditioning workouts and other remote fitness classes, ergonomic evaluations, and coaching in nutrition, exercise, stress management and more.

Blue Cross’ partnership with global health leader Virgin Pulse meant associates could access award-winning content on digital well-being platform Whil to develop skills to calm and focus their minds and relax their nerves.

Virtual programming will continue at Blue Cross as part of a holistic hybrid approach to employee health care.

“We are in a unique position to support our associates as they work to achieve and maintain their health and well-being,” said Hillary McCurley, chief human resources officer. ■



### A HEALTHY THOUGHT

*‘Being flexible, innovative and putting employee health and wellness first leads to a stronger, healthier and more effective workforce.’*

...

**HILLARY MCCURLEY**  
Blue Cross & Blue Shield  
of Rhode Island  
chief human resources officer

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Martha L. Wofford  
CEO and president  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
750

## Health care tailored to unique needs

BY JAIME LOWE | Contributing Writer

3

**NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH PLAN** of Rhode Island’s wellness program is tailored to fit the unique needs of its employees. Its key feature is

its flexibility.

Employees can set realistic, long-term goals and personalize them based on their health needs. Some perks include free wearable electronic devices that track steps and sleep, a new fully equipped fitness center and a Bevi water machine.

Neighborhood Health also offers monthly wellness webinars for its employees on a variety of topics, including nutrition, work-life balance, physical activity and financial wellness. Additionally, the program provides a solid focus on mental well-being with webinars on chair yoga, meditation and stress management, as well as a premium subscription to the Calm app.

“Our goal is to have as many employees as possible touch at least one aspect of our wellness program,” Compensation and Benefits Manager Nicole Voller said. “Having an engaged population will ultimately lead to overall job satisfaction and a happier workforce.” ■



### A HEALTHY THOUGHT

*‘[Our] mission is to promote health, wellness and quality of life for employees and their loved ones so they can be at their best.’*

...

**NICOLE VOLLER**  
Neighborhood Health Plan of  
Rhode Island compensation  
and benefits manager

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Peter Marino  
CEO and president  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
580

## Engaged employees compete to stay fit

BY HUGH MINOR | Contributing Writer

4

**TO MAINTAIN A COMPETITIVE EDGE** in the plastic fabrication industry, the leadership team at **Toray Plastics (America) Inc.**,

based in North Kingstown, is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all employees.

“We feel that in order for employees to be satisfied and grow in their roles, health and wellness is a critical tool for our overall success,” said Lisa Ahart, Toray’s vice president of corporate human resources and environment, health and safety.

That attitude is championed throughout the organization. CEO and President Michael Brandmeier leads companywide Health & Wellness Challenges in which employees compete by keeping track of activities on their Virgin Pulse app. Contests range from tracking steps daily to developing better sleep habits.

Brandmeier spices it up with his own “Brando Bucks” so employees can earn rewards for their participation.

Having Toray’s employees more engaged in their own health and wellness helps build a sense of loyalty that leads to everyone’s success. ■



### A HEALTHY THOUGHT

*‘For employees to be satisfied and grow in their roles, health and wellness is a critical tool.’*

...

**LISA AHART**  
Toray Plastics (America) Inc.  
vice president of corporate  
human resources  
and environment,  
health and safety

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Michael Brandmeier  
CEO and president  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
700

## WashTrust is invested in workers’ well-being

BY HUGH MINOR | Contributing Writer

5

**THE WASHINGTON TRUST CO.** is committed to the financial health of its customers, but the wellness of its employees is critical to its success as the oldest community bank in the nation.

According to Dianne Morrone, assistant vice president of corporate training, “Washington Trust’s Wellness Program encourages a healthy lifestyle by supporting employees with fun wellness challenges, webinars and a reimbursement program.”

To keep its employees focused and energized, the Westerly-based bank’s wellness teams create weekly challenges and urge everyone to participate. Activities include sending in a photo of their favorite hiking location or a special place where they like to sit and meditate.

During the holidays, Washington Trust created a cookbook featuring healthy desserts submitted by employees. It was a way to promote better eating and connect staff by sharing some of their favorite recipes.

Also, employees can earn wellness points by joining in volunteer opportunities that involve physical activity. ■



### A HEALTHY THOUGHT

*‘Our mantra has been to take care of yourself, and make a conscious decision to be proactive about your health.’*

...

**DIANNE MORRONE**  
The Washington Trust Co.  
assistant vice president  
of corporate training

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Edward O. Handy III  
Chairman and CEO  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
617



**PICTURE PERFECT:** Groov-Pin Corp.'s Susan Smith, executive assistant and manager of human resources, takes a group selfie with her fellow employees at the company's Smithfield facility.  
PBN PHOTO/RUPERT WHITELEY

# Wellness programs unite employees at Groov-Pin

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

1

**EMPLOYEES WALKING THE GROUNDS** of Groov-Pin Corp. in Smithfield during work hours aren't goofing off. Rather, they are participating in the company's Walk to Wellness Program.

Not only have some employees lost weight and a couple are no longer insulin dependent, "the program is good for the team; it's brought employees together and has a positive impact on their physical, mental, fiscal and social health," said Susan Smith, executive assistant and manager of human resources. "It's now the culture of the company."

Of Groov-Pin's 85 employees, 47 are in Rhode Island.

After evaluating whether the manufacturing company could operate as a social enterprise – a business that addresses social needs through its products and services while maximizing profits, CEO Scot Jones brought the company together to examine and evaluate Groov-Pin's values.

"I heard an employee say, 'It's great to be of service to the community, but we need to take care of ourselves first.' We took that message to heart and brought that back to our values ... and from there, we developed our wellness program," Jones said.

After developing the program seven years ago, Groov-Pin began participating with United-HealthCare Corp.'s Motion Program, in which exercise trackers monitor participants' physical activity.

Incentives to participate in Walk to Wellness have included contributions to Groov-Pin employees' health savings accounts, massage gift certificates, paid days off, subsidized gym

memberships and exercise items such as water bottles, T-shirts and gym bags.

"Before COVID-19, we'd hold yoga classes every other week – weather dependent – for an hour each morning," Smith said.

"One woman told me, 'If it weren't for Groov-Pin, I never would have tried yoga.' Those are some of my favorite times – when I see people get excited about healthy choices like yoga or our nutrition classes," Smith said.

The company, which experienced no cases of COVID-19, is being cautious about bringing back such programs for the time being.

Employees' financial well-being is an important component of Groov-Pin's program, as management recognized that financial worries and anxieties can impact the well-being of otherwise-healthy individuals. To that end, Groov-Pin sponsors workshops and information sessions related to finance and investing.

During the pandemic, Smith said, "We saw how important our employees' social health was; people felt disconnected. Our wellness program already included programs to address employees' physical, mental and financial health, so we decided that connecting employees to the community was an important fourth element."

Getting employees out walking, burning calories, relieving stress, building muscles and developing healthy habits, all while raising money for nonprofit organizations, including Cross-

**GROOV-PIN CORP.**

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Scot Jones

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:** 85

roads Rhode Island, American Lung Association and Black Mountain of Maine, is part and parcel of Groov-Pin's wellness focus. Donations to these nonprofits, Smith says, represent contributions from employees and the company.

Groov-Pin has held mindfulness programs, self-defense, acupuncture and more. If people ask for and are interested in a program, the company will look for people to lead it.

"On average, slightly more than 80% of employees participate in our [wellness] initiatives," Smith said.

The broad-based participation is paying off. Smith said she has seen more wellness visits and fewer sick-patient visits.

"While we have an older population, our [health-related] numbers are going in the right direction," she said.

Being present, being part of the group and listening is why Jones fully embraces Groov-Pin's myriad exercise initiatives.

"I was one of the first to get acupuncture, I did yoga and I participate in walks," Jones said. "The message is – in real terms – that the employees are one of the most important parts of the business."

In addition to the walking initiatives, Groov-Pin this year established monthly health and wellness challenges, all with incentives to participate. August's will encourage employees to try healthy new foods.

"Our wellness programs are created for all of us – we're a family here," Smith said. ■

**A HEALTHY  
THOUGHT**

*'We recognize if our employees struggle with health, it is difficult to be productive.'*

...  
SUSAN SMITH,

Groov-Pin Corp. executive assistant and manager of human resources





## Healthy choices lead to fatter wallets

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

**2** AT CHILDREN'S FRIEND, Rhode Island's oldest child-centric nonprofit, employees can save up to \$1,500 in deductible health insurance expenses by taking part in the Providence organization's annual voluntary Health Insurance Waiver of the Deductible Incentive Program, says benefits and wellness specialist Julie Colangeli.

"The goal is for employees to complete five basic health and wellness steps that lead to healthier lifestyles and engagement with health care providers," Colangeli said. "In 2021, 74% of employees enrolled in our health plan earned that waiver."

Last year, 34 employees collectively lost some 300 pounds through a virtual yearlong program. Other initiatives include a Healthy Eating Program, a Healthy Lifestyle Program, free access to the Headspace app and, this summer, \$10 farmers market vouchers.

"We look for community partners who want to work with us," Colangeli said, including the R.I. Department of Health and Farm Fresh Rhode Island.

Children's Friend's volunteer Wellness Committee works to develop health and wellness programs. ■



Children's  
FRIEND

A HEALTHY  
THOUGHT

*'The goal is for employees to complete five basic health and wellness steps that lead to healthier lifestyles.'*

...  
JULIE COLANGELI  
Children's Friend benefits  
and wellness specialist

CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):  
David Caprio  
CEO and president  
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:  
375

## Virtual wellness options here to stay

BY NANCY KIRSCH | Contributing Writer

**3** INNOVATION, RESPONSIVENESS and technical support propelled AstroNova Inc. to lead each of its global markets.

Similar qualities have helped the data-visualization-technology manufacturer engage, educate and empower employees worldwide to healthier living since 2014, which has stabilized company health care costs for the past three years.

One of the first private, nonmedical businesses certified for on-site COVID-19 testing, AstroNova will run its weekly test lab for employees through summer's end. The company also hosted a public vaccine clinic.

During the pandemic, myriad online initiatives such as telemedicine and virtual 5K races – a company running-club favorite – boosted wellness, especially among employees working remotely, including half of the workforce at AstroNova's West Warwick headquarters.

This virtual wellness programming has become a more permanent part of AstroNova's health care hybrid.

"Every year we strive to add or create more options for people – more choice at lower cost," said Matt Cook, vice president of human resources and organizational development. ■



A HEALTHY  
THOUGHT

*'We focus on education and not mandates, as we offer employees, their spouses and families custom health care, including plenty of social options, for their well-being.'*

...  
MATT COOK  
AstroNova Inc. vice president  
of human resources and  
organizational development

CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):  
Gregory A. Woods  
CEO and president  
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:  
232

## PCU challenges staff to step up fitness

BY KIMBERLEY EDGAR | Contributing Writer

**4** PAWTUCKET CREDIT UNION took its first steps toward companywide wellness at about the turn of the millennium.

When PCU opened its new headquarters at 1200 Central Ave. in Pawtucket, it also launched an in-house fitness center.

Since then, PCU has made strides toward employee health and wellness success, including a fiercely competitive app-based step challenge that saw 13 teams log almost 3.5 million steps in one week earlier this spring.

As the COVID-19 viral threat subsides, 93-year-old PCU plans to continue offering its 263 employees more of these challenges and other virtual programming such as health webinars that helped employees stay physically and mentally on track during the pandemic.

In June, the gym reopened, and a cardio class – an employee favorite since 2014 – was back up and running.

"I don't think I've gotten so many emails from so many people happy to work out again," said Heather Thurber, assistant vice president of human resources. ■



Pawtucket  
Credit Union

A HEALTHY  
THOUGHT

*'We want our employees to know we care about them and their families, and we're trying to ... support their health and wellness.'*

...  
HEATHER THURBER  
Pawtucket Credit Union  
assistant vice president of  
human resources

CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):  
Brian Azar  
CEO and president  
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:  
263

## Workers walking toward wellness

BY WENDY PIERMAN MITZEL | Contributing Writer

**5** COOLEY GROUP may have faced new challenges throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, but one thing stayed the same: the success of its Wellness Walking Competition, now 12 years strong.

Cooley provides step trackers to all employees and twice a year runs a challenge coordinated through the Virgin Pulse app.

At Cooley, reaching 10,000 steps in the challenge earns a vacation day, a prize that employees, or the 85% of the workforce w/ c 090ho regularly participate, have come to really value.

"It works out to nearly 300 eight-hour vacation days a year. We call it a wellness vacation day," said Debra Bedrosian, vice president of human resources and social responsibility at the Pawtucket-based manufacturer of engineered membranes. "We're just so pleased that in the middle of all this with COVID, we kept everyone safe and healthy. It's been a struggle." ■



A HEALTHY  
THOUGHT

*'For the past 12-plus years, we have conducted biannual walking challenges for all our employees, with at least an 85% participation rate.'*

...  
DEBRA BEDROSIAN  
Cooley Group director of  
human resources

CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):  
Daniel Dwight  
CEO and president  
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:  
195



## Strengthening those who help others

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

**6**

**THE R.I. HOUSING and Mortgage Finance Corp.** ensures that the 220 employees who help get folks into homes

and rentals via mortgage and rental assistance are themselves well-cared for. Throughout the year, the agency, on Washington Street in Providence, hosts seminars for its team members on topics such as quitting smoking, managing diabetes, eating healthfully and fighting stress.

Karen Ramieri, payroll and benefits generalist, said the busy agency encourages employees to take time to focus on better health and learn how they can take preventative actions to be healthier. Ask A Nurse is one example, in which R.I. Housing team members can bring their questions to a health expert in a private session. Flu clinics are also offered.

"We also have an EAP [Employee Assistance Program] that is for our employees, plus their families," Ramieri said.

Going beyond physical health, these programs offer help with personal problems that may be impacting employees at work or at home. ■



### A HEALTHY THOUGHT

*'We've had chair yoga and chair massage sessions for them, so they can decompress and unwind.'*

...

**KAREN RAMIERI**  
R.I. Housing and Mortgage Finance Corp. payroll and benefits generalist

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Carol Ventura  
CEO and executive director  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
220

## Leading wellness charge in big way

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

**7**

**GENTLE GIANT MOVING CO.**, which has a location in East Providence, supports employee health – both body and mind.

Company health benefits include three mental health therapy sessions a year. The company coordinates on-site meditation sessions as well. Team members have a gym right in the warehouse, complete with guided exercise sessions, says company public relations and marketing specialist Jen Flanagan. She said that equipment is constantly updated due to the nature of relocation work.

"Sometimes we will go to customers' houses, and they will have very gently used exercise equipment they want to dispose of – we sometimes offer to take those items to the warehouse and know people will use them here," she said, with the workplace gym offerings having grown as a result.

Themed summertime wellness weeks introduce new disciplines, such as yoga. Gentle Giant also offers free or reduced gym memberships for those who prefer to lift or sweat it out outside of work. ■




### A HEALTHY THOUGHT


*'Employees have access to a gym right at work – we have people here who lead classes, or they can work out on their own.'*

...

**JEN FLANAGAN**  
Gentle Giant Moving Co. public relations and marketing specialist

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Tom O'Gorman  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
350






## Caring for Rhode Islanders

Thank you to the more than 600 Neighborhood employees who make health and wellness a priority each and every day – for our employees, members, providers, and the communities we serve. Your commitment has once again made Neighborhood one of Rhode Island's Healthiest Employers.

[www.nhpri.org](http://www.nhpri.org)



## Taking pride in employee care

BY SUSAN SHALHOUB | Contributing Writer

**8**

**ENGAGING THE 324** employees at **Rhode Island Medical Imaging Inc.** across the company's 12 locations is a challenge, said human resources benefits and wellness specialist Sarah Beaulieu, but one Rhode Island Medical Imaging prides itself in achieving.

"We had a walking challenge in May with lots of engagement. It was outdoors, and whichever teams or individuals got the most steps, got prizes, such as sneakers," she said, with each employee getting a RIMI-branded pedometer.

The company has a fitness center at its administrative location in Warwick as well. Employee financial health is also a focus. Rhode Island Medical Imaging recently offered a free webinar on 401(k)s, Beaulieu said. To drive home the importance of maintaining mental health, RIMI has offered scavenger hunts for fun, chair massages and spots to relax around the main building. ■



### A HEALTHY THOUGHT

*'We had a walking challenge in May with lots of engagement. ... Whichever teams or individuals got the most steps, got prizes.'*

...

**SARAH BEAULIEU**  
Rhode Island Medical Imaging Inc. human resources and benefits wellness specialist

**CEO (OR EQUIVALENT):**  
Dr. John Pezzullo  
President  
**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:**  
324

# HEALTHIEST EMPLOYERS OF RHODE ISLAND

(based on companies with 500-1,499 employees)

2021 rank	Company   Website CEO/President	Address Phone	Type of business	No. of employees	Top health programs offered
1	<b>South County Health</b>   southcountyhealth.com Aaron Robinson	100 Kenyon Ave. South Kingstown, R.I. 02879 (401) 788-1405	Health care	814	Community 5K, weight loss programming
2	<b>Blue Cross &amp; Blue Shield of Rhode Island</b>   bcbsri.com Martha L. Wofford	500 Exchange St. Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 459-1000	Health insurer	750	Charity walks, health challenge programs, mental health awareness, stress management
3	<b>Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island</b>   nhpri.org Peter Marino	910 Douglas Pike Smithfield, R.I. 02917 (401) 459-6000	Health insurer	580	Flu clinics, free on-site gym, meditation and yoga programs, Weight Watchers program
4	<b>Toray Plastics (America) Inc.</b>   toraytpa.com Akihiro Nikkaku, CEO, president and chief operating officer, Toray Industries Inc.; Michael Brandmeier, CEO and president, Toray Plastics (America) Inc.	50 Belver Ave. North Kingstown, R.I. 02852 (401) 294-4511	Manufacturer	700	Company fitness center and monthly wellness days
5	<b>The Washington Trust Co.</b>   washttrust.com Edward O. Handy III, chairman and CEO	23 Broad St. Westerly, R.I. 02891 (401) 348-1200	Financial services	617	Weekly challenges to promote exercise, healthy habits, mindfulness and stress reduction

# HEALTHIEST EMPLOYERS OF RHODE ISLAND

(based on companies with 15-499 employees)

2021 rank	Company   Website CEO/President	Address Phone	Type of business	No. of employees	Top health programs offered
1	<b>Groov-Pin Corp.</b>   groov-pin.com Scot Jones, CEO	331 Farnum Pike Smithfield, R.I. 02917 (401) 232-3377	Manufacturer	85	Acupuncture sessions, mindfulness programs, monthly on-site or virtual yoga sessions, self-defense sessions
2	<b>Children's Friend</b>   cfsri.org David Caprio	153 Summer St. Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 276-4300	Nonprofit	375	Employee assistance program, on-site yoga flow classes, team-based physical activity challenges
3	<b>AstroNova Inc.</b>   astronovainc.com Gregory A. Woods	600 East Greenwich Ave. West Warwick, R.I. 02893 (401) 828-4000	Manufacturer	232	Wellness premium rewards program
4	<b>Pawtucket Credit Union</b>   pcu.org Brian Azar	1200 Central Ave. Pawtucket, R.I. 02861 (401) 722-2212	Financial services	263	Cardio conditioning class, chair massages, on-site walking groups, yoga class
5	<b>Cooley Group</b> <sup>1</sup>   cooleygroup.com Daniel Dwight	350 Esten Ave. Pawtucket, R.I. 02860 (401) 724-9000	Manufacturer	195	Annual physical campaigns/challenge, gym reimbursement programs
6	<b>R.I. Housing and Mortgage Finance Corp.</b>   rihousing.com Carol Ventura, CEO and executive director	44 Washington St. Providence, R.I. 02903 (401) 457-1234	Financial services	220	On-site/virtual programming for diabetes, depression, heart disease, nutrition and other health issues
7	<b>Gentle Giant Moving Co.</b>   gentlegiant.com Tom O'Gorman, CEO; Larry O'Toole, founder and president	125 Amaral St. East Providence, R.I. 02915 (401) 453-4400	Moving and storage service	350	Acupuncture sessions, chair massages, free gym memberships, on-site gym, yoga classes
8	<b>Rhode Island Medical Imaging Inc.</b>   rimirad.com Dr. John Pezzullo, president	125 Metro Center Blvd. Warwick, R.I. 02886 (401) 432-2400	Health care	324	Nonprofit walk events, on-site gym

<sup>1</sup> Cooley Group was acquired by its executive leadership in collaboration with J.H. Whitney Capital Partners, a private-equity firm, on Jan. 4.



# Benefits for your mind, body, and business.

We're proud to be recognized as one of Rhode Island's Healthiest Employers, and congratulate all **2021 Providence Business News Healthiest Employers Award** recipients on putting health and well-being at the center of their company culture.

At Tufts Health Plan, we are committed to providing access to robust health and wellness programs to help your employees and their families stay healthy. For more information on how Tufts Health Plan can work with you to create a health benefits package, [visit \*\*tuftshealthplan.com/wehearyou\*\*](https://tuftshealthplan.com/wehearyou)

