

President's Message

Dear MCSIG Member:

Happy 2008! I hope you had a restful holiday and that you have made some New Year's resolutions that include a healthy lifestyle.

To help you achieve any health or wellness goals to which you aspire, MCSIG is once again offering a free wellness assessment in February and March. Participation in this event continues to increase, and it is an opportunity for you to identify health issues before they become a problem. For more information about the wellness assessment, please refer to the *Wellness Works!* insert in this newsletter.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish the best to our outgoing Executive Director, David Barrett, who has guided the JPA to many successes during his 12 years of service to our school districts.

I am pleased to welcome our new Executive Director, Sherrell Freeman. Sherrell comes to us from the City of Monterey as their Risk Manager for four years. Prior to that she spent seven years with the County of Monterey managing their risk management and employee benefit programs. Sherrell has a Masters Degree in Public Administration and holds both Associate in Risk Management and Risk Management for Public Entities professional designations.

As a reminder, MCSIG is guided by a Board of Directors. Your district and your employee unions have representatives on the MCSIG Board. For your information, a list of board members is included in this issue.

Finally, I hope that attention to your health is one of your top priorities for 2008. As always, please contact the MCSIG office if there is anything we can do to assist you.

To your health!

Garry P. Bousum, Associate Superintendent
Administration and Business Services
Monterey County Office of Education
President, MCSIG Board of Directors

From the Executive Director.....2

Meet Your MCSIG Board of Directors.....2

Help Control Healthcare Costs.....3

Turning 65? Look for a Medicare Part D Mailing from MCSIG.....3

Take Advantage of Fitness Center Discounts.....3

Student Status Verifications Are Due.....4

Wellness Works!.....insert

Your Wellness Assessment.....insert Schedule



Now Playing 2008...

Mark your calendars for these upcoming wellness events:

- ▶ YOUR Wellness Assessment—Feb.12 through April 3
- ▶ Exercise Challenge—Feb. 18
- ▶ 14th Annual Health Fair—May 22

From the Executive Director

Greetings and Happy New Year to all MCSIG participants!

I am honored to have been chosen to be a part of the MCSIG team. Your MCSIG Board and staff are doing a remarkable job making sure all participants have access to comprehensive, responsive and affordable health insurance as well as general health and wellness information.

I appreciate how vitally important affordable health insurance is to our participants. I encourage each one of you to help us control health insurance costs by becoming knowledgeable health care consumers and by participating in our wellness programs. Each issue of the MCSIG MESSAGE is designed to help you do both!

I am committed to carrying on the great work of MCSIG and I look forward to cooperative, collaborative resolutions of future health insurance issues. I value any and all input toward our efforts.

Sherrell Freeman
Executive Director, MCSIG

Meet Your MCSIG Board of Directors

From time to time we like to provide a list of MCSIG Board members for your information.

MCSIG Board of Directors

- Alisal USD, Nancy Pfeiffer (831) 753-5700
- Alisal USD, Chris Techaira (831) 753-5700
- Bradley USD, Catherine Reimer (805) 472-2310
- Carmel USD, Rick Blanckmeister (831) 624-1546
- Gonzales USD, Sara Perez (831) 675-0100
- Graves SD, Lori Contreras (831) 422-6392
- Greenfield USD, Melody Canady (831) 674-2840
- Hartnell College, Vacant (831) 755-6700
- King City Joint UHSD, Tom Michaelson (831) 385-0606
- King City USD, Tom Michaelson (831) 385-1144
- Lagunita SD, Vera Gruber (831) 449-2800
- Learning For Life, Charlynn Vadnais (831) 384-7788
- Mission USD, Elizabeth Bozzo (831) 678-3524
- Monterey Bay Charter, David Hill (831) 655-4638
- MCOE, Garry Bousum (831) 755-0307
- MCOE, Barbara Cornett (831) 755-0300
- Pacific Grove USD, Robin Blakley (831) 646-6509
- Pacific USD, Susan Perry (805) 927-4507
- Salinas City ESD, Akur Vardarajan (831) 753-5600
- Salinas City ESD, Pat Willingham (831) 753-5600
- Salinas Union HSD, Alejandro Hogan (831) 796-7000
- San Antonio USD, Linda Irving (831) 385-3051
- San Ardo USD, Angel Vega (831) 627-2520
- San Lucas USD, Catherine Reimer (831) 382-4426
- Santa Rita USD, James Fontana (831) 443-7200
- Soledad USD, Connie Nunez (831) 678-3987
- Spreckels USD, Veronica Flournoy (831) 455-2550
- Washington USD, Dee Baker (831) 484-2166
- CSEA, Adela Lujan (Alisal USD) (831) 753-5755
- CSEA, Joan Madden (MCOE) (831) 755-0313
- CSEA, Eric Price (Hartnell College) (831) 755-6789
- CSEA, Rosie Sanchez (Salinas City ESD) (831) 753-5685
- CTA, Robert Della Rosa (Sal. City ESD) (831) 753-5600
- CTA, Peggy Gilkey (Alisal USD) (831) 753-5740
- CTA, Donna Leonard (Alisal USD) (831) 442-0612
- CTA, Derek Yonekura (Wash. USD) (831) 424-0669
- Retiree Rep., Suzanne du Verrier (831) 755-0161

Help Control Healthcare Costs



MCSIG's benefits program is self-insured, which means that you fund the plan, and benefits are not unlimited. As plan costs increase, the cost to members increases as well.

One way to control rising healthcare costs is to help prevent errors within the plan. This includes making sure that all plan participants are eligible for the benefits program.

Non-eligible participants, such as ex-spouses or students who have left school or graduated, can add thousands of dollars in claims each year. That means increased costs for all MCSIG members. In addition, the non-eligible participants may lose their coverage continuation rights through COBRA, if the plan is not notified timely of the change in status.

If you experience a change in your family, such as a divorce, or a college student who graduates, you need to report it to your employer right away.

For example, full-time college students who drop out mid-term are no longer eligible for coverage. If claims are paid to an ineligible participant, they are not entitled to the benefits and full restitution must be made. In addition, there may be legal complications as well. For this reason, it's really important that you keep your dependent information updated at all times.

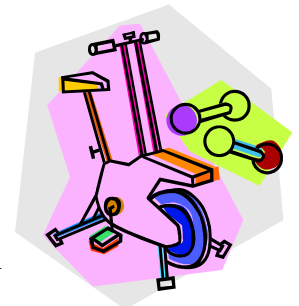
We appreciate your efforts to help control the cost of your benefits. It's important for you, your colleagues, and all of our families.

Turning 65? Look for a Medicare Part D Mailing from MCSIG

If you are approaching the age of 65, stay tuned for Medicare Part D enrollment information from MCSIG. In order to continue participation in the MCSIG medical plan, **you must enroll for Medicare Part D through MCSIG**. If you have any questions after receiving your information packet, please contact MCSIG customer service.

Take Advantage of Fitness Center Discounts

If you are among the millions of people who resolved to improve your fitness level in 2008, remember that you can get from 10 to 50 percent off of regular membership fees from a number of fitness centers. For more information, log onto www.mcsig.com/Fitness.html, or call Neil Hertsch at 831-755-0161.





76 Stephanie Drive
Salinas, CA 93901

PRSR STD
U S POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 335
SALINAS, CA

Student Status Verifications Are Due

If you recently received a student status verification letter, please fax, mail or e-mail a copy of the Spring registration form, available on the web site of most colleges, to MCSIG by February 29th. The form needs to show full-time enrollment (12 units) for your student. If the registration is not available online, simply request the verification from the school's registrar.

Fax: 831-755-0172 **Mail:** MCSIG, 76 Stephanie Drive, Salinas, CA 93901

E-Mail: www.mcsig.com, click on customer service



We mail verification requests out twice a year because students may change status from one semester to another. If your student recently graduated, they are eligible to continue their coverage for up to six months to the age of 25, or until they are employed with benefits, whichever occurs first. To receive this 6-month extension, just send us proof of graduation.



Wellness Works!

MCSIG Health Promotion Newsletter
Editor: Neil Hertsch, M.S., CHPD
nhertsch@monterey.k12.ca.us

(831) 755-0161

1st Quarter 2008

What's your New Year's Resolution?

Chances are that you or a family member made a resolution to eat better, get more exercise or lose excess weight this year. Reviewing your personal health habits annually and targeting one or two for improvement is a worthy goal and wise investment. MCSIG would like to improve your chances of achieving your healthy resolutions this year by providing a health assessment and road map for success.



cholesterol, glucose and blood pressure. No fasting is required. **Your results are available immediately and include a brief consultation with a nurse.** Participants receive a personal report mailed to their homes with helpful recommendations for health improvement. The assessment provides important mile posts to chart your progress on your road to better health. The theme for the assessments this year is **“TAKE IT To Be Fitter, Happier, Healthier.”**

Sign up for a 15-minute appointment by calling the contact person listed on the enclosed schedule. The schedule is also on our website (www.mcsig.com). The assessment is required if you have applied for the Healthy Lifestyle Solutions Incentive Program. **Each participant will receive a Sport Waist Pack and be entered into a school site drawing for a \$20 BORDERS gift certificate.**

A Healthier You in 2008

Beginning in February, MCSIG will be offering complimentary onsite health assessments for our members (over age 18) at schools throughout Monterey County. The assessments are voluntary, confidential and designed to help you identify personal habits that affect your health and longevity and customize a program that will create a healthier you. The assessment features a computerized health risk appraisal and health screenings for

“A resolution isn't what you should do; it's a chance to move your life forward.”

- Terri Trespicio

Wise Health Care Consumer Workshops

MCSIG is offering our member districts 30-minute workshops called “How to Be a Wise Health Care Consumer.” The workshop provides instruction on the treatment and prevention of minor health issues and a decision guide for when you need to see a doctor. Led by Dr. Sam Bozzo, the workshop includes role-playing with real-life personal health issues and information on enhancing doctor/patient communication.



Each participant receives a *Healthier at Home* self-care booklet valued at \$20 and 15 points in the Healthy Lifestyle Solutions Incentive Program. Interested schools and individuals should contact MCSIG (831)755-0161 to schedule a workshop. We request a minimum of 20 employees/members to schedule a workshop.

“There is no drug in current or prospective use that holds as much promise for sustained health as a lifetime program of physical exercise.”

- Dr. Walter Bortz II, Professor of Medicine at Stanford University and avid marathoner

**Dick Bollin**

Wellness Member of the Second Quarter '07
Retired Spouse of a MCSIG member

Place of Birth: Porterville, CA

Favorite healthy snacks: Fruit and raw vegetables

Exercise routine: I walk daily between 45-75 minutes and also work in the yard.

Favorite activities: I enjoy playing computer games, watching my grandchildren's sporting events and traveling.

Stress buster tip: Walking

Wellness Achievement: Tired of looking for larger size clothing, leg aches, high blood pressure and other weight related complications, Dick took action. He joined Weight Watchers, kick started his walking program and started focusing on his health. Dick lost 80 lbs. and no longer feels like he needs to "clean his plate." He now brings half of his food home from a restaurant for the next day. Since committing to a healthier lifestyle, Dick is free of the painful leg aches, is off blood pressure medications, has lowered his cholesterol and looks and feels great. Shopping for clothes in smaller sizes is now a pleasure. Dick received a gift certificate for a dinner for two and a framed award.

Congratulations Dick and keep up the good work!

**Dessy Junsay Murphy**

Wellness Employee of the Third Quarter '07
Physical Education Teacher
Pacific Grove Middle School – Pacific Grove USD

Place of Birth: Tokyo, Japan

Favorite healthy snacks: Frozen banana, peanut butter, soy milk and Ovaltine smoothies

Exercise routine: I commute to work on my bike each day (15 miles), walk my three dogs throughout the week and do yoga on the weekend. I also get strength training through my work as a massage therapist at the Spa on the Plaza.

Favorite activities: Surfing, boogie boarding, hiking, sailing, learning new styles of bodywork. I'm currently studying Shiatsu and Thai massage.

Stress buster tip: Make a list, then take a nap (i.e., acknowledge your busy-ness, and then take time for yourself). Get a massage.

Wellness Achievement: Dessy strives to help her middle school students be physically active each day and learn the importance of good health. Dessy applies these same principles to her own life by riding her bike to work each day and eating healthy foods. "I began cycling to work once a month and now rarely ever drive between Seaside and Pacific Grove. You have to start somewhere." Besides being a healthy role model for her students, she serves as the Wellness Ambassador for her school. She encourages her co-workers to participate in MCSIG wellness activities to enhance their well-being. Dessy received a gift certificate for a dinner for two and a framed award.

Congratulations Dessy and keep up the good work!

Spotlight recognizes school employees who have improved their health and become healthy role models for students and staff. If you know someone who deserves to be in the Spotlight, please submit a nomination form. Nomination forms are available at www.mcsig.com or by calling MCSIG (831) 755-0161.