

## Staff Step Lively

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When it's time for lunch on the uptown campus, Jean Mouton, a user analyst at the A. B. Freeman School of Business at Tulane, sets out for more than just a meal. She joins about 15 co-workers in heading across campus to the indoor track at the Reily Student Recreation Center, where each one works toward a goal of taking 10,000 steps-a-day.



Jean Mouton is one of nearly 1,000 Tulane employees walking their way to better health through the 10K-A-Day program. (Photo by Alicia Duplessis Jasmin)

The walking program, which was put into place in February 2009, is one of several [wellness initiatives](#) implemented by the Tulane Workforce Management Organization.

Mouton and nearly 1,000 other members of the Tulane community are taking part in the 10K-A-Day walking program. "It has captivated the Tulane community, encouraging camaraderie and friendly competition," says Sandy West, chair of the TU Wellness committee and director of strategy, planning and implementation in the Workforce Management Organization. And it's making participants healthier.

“My cholesterol in November was at 278 and by April it was down to 214,” says Mouton, who modestly adds that she also has lost 20 pounds. “My doctor was blown away and told me to keep doing whatever it is that I was doing,” she adds.

Mouton's comments are similar to others heard by Tulane wellness coordinator, Erica Taylor.

“I receive e-mails and phone calls all the time with people saying how much walking has helped them,” says Taylor. “It's not just about weight loss. They are reporting lowered blood pressure and cholesterol, more energy, better eating habits and improved sleep.”

In her 60s, Linda Aymami, a staff member whose walks and other fitness activities add up to 10,000 steps daily, meets with her group of “40-something to 60-somethings” outside the Tulane building at 1440 Canal St. downtown 30 minutes before every workday. The group walks to the Louisiana Superdome, which they circle three times. By the time they return to their office building the group has completed a distance of about four miles, says Aymami, a document control specialist in the Tulane Center for Gene Therapy.

“The walking program is so convenient because it's here at work, it's with a group of friends and it doesn't cost anything,” says Aymami. “I feel so much better, I've lost some weight and I haven't felt like this in years.”