

Get On the Streetcar to Wellness

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fsimon@tulane.edu

From fried turkey to turducken, eggnog and pecan pie and on to king cakes, this is a challenging time for anyone in Louisiana to stay healthy. Tulane University is launching a new employee wellness campaign for the new year: the 2011 Streetcar to Better Health.



Using New Orleans' iconic streetcars as a theme, Tulane is launching a comprehensive wellness campaign for employees. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Offered by TUWellness through the Workforce Management Organization, the campaign invites employees to “hop on the streetcar to better health,” says Erica Gilliam, TUWellness specialist.

“This is a more comprehensive campaign this year to promote the entire year's initiatives,” Gilliam says. The program invites employees to ride a virtual streetcar that has five stops: knowledge, healthy diet, active lifestyle, awareness and buddy bonus.

The active lifestyle stop will kick off on Jan. 24 with the “Living Well in Louisiana” initiative. Employees will be encouraged to record their steps or minutes of other

physical activity during the 12 weeks in the program offered by the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness. Check the [schedule](#) for information sessions to sign up and learn more.

Most any physical activity that can be pursued in Louisiana will count, Gilliam says. Imagine walking or biking along the streetcar route on St. Charles Avenue, walking the boardwalk to the Louisiana Swamp exhibit at the Audubon Zoo, or biking the Tammany Trace. Gift card incentives will be presented to selected participants.

For the knowledge stop on the virtual streetcar, there will be lectures on 10 different topics. Employees who participate in seven of the 10 programs will be eligible for a \$25 gift card. For the healthy diet stop on the virtual streetcar, [Dr. Gourmet](#) will present a three-week series of lectures on each main campus. Employees who attend all three lectures will receive a \$25 gift card.

The awareness stop and the buddy bonus stop ? available to employees and their spouses who are in enrolled the United Healthcare plan ? offer additional activities and incentives.

“The buddy bonus stop is new this year,” Gilliam says. “If a covered employee gets two other employees who are covered by United Healthcare to participate in an online health assessment, they will receive President Scott Cowen's Presidential Wellness Award. Two people will be selected to receive \$1,000 or \$500 gift cards.”

The goal? To encourage faculty and staff members participate in [wellness programs](#) for a healthier workforce at the university.