

## Personal Statement for Health and Wellness Promotion

By Jessica Greenwood and Lauren Anderson

For a while now, Lauren and I have been looking for a way to combine our two passions of working with students, and health and wellness. The Wellness and Health Promotion Knowledge Community is the perfect way to combine these two concepts in a meaningful way. We believe health plays a pivotal role in the success of college students, and as a student affairs practitioner; we work hard to be role models in this aspect for our students.

Often time, health and wellness education for college students is limited to mental health awareness and safe sex. Both of these topics are important, yet only a small piece of what health and wellness encompasses. Universities should be prepared to discuss nutrition and disordered eating, exercise, sleep habits, mental health disorders, and healthy habits. All of these topics play important roles in the college experience and help to prepare students for a lifetime of health and happiness.

One of our top goals has co-chairs of the Wellness and Health Promotion Knowledge Community would be to establish a monthly discussion based on recent and relevant health articles. This would enable practitioners to stay up-to-date on health trends, while discussing best practices and concerns with their colleagues across the country. Another goal we have is to create a space where members can share the structure and format of their wellness initiatives at their universities. This will provide a location to share best practices and discuss trends across different areas.

Along with providing health and wellness services to our students and campuses, we would like to address the issues that we face in our own lives regarding health and role modeling for our students. As mentioned above, we try to stay active and healthy in our own lives, and work to include our students and our co-workers in our endeavors as well. Our staffs run local races together, ranging from 5Ks to half marathons. We encourage each other to eat well, take walks, and some of us have even created standing desks in our individual offices to test out.

Having a support system when making healthy choices is important, and we think this knowledge community should serve as this support system within the NASPA community. Creating group goals, partnering with the website Student Affairs Fitness, and sponsoring activities as regional and national conferences are all great ways to establish this community. We would like to enable all members to use this knowledge community as an outlet, whether that's to share questions and concerns, or challenges and successes. Anyone who wants to partake should feel comfortable and encouraged to do so.

We believe it is important to have goals and direction, but we also understand that this will be a learning experience for all involved. Some of the ideas we thought were the greatest may fail, but what's important is that we keep moving forward and trying new ways to reach out to our members. We may have little experience within NASPA and the knowledge communities, but we are willing to put forth the time and energy to make the Wellness and Health Promotion Knowledge Community successful.