



## **Central Vermont Council on Aging Employee Wellness Program By Sarah Mason, Office Manager**

The Employee Wellness & Celebrations Committee (Chris Shaw, Diane Leuschner, Marie MacDougall, Megan Thomas, Rheneé Placey and Sarah Mason) is proud to receive a Gold Level 2020 Governor's Council Award for Worksite Wellness!

CVCOA's philosophy is that work/life balance and overall wellness for employees is valued and an important part of having a positive work culture and high level of staff retention. Health benefits, flexible work schedules, generous time off policies, a discount at a local gym, ergonomic accommodations for staff office equipment and an employer contribution to employee retirement plans are some of the many ways we demonstrate this value and commitment to our staff.

CVCOA is a proud subscriber of Employer Assistance Program (EAP) which promotes the health of employees and their household members by offering immediate access to free, confidential counseling for a wide range of life issues.

Over the years we have provided programming during Wellness Month (May) and worked to facilitate opportunities throughout the year when possible. Examples of programming we have in place are:

1. **Activity Challenge** – staff track their activity and receive 1 point for every 15 minutes of active time for three weeks. The top two staff receive a wellness related prize.
2. **Ted Talk Tuesday** – Lunch and learn opportunities where staff watch a Ted Talk on a wellness and/or aging topic and engage in discussion.
3. **Chair Massage** – CVCOA hires a Massage Therapist to provide 10-minute chair massage for all staff.
4. **Local Walking Maps** – In our wellness folder on the CVCOA Intranet we have walking maps for various locations in Central VT to encourage walking while at work for all staff.
5. **Crafting** – Creating Zen Gardens and learning how to make felted crafts have been taught by staff. Studies show that hobbies provide opportunity to learn and keep our brains active!
6. **Themed Potlucks** – Healthy inspiration potlucks each week that include salad bar, taco bar, incorporating spice into your food and sweet/white potato bar.
7. **Healthy Snack Share** – Last year we created a calendar that staff could sign up to make and share a healthy snack with coworkers.
8. **Daily Walking Group** - Several staff formed and facilitate a daily walking group in which anyone can participate at the Barre Office.
9. **Vermont Corporate Cup Race** CVCOA is now a regular participant in the Vermont Corporate Cup Race which takes place annually in May thanks to staff initiative and interest.

This winter, Beth Stern, Executive Director coordinated a 5-week Meditation class facilitated by Ginny Sassaman for staff. This course is free and considered part of the workday.