

Wellness Council honors local efforts

An Arizona employee benefits consultancy and three of its local clients were among several to be honored by the Wellness Council of Arizona for promoting healthy workplaces.

The Benefit Commerce Group of Scottsdale started a health program that includes all 25 of its employees. It also hired a health coach and began biometric screenings.

BCG's three winning clients are Able Engineering & Component Services, Buffalo Exchange and Suntec Concrete.

Able Engineering was honored for investing \$250,000 in a wellness and fitness center, a healthy food cafe and hiring two full-time trainers. The company also adopted tobacco-free requirements, bio-

metric screenings and health risk assessments for employees and spouses.

Buffalo Exchange created a health plan that deposits between \$750 and \$1,500 a year into employees' health savings accounts for completing biometric scans and risk assessments.

Suntec was recognized for its wellness coaching and information programs. The company also had a weight-loss challenge and monthly visits from a health coach.

"It's walking the walk, not just talking the talk," said BCG co-owner Scott Wood. "It takes a lot of effort and commitment by the leadership."

— Connor Radnovich

WHY WORKPLACE WELLNESS?

Six reasons to implement a workplace wellness program:

- 1. Health care costs:** The average annual health care cost per person in the U.S. exceeds \$3,000, and lifetime costs are somewhere in the neighborhood of \$225,000 per person.
- 2. Preventability of illness:** Experts suggest preventable illnesses make up about 70 percent of the total burden of illness and associated costs in the U.S.
- 3. The extended work week:** The typical American works 47 hours a week — far more than just 20 years ago.
- 4. The technology revolution:** Increased reliance on technology has ushered in a host of new health concerns, including repetitive stress injuries, low-back problems and poor vision.
- 5. Increasing stress levels:** In a recent national poll, 78 percent of Americans described their jobs as stressful, and the vast majority said their stress levels have worsened in the past 10 years.
- 6. Increased diversity:** With greater ethnic diversity in the workplace comes the challenge of being responsive to a variety of additional health concerns.

Source: Wellness Council of America

