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SA PARKS

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Army veteran Mike Gallardo performs a successful box jump with Aleigha Barrera, Executive Director of Transition Possible and the non-profit's founder, Rick Martinez.



PeakLife SA

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PeakLife SA Magazine is published by PeakLife Wellness. Please send all press releases and other information related to PeakLife SA to: 418 Mesa Hill, San Antonio, TX 78258
phone: 210-399-1791
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www.peaklifewellness.com

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“It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

What makes San Antonio great? Ask locals and you will get as many answers as people you ask. For me, it's the phenomenal generosity of the people you meet here. We have all heard SA described as “a big city with a small town feel.” I believe the small town feel stems from the sense of community. “People helping people” is a part of the culture. We see this spirit not only in individuals, but in our local corporations and non-profits. San Antonio Sports not only works to drive sporting events to the city, but they help ensure that our inner-city children get the equipment they need to participate in sports. Gordon Hartman formed the Scorpions soccer team to profit an amusement park for people with and without disabilities. Even the biggest party of the year, Fiesta, is one of the largest community benefits in the nation. The spirit of giving is everywhere.

When I launched *PeakLife SA Magazine* in 2011, I had to rely quite a bit on “the kindness of strangers.” So many people opened their hearts, wallets and contact lists to help make this publication a success. One such man is Rick Martinez. Rick is a former Army nurse and CrossFit gym owner who recently launched the non-profit Transition Possible to help aid our wounded warriors. Way to go, Rick!

We also congratulate *PeakLife SA Magazine's* Volunteer of the Year, San Antonio firefighter Bobby Ford. It's people like Bobby and the thousands of other extraordinary volunteers who embody the best of our city and truly make SA GREAT!

Be well! 🍀




Contributing Writers in this issue...



Rudy Acevedo has been coaching athletes since 2005 and has completed 50+ marathons. His company, R+R Fitness, specializes in training athletes of all paces and abilities for endurance events.

Rudy is a Certified Running Coach, a Physical Fitness Specialist, and a certified Yoga Instructor.



Andrea Bottiglieri has been in the fitness industry for over 12 years and believes in the promise of a healthier San Antonio where citizens will achieve a balance of health and wellness.



Donna Budjenska is PeakLife SA's managing editor and an independent consultant with Rodan+Fields Dermatologists, donnabud.myrandf.com.



Randy Escamilla, MPS, APR, is a veteran TV news reporter and also accredited in public relations. Last spring he earned his Masters of Professional Studies degree in Strategic Public Relations from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.



Jessica Lopez is currently a freelance writer and communications intern at the American Heart Association and a recent graduate of the University of Texas at San Antonio.



Jennifer Meachum RD, LD is the Director of Community Outreach and Employee Wellness for North Central Baptist Hospital.



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Suzanne Parker, H-E-B's Corporate Health & Wellness Coach, is an avid triathlete and mother of two teenage boys.



Laura Waldrum is Director of Marketing and Public Relations at the YMCA of Greater San Antonio. The Y is for youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Learn more at ymcasatx.org.

by Lynnette Montemayor
Photos by William Aiken

Transition Possible: FOR THE WARRIORS



Marine vet Josh Sweeney on the rings at Alamo CrossFit

Martinez. “I had to do more. We have to do more.”

Martinez understood that there were many more heroes in need of support, who wanted to be infused with the “no quit” spirit and surrounded by people who shared the same dreams. Thus, the idea of Transition Possible was initially conceived.

In 2007, he began to take care of Americans before they were sick, ill or just “a little bit fluffy” (a nice way of saying chubby) through a business he founded called Fitness Porvida – which translates to fitness for life. Fitness Porvida is more than a business, it is a movement of health, fitness, wellness and nutrition, and it's sweeping the city of San Antonio and beyond.

Fitness Porvida consists of three brick and mortar CrossFit gyms, two outdoor boot camps entitled BlueStar Fitness and a running club called Alamo Endurance. Martinez and his team are working to get his members, or “The Tribe” as they like to be called, healthy for life.

One of the mantras at Fitness Porvida is, “No excuses.”

“You have to make the decision that you want change, stop thinking about it and do it,” said Martinez.

Through Fitness Porvida, Martinez has met many that share that same mantra. SGT (Ret.) Josh Sweeney, a Marine veteran and a bilateral above-the-knee amputee, was introduced to Martinez when he and his wife were looking for a CrossFit gym in the area. Sweeney sustained his injury during a tour in Afghanistan when he stepped on an IED (Improvised

continued on page 6

“The warriors.”

If you ask Rick Martinez, founder of Transition Possible and owner of Fitness Porvida, who inspires him to be a stronger man, better husband and a more innovative entrepreneur, this would be his simple answer. Martinez recently founded the 501(c)3 non-profit organization in San Antonio to create an environment of CrossFit and overall fitness for our adaptive warriors and athletes. It is a cause to which his Fitness Porvida movement and gyms are dedicated wholeheartedly.

After 15 years of taking care of others as a registered nurse and a tour at Walter Reed Army Medical Center as an Army nurse, Martinez has seen the price of freedom and was inspired to take action. However, within his first 12 minutes at the hospital, he discovered his call to action, and what he refers to as his “very own personal why.” As Rick says, “I believed I had it all and knew it all and was on top of my world as a business owner, until I met my very first patient who was the same age as my daughter. This young soldier had lost a limb, an eye and an ear. I suddenly found myself re-evaluating the things that were important in my life.” He learned the absolute power of the spirit and human will.

“When I left Walter Reed, I just couldn't go back to nursing,” said

continued from page 5

Explosive Device). Despite the injuries incurred, Sweeney's spirit and attitude had not faltered. He hopes that others will be inspired and moved to achieve their goals when they see what he has done since his injury in 2011.

Their paths crossed again when Sweeney was working out with the San Antonio Rampage Sled Hockey Team and Martinez invited Sweeney and his wife to come out to Alamo CrossFit. Sweeney is currently a member of the U.S. National Sled Hockey Team and received a gold medal for his team's win at the 6th IPC (International Paralympic Committee) Ice Sledge Hockey World Championships held this year in Norway. His struggle, in combination with his triumph, inspired Martinez to do something more for these incredible athletes and brought national attention to the San Antonio-based Alamo CrossFit.

In 2011, Fitness Porvida held the first-ever Warrior Summit that featured some of CrossFit's best coaches as they came together with a group of adaptive athletes for two days of gymnastics, Olympic lifting and mobility work. The coaches put the attendees through skill sessions and CrossFit workouts, proving that CrossFit is for everybody. The three-day summit gave athletes of all conditions the opportunity to push their limits and gave them the strategies to achieve their fitness goals. Martinez' commitment to our military heroes and adaptive athletes was clear in his mission to host such an event.

Transition Possible was the next step. The non-profit was founded on the belief that wounded and adaptive service members need to continue to thrive and lead productive lives post-injury. After directly providing acute care and rehabilitation to amputees, traumatic brain injured and PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) servicemen and women, the gap was recognized that following their injuries, these brave heroes had the desire to remain athletically active and participate in competitive sport.

Transition Possible provides a continued opportunity to lead robust lives through sport and functional fitness. Its mission is to positively impact the lives of our nation's heroes and to encourage them to continue living and achieving through sport and functional athletics.

"I believe we all now have the moral obligation as Americans to help – the Transition Possible way," said Martinez.

Mike Gallardo, an Army veteran and below-the-knee amputee, is one of the warriors of Transition Possible and hopes to lead others by example.

"My personal mission is to help others in need as I was helped," said Gallardo. "I intend to help other wounded warriors get back into an active life and prove that we can be just as good as able-bodied people."

Martinez and company want to show the world that the warrior spirit can thrive no matter the circumstance and to bridge the gap between wounded hero and citizen.

"At the end of the day, everything that we do and the purpose behind our our mission is solely," said Martinez, "for the warriors." 🍀



Transition Possible founder, Rick Martinez



Army vet Mike Gallardo



By Donna Budjenska

You might have seen him behind the scenes, working long hours to pull it all together at the Cystic Fibrosis Tower Climb, or readying the SAFD's antique fire truck for breast cancer survivors to ride during the Fiesta Battle of Flowers parade, or spear-heading the annual MDA "Fill the Firefighter's Boot" campaign. It's Robert Ford, better known as Bobby, a San Antonio fire engineer and volunteer PR chief for the San Antonio Professional Firefighters Association.

After the magazine announced a contest to find San Antonio's top volunteer, a slew of nominations showcasing the city's best and brightest were received, but Ford rose to the top. What motivates this busy man to give so much of himself to his community? In a nutshell: He's a people person. As Bobby says, "It's the people I work with, all the volunteers I work with. They have made me look good."

In 1986, Ford followed a long-held dream and applied to become a firefighter. He succeeded and has, in his words, "been having a blast ever since." For almost 20 years, he's been in EMS and now serves at Fire Station 14.

Isn't being a full-time firefighter demanding enough? Not for Ford. Back in 2000 he went back to school at San Antonio College to become an RN and currently works part-time at

Volunteer of the Year

Robert Ford, Leads by Serving



PeakLife SA Magazine's Publisher, Dianne Glover, presents Robert Ford his award. Photo by Scott Smith

the Spine Hospital South Texas.

Dawn Solinski, Ford's colleague who nominated him, wrote, "Bobby Ford is the person that makes the face of the San Antonio Fire Department and all of our involvement in charity and community what it is. The department, [we] as individuals, and our community as a whole owe him a huge 'Thank You' for all he contributes of himself, not just a few times a year, but every week and any time he is asked." 🍀

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LAST MINUTE MARATHON

TRAINING TIPS by Rudy Acevedo

For those of you planning to run the San Antonio Rock 'n' Roll Marathon or Half Marathon, we're almost there! For the marathon newbie, you may have more questions than answers. Have I done enough? Why am I supposed to taper before the race? What do I do after the race is over? Whether you're a first-timer or an experienced pro, it's always good to remember the basics.

The cardinal rule of marathon training is: "Don't do anything new on race day!" Some of the primary areas of concern are:

- **Clothing:** Plan ahead for your attire before, during and after the race. Make sure that you have broken in those new shoes and worn the outfit you plan on racing in. This preparation will help ensure that you don't have any issues with chafing, blisters, etc.
- **Fuel:** Know what energy gels you are going to take, and when you'll take them, and have a plan for what you're going to eat on race day morning. During your training runs, take notice of what foods do or don't work for you, so you're not having to stop at every port-o-

potty along the race course. Have a specific plan for breakfast and energy gels (or other means of carbohydrate or electrolyte replacement) for during the race. Be sure to hydrate properly the week before the race.

- **Training:** Most programs peak about 2-4 weeks prior to the race. This is when you'll make the longest training run. This is typically 18-23 miles for a full marathon, and 10+ for a half marathon. After you've completed this training run, you'll go into a "taper," where you'll reduce your mileage to allow your body to recover, and be ready to race. The amount and length of the taper depends on your training program. One key point is "Nothing you do in the last 2 weeks will improve your performance!"
- **Checklist:** Even if you're participating in a race in your hometown, it's a good idea to have a pre-race checklist to make sure you don't forget the big items (e.g. shoes), or the small ones (e.g. gels).

On race day, be sure to enjoy the moment! This is your "victory lap"

for all your hard work and dedication. If you have a target pace in mind, you might consider running with a pace group (most races have them) to keep you from going out too fast.

After the race, be sure to have your recovery drink handy. This is usually a 4:1 ratio of carbs to protein. You can find powdered recovery drinks at most running equipment stores, or you can use low-fat chocolate milk. Whatever your preference, try and drink it as soon as possible after the race.

An ice bath will also help reduce inflammation and speed your recovery. Add 10-20 pounds of ice into some cold water in your tub, and sit in there for 5-10 minutes. Then take a warm shower. Also, do plenty of walking later that day. It will get blood flowing to the muscles, which will help flush waste products.

Congratulations on your accomplishment! Wear your finisher's medal with pride, and enjoy the moment!

Learn more about R+R Fitness at www.training210.com; or Rudy Acevedo can be reached at rudy@Training210.com.



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Ask the Dietician

By Jennifer Meachum, RD, LD

Dear Jennifer: I'm running my first half marathon in November. I've heard that I should eat a lot of pasta the night before the race. Is that fact or fiction?

Congratulations on your decision to do your first half marathon. Just as training has been an essential part of preparing you for the race, the type of fuel you put into your body is equally important and can impact your overall performance.

"Carb-loading" is the term used for eating a high carbohydrate meal the day before the race in order to ensure you have adequate glycogen or energy stores to prevent fatigue and help you cross the finish line. That is why eating pasta the night before the race is a common ritual with marathon runners. There are also other energy dense carbohydrates that can be substituted for pasta such as, a baked potato, brown rice, or sweet potato. Your high-carb meal should be paired with a moderate amount (3-4 ounces) of lean protein such as chicken, turkey, or pork.

It's best to avoid large portions of protein, high-fat and high-fiber foods since these foods take longer to digest. For your pre-race meal you also want to stick to the foods you know your body digests well and avoid trying new foods. It is also important to eat to the point where you are satisfied but not uncomfortably full.

Overeating during the pre-race meal may lead to gas, abdominal discomfort, or indigestion which can prevent you from having a good night's sleep. Another integral part of your nutrition the day before the race is hydration. Proper hydration before, during, and after the race is important to avoid muscle spasms, fatigue, and heat related illnesses. To avoid dehydration, skip all alcohol and limit caffeine. Instead, drink plenty of non-caffeinated beverages and sport drinks with electrolytes. Dehydration is a serious concern, but drinking too much water can be harmful as well. Overhydration can lead to hyponatremia, which can result in mild symptoms such as nausea to severe symptoms such as unconsciousness or coma. To ensure you

are adequately hydrated, drink when you are thirsty and make sure your urine is a pale yellow not bright or dark yellow.

On the day of the race, you want to eat a light meal that is high in complex carbohydrates but not too much fiber, such as, a whole wheat bagel with peanut butter, 1/2 banana and a glass of skim milk (if you tolerate dairy).

Following these pre-race guidelines will ensure that you are giving your body optimum nutrition for optimum performance, but remember to listen to your body and find what works best for you.

Have a question for Jennifer? Send it to info@peaklifewellness.com, and your question may be answered in an upcoming issue.

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Girls on the Run

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Want to be a coach? visit www.gotrsanantonio.org for more information!

SA Success Story:

Randy Escamilla

I never imagined that last year would launch me on an unplanned journey that would drastically change my life — yet the signs of an impending change were right in front of me.



AFTER

by Randy Escamilla, MPS, APR

Photos by Cameron Chafin



BEFORE

The 31" waist I enjoyed while covering live news events was gone. The pants I wore on my 5'8" frame now had a waist of 34". The T-shirts were large, and the notches in the belt showed signs of wear as I fastened it to the larger notches. It is not surprising that I weighed 206 pounds considering I thought Chick Fil-A was healthy eating, loved Snickers and ate breakfast tacos daily.

In the spring of 2011, I made my first trip to New York City. I liked the sleek look of the clothes, but I couldn't wear any of them. Low self-esteem was a by-product of the excess fat, and the struggle became one of both mind and body.

I also became a master of self-deception and justification. Standing in front of the bathroom mirror daily, I deluded myself into thinking that the weight gain wasn't that bad. After all, no one had commented on it. Yet, I knew it was neither normal nor healthy to eat a whole Domino's pizza for dinner. I would justify the behavior by concluding that the pizza maker deliberately placed an addictive additive in its sauce to make consumers eat more.

It was this kind of thinking that added pound after pound. It's also that mental anguish that led to the tipping point and finally got me to that foreign and intimidating place: the gym.

continued on next page

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I bit the bullet and scheduled a meeting with personal fitness trainer and Nutrition Fortress owner, Matt Gipson. Hiring a trainer is expensive, but I saw it as a life investment. Those first weeks of training were challenging. However, my mind focused on the goal of six-pack abs, muscle, and nicer clothes.

My workouts seemed brutal. But Matt kept pushing me. With progressive conditioning, my strength and endurance improved. During out-of-town trips, working out became a priority. I could see progress. Even better, others began commenting about the weight-loss and providing encouragement.

I learned that the more muscle you have, the easier it will be for your body to burn the fat. As Matt said, "Monitoring your body fat percentage is a better indicator than of progress than your weight on the scale. You could be 180 pounds and have a 32-inch waist or 180 pounds with a 34-inch waist."

For an entire year, I trained alongside Matt. At one point, I asked him if we could just work on my abs. He told me that there is no such thing as an isolation exercise. "We all have six-pack abs. It's just a matter of cardio and nutrition." He encouraged me to get 20-30 grams of protein within 30 minutes of working out to speed up my metabolism.

It took a while, but I learned to cut out fattening foods from my diet and incorporate better eating habits.

At age 48, I am in the best shape of my life. More than that, I enjoy working out and feel great. I went from more than 30 percent body fat to 10 percent and lost more than 40 pounds. My borderline hypertension is also gone. Today, I enjoy a 30" waist, and I hope to reveal those six-pack abs soon. If I can do it, anyone can!

Randy Escamilla can be reached by e-mail at RMEINSATX@gmail.com. For more information about Matt Gipson contact Nutrition Fortress at (210) 826-2500.

What Works

Randy Escamilla adheres to the following regimen to maintain his fitness regimen.

- Daily workouts of at least one hour
- High-protein meals (chicken breast, egg whites, fish)
- Breakfast: Vanilla protein shake mixed with whole grain oats and one banana

- Lunch: chicken breast, baby spinach, beans, fat-free cottage cheese
- No fried foods
- Nothing that comes through a window
- No white breads
- No white rice
- No sugar

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FIVE THINGS



to Consider When Looking to Volunteer

By Laura Waldrum, MPA

Volunteering is not only great for the community, it's also associated with numerous health benefits, such as, a lowered risk of depression and better overall health. However, determining which organization to volunteer for can be daunting. There are many organizations to choose from, so how do you find the one that is the best fit for you?

Here are five questions to ask yourself when looking for an organization with which to volunteer:

1 What are you passionate about?
Narrow your focus by creating a list of issues that interest you. Perhaps you want to promote health and wellness in your community or you are concerned with matters that impact children. Volunteer work is often fun but can be tedious. Working towards a cause you are passionate about will help you remain engaged and determined.

2 What are your skills?
Answering this question will help you determine what kind of volunteer position will fit you best. Do you have a history participating in sports? Perhaps you could volunteer to be a coach for a YMCA youth sports team. Or, maybe you are knowledgeable about nutrition. Volunteering at a local community garden or food bank might be a good fit for you.

3 How much time do you have to offer?
Be honest with yourself about how much time you have to give. Some organizations require large amounts of volunteer time and others need volunteers occasionally. To start, try volunteering for less time-consuming projects to help you avoid becoming overworked, overwhelmed, or even worse, burned out.

4 Do I have an existing relationship with a group that needs volunteers?
There may be volunteer opportunities at organizations you interact with everyday. For example, the YMCA is a great place to work-out, but you may not be aware that the organization has many opportunities for volunteers. Other places you may think of looking to volunteer is your child's school or a local park.

5 Who can help me find opportunities?
Chances are, you already know people that are experienced volunteers. Ask your neighbors, at church or even at your gym. You will likely find many people willing to share their volunteer experiences. They may even be able to connect you with a volunteer coordinator.

Finally, the United Way has a wealth of information about volunteering at their numerous partner organizations. Visit www.unitedwaysatx.org/volunteer to learn more about opportunities at the United Way.

With a little thought and planning, you will be able find an organization that is a perfect fit for you. Best of luck on your journey as a volunteer! 🍀

From the kitchen of Jennifer Meachum, RD, LD

- 4 cups cooked whole-wheat penne pasta
- 16 ounces fully cooked grilled chicken, sliced
- 1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- 1 ½ Tbsp. Olive Oil

- 1 cup of mozzarella, cut into small cubes
- ½ tsp kosher salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

In large bowl mix all of the above ingredients. Refrigerate for at least one hour. Serve chilled.

** For an extra serving of carbs the night before a race, serve the pasta salad with a slice of ciabatta bread (no butter or oil). 🍀



Bruschetta Pasta

NUTRITION FACTS	
4 - 1 cup Servings	
Calories	510.1
Total Fat	16.5 g
Cholesterol	98.6 mg
Sodium	628.6 mg
Total Carbohydrates	47.6 g
Dietary Fiber	6.0 g
Sugars	3.0 g
Protein	45.9 g

Healthy Eating

FOR BUSY PEOPLE



By Suzanne Parker

For Texans who are committed to living a healthy lifestyle, it can sometimes be daunting to make sense of all the latest nutritional information. Here are a few of my favorite tips and tricks to help you eat healthy, even when you are on the go:

Shrink and Multiply Your Meals

- Prepare foods in bulk and reinvent during the week. Examples include beans made in the crock pot, BBQ chicken breasts, pork roast or ground turkey made into burgers, stuff peppers or meatloaf. During the week, make these leftover meal starters into salads/sandwiches and wraps. Cook pasta, dress it with a tomato basil sauce and stash it away for later in the week. When ready to serve, add in a scoop of cottage cheese or ricotta for a protein boost. Or add some steamed veggies and fresh grilled shrimp for another pasta meal.
- Portion distortion--Learn about label information and review the ingredient list. Be aware that the portion on the label does not have to be your correct serving size. Often times there are several portions in one bag!
- Eat according to hunger --see if you can use a rating scale to determine if you tend to eat when you are starving or at the first sign of hunger. Avoid ever getting to the point of starving! Why? Chances are you will overeat.
- If eating less is your goal, start with a serving you think is on the small side—think you need more? Wait 10 minutes before you grab second helping. Chances are you will feel satisfied instead of FULL.

- Single serve items for grab and go: Tuna pouches, single serve cottage cheese, lowfat hard cheese and Greek yogurt make a great protein start to the meal. Then round it off with complex carbs such as whole grain pita, seedy crackers or low-fat pita chips.

Be a Daytime Eater

- Avoid skipping meals: The best approach to revving up your metabolism is to eat! Breakfast starts your day off right. Taking in calories when you are active during your day ensures your body burns calories instead of storing them.
- Healthy snack items are a good balance of complex carbs, protein and healthy fats. For a quick afternoon snack, pick up

meal bars and check out the bulk section for nuts and dried fruit. The produce section is perfect to grab fresh cut fruit, veggies and dips. Try hummus and sliced cucumber with a handful of cherry tomatoes.

Be Prepared: Always on the go? No time to eat? Avoid the fast food line with some of these simple food ideas that are easy to store and pack. You can eat at your desk, in the car or on the way to a meeting. Carry a small cooler in the car with:

- Slices of pork roast with whole wheat mini bagel, along with cherry tomatoes, baby carrots or broccoli florets already washed and pre-cut from the produce aisle.
- Apple slices, wedge of cheese in a pita—look for pre-sliced squares—easy to eat as you go. Throw in a bag along with a mini pita—all easy to eat with one hand!
- Wheat-corn tortilla with whipped lowfat cream cheese & jicama.

Eating healthy on the go doesn't have to be expensive, time-consuming or tedious. Planning ahead helps you make smart choices all week long!

Suzanne can be reached via e-mail at parker.suzanne.m@heb.com. Visit local H-E-B stores the second Saturday of every month for health screenings, great recipes and wellness tips. 🌱

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Great Places to Volunteer in SA



American Diabetes Association

> The American Diabetes Association's mission is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. There are many volunteer opportunities. Register online at www.diabetes.org.

American Heart Association

> The American Heart Association's mission is to build an awareness of cardiovascular disease and stroke. Go online to www.heart.org to volunteer.

San Antonio Parks and Recreation

> The San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department provides and maintains many facilities such as pools, parks, gyms, and recreational centers for the public. Find out more at www.sanantonio.gov/parksandrec.

San Antonio Sports

> San Antonio Sports is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to transform our community through the power of sport. Since 1984, our events and programs have given children, families and fans opportunities to get fit, be healthy and experience the many benefits of sport.

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> The YMCA is a nonprofit organization with volunteer opportunities around every corner. Opportunities to volunteer range from coaching or sponsoring youth sports teams to planning and participat-

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Visit SanAntonioSports.org or call 210.820.2100.



Local Students Work to Create HEALTHY SCHOOLS

By Andrea Bottiglieri

person at a time, we can all make a big difference together!" - Jasmin Palmares, Senior at McCollum High School

"My hope for this year as an Ambassador for the Mayor's Fitness Council is that I am able to exemplify a dedication to the improvement of our great city's quality of life. I already know, as a long-time resident of San Antonio, that the citizens of this city have an appreciation of culture and life that few cities can match, and I know that the students of San Antonio are ready and willing to help in creating a culture of health that no other cities have either." - Antonio Frieze, Senior at St. Anthony Catholic High School

"My hope for the Mayor's Fitness Council this year is that I am able to get the majority of my school active through exercise. My goal is to get new fitness classes started that are fun and exciting that students will want to sign up for." -Ashlee Caseres, Junior at Brennan High School

Andrea Bottiglieri can be reached at Andrea.Bottiglieri@sanantonio.gov or visit www.sabalance.org for more information about the Student Ambassador Program and the Student Wellness Club.



Photos are from Mayor's Fitness Council Student Ambassador orientation, June 2012

In 2010, the Mayor's Fitness Council had a vision to engage and empower students to be ambassadors of health, wellness and physical activity in the San Antonio community. Today, that vision is becoming reality with the formation of the Mayor's Fitness Council Student Ambassador Program. Nearly 200 applications were received from across Bexar County for students to earn one of the coveted thirty-five Ambassadors spots for the 2012-2013 academic year.

The mission these young Ambassadors are charged with is to involve the local youth in Mayor Castro's initiative to improve the health of San Antonio. The students will represent the Mayor's Fitness Council by promoting and encouraging healthy living at their school campuses and in their communities.

The Student Ambassadors will be attending leadership trainings, working on projects, developing action plans and meeting with local leaders to further develop their leadership skills. At the end of the school year, Ambassadors will be planning and hosting a City Wide Youth Summit highlighting their accomplishments.

The Mayor's Fitness Council has also launched the Mayor's Fitness Council Student Wellness Club, inviting all students in San Antonio to be change-makers in the community, at their school campuses and in their homes by promoting and encouraging healthy living and physical activity.

Perhaps there is no one better to talk about the program than the Ambassadors themselves. Here's what a few of them wanted to share:

"As an Ambassador for the Mayor's Fitness Council, I hope to demonstrate leadership to my community. I want to help make a difference in the way citizens of San Antonio view the importance of staying healthy and fit. I feel that just by encouraging one





Set SMART Goals and Stay on Track to Lose Weight

SMART Goals are:
 Specific
 Measurable
 Attainable
 Relevant
 Time-bound

By Jessica Lopez

You know losing weight will improve your overall health, but knowing how to start can be a roadblock for many people. The American Heart Association's "Six Weeks of Heart Healthy Tips" recommends setting SMART goals to jumpstart your weight loss program. These goals help break down one big goal into smaller ones that will help you focus activities and behaviors that can lead to lasting change.

Be Specific. Decide on a specific amount of weight to lose. But be realistic; saying you are going to lose 15 pounds is much more definite than vague desires of "losing weight" or "getting in shape." Knowing what you specifically want out of your goal will help you achieve it.

Once you have a specific goal in mind, make it Measurable. A 15-pound weight loss is measurable on a scale. Measuring inches loss can also improve motivation. The American Heart Association recommends keeping a journal. Writing down the time, duration, and speed of your walks/exercise keeps you accountable and helps you monitor progress. Looking back through your early journal entries will show you just how far you've come.

"Using a journal not only keeps you accountable but also allows you to

continued on next page

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"After seeing the difference the Y made in my family, I have to share it with others and make sure they have the same experience."
 -Matt Rice

ymcasatx.org/volunteer

YMCA Mission: To put Judeo-Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.



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gauge what's working and what's not," says Joshua Fosmire, CPT and owner of Flexible Fitness, a personal training gym. "This allows you to make adjustments along the way. Some things that are good to keep track of are your food/calorie intake and cardio/weight training workouts."

Be sure that this goal is still Attainable and practical. Safe weight loss can be done at the rate of 1-2 lbs per week.

"I find setting attainable goals to be the most important," Fosmire says. "You want to aim high with your goals but not so much that you won't be able to reach them."

He adds that smaller, reasonable goals will propel you towards success in achieving the bigger long-term goals and keep you motivated along the way.

"And, when motivation is an issue, as the old saying goes, 'variety is the spice of life,'" Fosmire suggests. "Adding variety to your fitness routine will keep boredom at bay. If you find you're stuck in a rut, try something you've never done before, like a local boot camp or TRX class."

Of course, a little motivation can go a long way on your path to a healthier you. Finding something Relevant or worth looking forward to can motivate a person to look better, feel better, and have more energy, making the experience more enjoyable and rewarding when reaching that personal goal.

Once you know that your goal is attainable, apply some Time Bounds. There is an ending date when you will know that you have reached the goal. Congratulate yourself, but keep in mind that you can then choose to set another goal or maintain your current weight if you have reached your goal weight. Keeping up with your newly acquired habits will benefit you in the end.

"When you've gotten off track, don't get discouraged," Fosmire adds. "Identify what the issue was: illness, traveling, over scheduling, etc. Once you identify the cause, you are more likely to change the behavior."

Having SMART goals and strategies can put you on a path to a healthier lifestyle.

Fosmire also recommended some helpful websites, including www.startwalkingnow.org, www.myfitnesspal.com, www.fitday.com, www.onlinefitnesslog.com, www.dailymile.com, www.mapmyrun.com

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