

CalHR Wellness Coordinator Recognition Award  
Emily Mah-Nakanishi

It is my pleasure to nominate Emily Mah-Nakanishi for the CalHR Wellness Coordinator Recognition Award. Emily is responsible for administering the CalPERS Wellness Program for 3000 team members with a focus of increasing employee awareness of good health by encouraging and facilitating the adoption and maintenance of healthy behaviors and lifestyles through a variety of program activities.

These efforts are aligned with the CalPERS Strategic Plan and assists CalPERS in remaining a destination employer, enabling us to attract, develop, and retain a competent, creative, and highly motivated workforce.

The CalPERS Wellness Program and Fitness Center provide program activities that encourage high employee participation and promote health, vitality and productivity.

CalPERS was a proud 2009 Silver Award recipient of the California Fit Business Award and a finalist for the 2014 Healthiest Employer Award. These awards recognize companies across California that promote a healthier workplace. Winners are selected based on the depth of their health and wellness programs, the quality and focus of their policies, and the involvement of their leadership. Additionally, Emily was a 2017 APEX recipient which is the highest level of formal recognition CalPERS offers.

Emily oversees a robust program and is continually looking for ways to enhance CalPERS offerings and resources. She leverages multiple avenues to market initiatives and programs in order to increase awareness. This includes all team email communications, the CalPERS social media platform, visiting team and division wide meetings, gaining senior leadership commitment to send all team voicemails and encourage participation and more. Emily also does a remarkable job customizing communication to our offices located outside of headquarters and always ensuring they can participate to the extent possible. Emily is responsible for oversight of:

- Onsite fitness center with nearly 800 members
- Courses and Workshops to include:
  - Nutrition Works, a lunchtime nutrition class that focuses on a variety of topics such as weight loss, managing diabetes, high blood pressure, and overall good health through healthy eating
  - Stress Management class which helps employees manage stress through a variety of techniques
- Presents during our monthly New Employee Orientation to showcase program offerings and to new supervisor classes to demonstrate how critical the manager's role is in supporting their employees with regard to their wellness goals.
- The Wellness Program typically holds onsite health screenings every two years. During the event, employees are encouraged to complete a health risk assessment (HRA) to evaluate their overall health. Aggregate data collected

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through the screenings helps to identify high-impact health promotion initiatives. The following screenings are offered:

- Body mass index (BMI),
  - Blood pressure,
  - Triglycerides,
  - Blood glucose,
  - Cholesterol levels
- Collaborates with local businesses such as Fleet Feet Sacramento to offer employees on site shoe fittings and no cost seminars to complement our instructor led run/walk sessions which take place twice per year
  - Wellness campaigns to help educate staff on various disease states, encourage healthy behaviors and lifestyle changes such as:
    - Healthier U
    - Instructor-led run/walk sessions
    - Top Loser Weight Loss Challenge
    - Just Walk 10,000 Steps

Emily evaluates program success and identifies employee needs and interests through enterprise-wide surveys and employee engagement scores. Interim and post surveys are also completed to assess the effectiveness of initiative(s).

She engages all levels of the leadership team resulting in their support all team members and their own participation in program activities. Executive leadership commitment to the program is evident in the resources dedicated to this effort.

Emily also oversees and facilitates the Wellness Committee which is comprised of team members from across the organization who have an interest in health and wellness. This committee meets monthly with the mission and purpose of creating an environment that educates and motivates employees toward living a zestful, balanced and healthy life. Committee members help to promote programs geared toward the physical and emotional well-being of all CalPERS staff. The committee members serve as the wellness champions at the division level and assist Emily in developing and implementing programs related to fitness, nutrition, stress reduction, and other health-related topics.

Emily can be credited to taking the CalPERS Wellness Program to an entirely new level since stepping into her role making CalPERS an exemplary example for other government agencies and private companies as well.