

# NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

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## **Winners Announced for Spring Wellness Challenge - *The Great River Road Race***

Area employees logged 8,038,526 steps (over 4,000 miles) as a team challenge, virtually racing from the northern-most tip of Minnesota to the southern-most tip of Louisiana paralleling the Mississippi River. Twenty worksites encompassing over 300 employees participated in the recent wellness challenge sponsored by Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council.

“The race was one opportunity offered to get employees in the habit of regular physical activity throughout the day,” said Jessica Davies, Assistant Health Director. “Many employees say how much they like the competitive aspect of the challenge and how it keeps them accountable to others,” she added.

Businesses reaching the finish line at the Gulf of Mexico as a team were placed into a drawing for larger prizes. We are excited to announce the following winners:

- **1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner – Dawes County in Chadron** - \$1000 towards employee wellness program
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner – Hemingford Public Schools** - \$500 towards employee wellness program
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner – Scottsbluff-Gering United Chamber of Commerce** - \$250 towards employee wellness program

Even if you already walk for exercise, hit the gym, or do some other type of workout regularly, being active is essential to your wellbeing. Research shows that sitting too much is more dangerous than smoking.

In one study, researchers saw changes in arteries that may contribute to heart disease after just three hours of sitting—and that was in healthy 20-somethings. *The good news: just five minutes of movement every hour prevented it.* The council provides ideas and strategies to area worksites to do just that!

The spring wellness challenge is just one of the many benefits of membership to the Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council. The next challenge will be held in the winter of 2018 focusing on healthy habits during the holidays. Contact Jessica Davies at 308-487-3600 extension 101 or visit [pphd.org/pwwc.html](http://pphd.org/pwwc.html) for additional information about worksite wellness.

The Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council is proudly part of Panhandle Public Health District and specializes in supporting employers in the Panhandle region. We recognize that many

employers support a diverse and remote workforce and offer innovative ways to overcome the challenge of working with a virtual team. We understand that many of our employers do not have full-time wellness resources and work to provide resources and training to make running a worksite wellness program as easy as possible.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle community.