



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### **Well City Milwaukee Announces Pursuit of *Well City – Gold* Designation**

*Forty-Eight area Charter Member employers leading the charge as Well City Milwaukee sets goal to achieve gold status by end of 2014*

**MILWAUKEE** – February 16, 2012 – Following an incredibly successful three-year initiative that earned Milwaukee a *Well City USA– Silver* designation in 2010 by the Wellness Council of America (WELCOA), Well City Milwaukee this year is embarking on its second phase with a goal to earn a *Well City – Gold* designation by the end of 2014.

Milwaukee is the largest city in the country to earn silver status and the only city in the country to take on the challenge of pursuing a second three-year initiative to reach a higher level of accreditation. And Milwaukee's success in phase one helped spawn three other Well City USA projects in Wisconsin – in Racine, Oshkosh and the Fox Cities – making Wisconsin the only state in the country to have four active Well City projects.

"We are thrilled that so many of Milwaukee's leading workplaces have seen the importance of this initiative and have joined us in our efforts to make Milwaukee one of America's healthiest cities," said Janet McMahon, Executive Director of Well City Milwaukee. "More than eighty-five percent of the organizations that signed on in phase one have recommitted again for phase two, and we think that speaks volumes about the value we've been able to deliver as these organizations have worked to create or improve their corporate wellness programs. Our team is energized and ready to get more of our area's employers on board."

In addition to the 29 organizations that have recommitted to Well City Milwaukee from phase one, 19 new area workplaces have recently committed to start the process for earning their Well Workplace designation in phase two. Charter Member organizations leading the charge include Alverno College, Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, Educators Credit Union, Helwig Carbon Products, ManpowerGroup, Marquette University, Michael Best and Friedrich, Outpost Natural Foods Cooperative, P&H Mining, Park Bank, Robert W. Baird, Rockwell Automation, Sensia Healthcare, We Energies, and others. (See full list below).

Milwaukee earned its *Well City – Silver* designation by engaging 30 percent of the city's workforce (34 employers who collectively employ 77,000 employees) in comprehensive, data-driven worksite wellness programs. To earn a *Well City – Gold* designation by 2014, Well City Milwaukee will have to engage 50 percent of the area's workforce under the initiative, which amounts to approximately 125,000 employees across the Milwaukee area.

Workplaces looking to get involved can commit anytime, though the sooner they begin the process, the sooner they will earn their Well Workplace accreditation and help Milwaukee reach

the 50 percent milestone. Organizations involved today range from some of Milwaukee's largest employers to some of its smaller businesses and nonprofits.

According to Kari Mitchell, Director of Human Relations for Outpost Natural Foods, participating in the Well City Milwaukee project helped Outpost focus its employee wellness efforts.

"Although Outpost has always been in business to promote healthy eating and personal wellness in the community, signing onto Well City Milwaukee motivated us to focus our efforts directed toward our staff and apply for the Well Workplace Award through WELCOA. It gave us the opportunity to gain support and encouragement from our peers in a pretty rigorous process, and the result of this process was amazing. We got senior level awareness and support of our programming; we have measurable goals to monitor our success and impact; and we have an operating plan that constantly gives our wellness team direction and focus. It made us more serious and focused as a company about the wellness of our employees."

And making Milwaukee more serious and focused about employee wellness is the ultimate goal of Well City Milwaukee, according to McMahon.

"A healthier workforce means lower healthcare costs, higher productivity and job satisfaction, increased employee retention and an overall culture of wellness and vitality throughout the city," said McMahon. "Our hope is that the improved health and wellbeing of the employees engaged under this initiative will have a ripple effect on the community at large."

Employee wellness programs deliver measurable, tangible results that positively affect an organization's bottom line. Healthier employees mean lower healthcare costs not only for your organization, but for the community as a whole. Fewer sick days mean more productivity. And healthier employees are happier employees, resulting in less employee turnover and higher employee satisfaction.

Well City Milwaukee helps employers maximize their wellness program's potential, optimize dollars spent on their programs and improve their overall return on investment by offering tools, resources and expert guidance every step of the way through completing the Well Workplace Award accreditation.

In addition, each area workplace has a vested interest in making Milwaukee successful and attractive to current and potential residents and employees. By helping Milwaukee earn the Well City USA– Gold designation; your organization will be part of something important and impactful.

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### **About Well City Milwaukee**

Well City Milwaukee is an initiative dedicated to making Milwaukee one of America's healthiest cities through the participation of area workplaces in results-driven corporate wellness programs. The initiative is a collaboration between the City of Milwaukee, the Greater Milwaukee Committee, the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, the YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee and the Wellness Council of Wisconsin. Employers may join this initiative anytime during the three-year project. To learn more about Well City Milwaukee and the accreditation process, to see a list

of participating organizations and sponsors, and to read case studies and testimonials from current Well City Milwaukee member organizations, visit [www.wellcitymilwaukee.org](http://www.wellcitymilwaukee.org).

### **List of Well City Milwaukee Employers as of 2/14/12:**

1. Alverno College
2. American Society for Quality
3. Aurora Health Care
4. Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
5. Chr. Hansen, Inc.
6. City of Milwaukee
7. City Center at 735
8. Concentra Clinics
9. Core Creative
10. Creation Technologies
11. Diversified Insurance Services
12. Educators Credit Union
13. Extendicare Health Services, Inc.
14. Froedtert Health
15. Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin
16. Greater Milwaukee Committee
17. Gustave A. Larson Company
18. Health Payment Systems, Inc.
19. HellermanTyton
20. Helwig Carbon Products, Inc
21. Independence *First*
22. Kleen Test Products
23. LaMacchia Group
24. ManpowerGroup
25. Marquette University
26. Medical College of Wisconsin
27. Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce
28. MGIC Investment Corporation
29. Michael Best & Friedrich LLP
30. Midland Health Testing
31. Milwaukee Public Schools
32. Mount Mary College
33. Outpost Natural Foods Cooperative
34. P & H Mining / A Joy Global Company
35. Park Bank
36. Pyramax Bank
37. Robert W. Baird
38. Rockwell Automation
39. Securitas Security Services USA
40. Sensia Healthcare
41. The Mark Travel Corporation
42. The Starr Group
43. United Health Care
44. von Briesen & Roper, s.c.
45. Wacker Neuson
46. We Energies
47. Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare
48. YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee