Educational Design

We, the members of the 2007-2008 Wellness House, hope to create an environment in which the Kalamazoo College community can come together to promote methods of healthy living. We will attempt to do so using three themes, one designated for each quarter. The three themes are as follows: Nutrition, Emotional Health and Wellness, and Physical Wellness.

The fall quarter will focus on the idea of Nutrition through healthy eating. We will attempt to educate the Kalamazoo College community through resources within the college, resources within the Kalamazoo community, and resources outside of Kalamazoo, as well as educational literature and presentations. Specific events will focus on both how to avoid unhealthy eating choices and how to seek healthy alternatives.

Winter quarter will focus on Emotional Health and Wellness. We will seek to help students cope with the emotional stress and hardships which are often amplified during the Winter Quarter. Through speakers, presentations, and events, we will teach the Kalamazoo College community how to enjoy Winter Quarter and improve the quality of life on campus.

Physical Wellness in the Spring Quarter will focus on the physical maintenance of ourselves and our environment. We hope to teach the Kalamazoo College community fun, effective ways to both improve physical fitness and better our world. Our goal for the quarter is to help the campus learn how to care for their bodies and their world.

During the 2007-2008 year, we will seek to teach the campus how to enjoy a life of health, balance and wellness. Resources such as special events, speakers, group activities, films, and presentations will educate the Kalamazoo College community about wellness and improve the quality of life for our College as a whole.
Programming

*This is a cumulative list of our ideal events. We brain-stormed and attempted to create events that fulfill a need on campus based on our own experiences and feedback from our peers. We are very excited to make these plans reality, but are also willing to compromise and revise as necessary to ensure that we are providing the most helpful, educational, and practical programs with the resources at hand.*

FALL 2007 (Nutritional Wellness)

- **On Campus Farmer’s Market** For part of our theme of nutritional wellness, we plan to work with Farms2K, Student Development, and the Urban Environmental Accords to bring local produce vendors to a monthly campus event, making fresh locally grown produce easily available to the student body. Many students, especially first year students, are not able to make regular trips to local grocery stores, and MunchieMart doesn’t have everything a student needs for a balanced diet. It is important to raise awareness of the health benefits of eating fruits and vegetables because it’s easy to forget and neglect. At the same time we will be promoting local growers, which is both environmentally friendly and economically savvy.

- **Vitamin/Health Specialist:** We would like to invite a Shaklee Representative health specialist, Monday, to come and give a presentation. She can teach us the benefits of vitamins and finding those vital nutrients that busy college students are often missing in their own diets. As a K alum, she knows the lifestyle and the levels of stress students are under, so she can point out specific problems that can occur and how to prevent and fix them. The Shaklee Company itself has a long history and reputation for leading the way in natural vitamins. Their products have helped athletes win over 50 Olympic gold medals, and they take special care to make sure only the natural ingredients listed make it into your vitamins.

- **Healthy Choices in the Cafeteria:** The following are statistics that support the need to educate students about healthy eating: Students gain an average of 4 pounds during the first three months of their freshman year of college—a rate that is 11 time higher than 17 and 18 year olds not in school; Cornell researchers found that, on average, only 174 calories a day accounted for the weight gain (to put in perspective, one slice of cheese pizza = 230). Therefore, we would like to hold an event led by Carrie Brankiewicz (certified dietician and physical education instructor) that focuses on healthy eating in the cafeteria, which involves considering balancing calories, ideal body weight and how to safely and effectively lose or maintain weight while eating in the cafeteria.

- **Being a Vegetarian:** There are many students on campus with unique eating choices and dietary needs. One popular health and moral choice for some of
these students is vegetarianism. In the fall, in accordance with our wellness theme and in an attempt to represent different nutritional choices, we would like to hold a student panel (perhaps with the participation of a certified professional, or someone well-versed in the field) who will discuss what it means to be a vegetarian, why they have chosen to be so, and how to survive on a college campus without eating meat. This event is not meant to convince people or change their own eating habits, but to share information with them and answer questions or concerns.

**Eating Disorders** Eating Disorders/ED Awareness Week is another area in which the Wellness House could contribute useful services. Even though this week is observed during spring quarter, we would like to build awareness beginning in the fall and connect it to some of our other events and the broader theme of Nutritional Wellness. Speakers and events emphasizing healthy choices and good body image as well as a fresh perspective on managing anxiety and insecurity would help to combat some of the stressors which lead to eating disorders. Furthermore, the Wellness House would work to promote the services offered by the Counseling Center by informing students through speakers, events and presentation that seek to teach the campus community how to recognize when we need help.

*(Power Walks: see Spring 2008)*
*(Yoga: see Spring 2008)*

**WINTER 2008 (Emotional Wellness)**

- **Laughter Therapist:** During Winter quarter, students can find it difficult to find things to smile about considering the dreary weather and intense workload. Laughter is crucial to maintaining a healthy mental state. Laughter Therapist Enda Junkins gives talks all across the country on the benefits of laughter and finding a reason to smile. We would like to bring in Ms. Junkins or someone in her field to talk to students about the importance of laughter.

- **Comedian:** Along the same lines as laughter therapy, Comedians can help to find humor in the absurdities of life, and can help to give students perspective on their lives. During winter quarter, we would like to bring in either a comedian or an improv comedy troupe (or work with Monkapult or the sketch comedy club on campus) to give the students a break from the weather and their studies and give them a chance to laugh and learn about how important it is to take a step back every once in awhile and just have a good time.

- **Dr. Ellen Wagenfeld-Heintz:** Dr. Wagenfeld-Heintz is conducting a class this spring at the Stryker Center titled Recognizing and Calming Stress in Everyday Life. This is one of our goals and focuses of winter quarter, so we aim to have Dr. Wagenfeld-Heintz come and give a talk, or possibly workshop, on a similar subject.

- **Movie Nights:** *Thirteen, Supersize Me, Girl Interrupted, Prozac Nation, Dead Poets Society, Running With Scissors, Little Miss Sunshine, The Squid and the Whale, Thank You for Smoking.* All of the above movies have some component of Physical or Mental Wellness. In the winter, we would like to help students cope with the depression and sadness that can come with winter
quarter, and show some movies that depict ways in which other people, dealing with similar issues, have dealt with their problems. Also, these movies include good examples of what not to do, and how easily things can get out of control if one doesn’t ask for help.

**Meditation** The chapel offers a once weekly meditation period, and Doree Lipson is currently leading one section of a meditation class. We hope to co-opt the idea of meditation on campus, promoting the healthful benefits of meditation and raising awareness about these events. We may also possibly host our own event, which would include an informational lecture as well as theory and technique training, focusing on teaching students balance and de-stressing techniques. Books such as Paul Wilson’s *The Calm Technique: Meditation Without Magic or Mysticism* show how meditation is a useful resource in relieving stress and anxiety and is, therefore, important for a healthy life.

**Making Stress Balls:** Increased stress levels due to the rigor of college life are increasing as evidenced by: more than 30% of all college students report feeling overwhelmed a great deal of the time and 38% of college women; in 2000, 7% of college student reported experiencing anxiety disorder the previous year; anxiety/stress link directly to depression, which can lead to suicide (2nd leading cause of death in college populations). In response to the prevalence of stress on the K college campus we would like to hold an event that involves making stress balls while providing information about ways that students can deal with stress (Counseling Center, breathing technique, exercise, etc.).

(Yoga: see Spring 2008)

**SPRING 2008 (Physical Wellness)**

**Yoga:** We propose to hold yoga sessions at least once per quarter to introduce the campus community to the powerful benefits of regular yoga practice. During these sessions, we would teach students basic Hatha and Kundalini yoga exercises and kriyas which promote relaxation, stress release, increased flexibility, and an overall physical tune-up. The benefits of yoga are innumerable and we would provide students with material detailing these benefits as well as basic exercises they would be able to practice on their own. Having experience practicing and leading others through yogic exercises, Amy Hutchison would be able to lead these sessions. If additional resources were needed, we aim to consult with one of the yoga instructors at the college including Connie Roselander, Karen Berthel, or Dr. James Langeland.

**Power Walks:** Ideally, we would like to hold once weekly power walks, open to anyone on campus (specifically during the beginning of fall and spring quarter). The health benefits of walking are numerous, and we intend to stress the importance of exploring, getting off campus, being with friends, and scheduling some time out of academic life for mental and physical well-being.
In the fall, these walks could also function as tours of downtown/the area for incoming freshmen.

**No-Impact Day:** In the spring, we want Physical Wellness to apply not only to our bodies, but also the physical world in which we live. The goal of this is to spend a day having as little negative impact on the environment as possible: trying to walk instead of drive (or arrange a carpool), using lights infrequently and turning them off when not in use, cutting down on the amount of disposable waste we create (travel coffee mugs, tissues ...), etc. We want to take time to create awareness of conservation and environmental issues by advertising for and implementing a No-Impact Day, hopefully in conjunction with Envorg and as a part of the celebration of Earth Day.

**Go Out and Play Day:** We would coordinate this campus-wide event with the Childish Games Commission. The purpose would be to encourage students to take the time for physical activity, especially activities outdoors. We would also be doing so in a way that has little effect on the Earth, particularly by conserving energy. Activities would include games such as Red Rover, Tag, Hopscotch, Four Square, Capture the Flag, jump rope, a water balloon fight, field hockey, general ball games, and other physically active childhood games. Not only would these activities provide students with a fun way to exercise, but they would also strengthen the sense of community on campus.

**Bike Trip:** This year the Bike Co-Op sponsored a bike trip on the Kal-Haven trail. The trail is a wonderful asset and resource to the Southwest Michigan area, and biking is one of the best ways to get an all body aerobic workout. By helping to facilitate and promote this event, the Wellness House can effectively illustrate the benefits of biking for both our own Physical Wellness and also that of our environment, while at the same time giving students an opportunity to explore the area and witness the physical beauty that can often be hard to find in an urban setting.

**Cooperating with the Chapel Program:** The Chapel Program had several Spring Quarter events this year, including the maple syrup outing, hike in Markin Glen, canoe on the Kalamazoo River, and a trip to the beach at Saugatuck. As the Wellness House, we would co-advertise these events and coordinate with the Chapel program to put on similar events next spring, and also give input for new events that fall within the parameters of both Physical and Spiritual Wellness. These events bring students in touch with nature and also promote the physical wellness of both ourselves and our environment. This effort will be made possible due to three of the members being student Chaplains next year.

**IN-HOUSE**

**Growing Seeds/Composting:** This would be less of an in-house activity, and more of a practice. After learning more about our environment and ways to protect and conserve it, we want to grow seeds and compost for DIRT, the organic garden club on campus. This way we will incorporate healthy environmental practices into our everyday routine while also working with a group on campus achieve its goals.
**Rock Climbing:** While observing our own physical health, we will go rock climbing together at Climb Kalamazoo downtown. Rock climbing together will help us learn to work as a team, encourage exercise, and build skills that develop personal growth. The benefits of climbing include working together, building confidence, improving problem solving skills, and sharpening mental focus.

**Picnic at the Arboretum:** Organizing an in-house trip to the arboretum will provide us with a healthy trip outdoors. According to one study, fresh air contains negatively charged oxygen molecules, which has been shown to improve moods, reduce the amount of bacteria and viruses in the air, and improve lung function. Also, benefits from the ultraviolet light from the sun include enhancing Vitamin D production and, at least temporarily, lowering blood pressure and cholesterol. Furthermore, we will also experience energizing, refreshing benefits from the kind of solitude that can only be found in nature. This would fit into our Spring Quarter theme of fitness/physical health.

**Tea Nights:** In an attempt to keep our minds and bodies healthy, we plan to have weekly tea nights. First of all, this will promote house bonding as we take the time to sit and talk with each other. Also, we feel that taking the time to pause during the hectic weeks of Kalamazoo college life can be especially healing and good for mental health. Tea itself has physical health benefits including: protecting against certain types of cancer, strengthening the immune system, lowering stress levels, and lowering your risk for heart disease.

**Dinners:** We plan to delegate at least one night each quarter to be a house-wide dinner. These will include, but are not limited to, finding new and exciting recipes to satisfy a diverse set of palates, dividing up duties so that we’re all contributing and working together, and sitting down together among great food and great company. On top of enjoying the meal, we can grasp an educational moment and each bring an article to the table relevant to our Wellness theme of the quarter. These would also be an excellent opportunity for us to catch up on how we’re doing, how we’re achieving our house goals, and ensure that we’re communicating and living together harmoniously.

**Cross Country Skiing/Snowshoeing Trip:** As an in-house event, we would like to plan a trip to the Kalamazoo Nature Center to engage in cross country skiing or snow-shoeing. During the long winter months, mental and physical health is especially important to maintain and spending time outdoors greatly enhances well-being. Through teaching each other to cross country ski or snowshoe, house members would have the opportunity to engage in an active lifestyle while having the opportunity to reap the meditative effects of time spent in nature. We would be able to rent equipment from Lee’s Sports in Kalamazoo.