

## unisen

### Opens Fitness Centre at their New Headquarters

Tri Fit is very pleased to be working with Unisen Inc. to develop and manage their 5,000 sq. ft. fitness and wellness center, which opened this September.

Unisen Inc. is a leading provider of specialized business services to Canada's retail investment fund industry. Unisen focuses on supporting the fund information cycle comprising unit-holder record keeping software, unit-holder account administration, client services, dealer relations, and fund accounting. Their new corporate headquarters located at the Airport Corporate Centre in Mississauga is now home to approximately 1000 of its employees.

The fitness centre *Moving in Unisen*, located on the main floor of the building, includes an aerobics studio with sprung wood floor, an individual workout area for cardio and strength training, a stretching area and men's and women's change rooms.

Two full-time Tri Fit consultants, Tracy Riddell and Rachael Conacher, manage the fitness facility and its related wellness and recreation programs. Employee volunteers are being trained as fitness instructors and strength trainers to maximize the number of group class offerings.

Robert Smuk, President and CEO, anticipates that the new fitness centre will offer many opportunities for both the employees and the organization. "We believe that providing an on-site fitness center will enhance the health and well-being of our employees and also help to build a positive community in which to work."

"When selecting the management team to run our wellness program, we recognized that Tri Fit demonstrated a high level of professionalism and an ability to integrate fitness, wellness and recreation programs to enhance our new corporate culture."



Tri Fit Management team, Veronica Marsden, Adrienne Sutton and Sue Pridham congratulate Robert Smuk, UNISEN President and CEO, on the opening of their new Fitness Centre.

## Leading by Example

### Theme of Health Work and Wellness Conference

Tri Fit co-owner Veronica Marsden was recently in Gatineau Quebec attending the 7th Annual Health Work and Wellness Conference.

Dr. Julian Barling, Associate Dean, School of Business, Queen's University set the tone for the conference by presenting his healthy workplace model. The model developed by Dr. Barling was influenced by an on-line survey conducted by a recent Gallup Poll, which asked employees "What makes workplaces well?"

The root of a healthy workplace is Transformational Leadership. Employees who work for such leaders are inspired, motivated and intellectually stimulated while feeling that their unique needs are taken into consideration. It is a style of leadership that leaves employees feeling that there is nothing they can't do and therefore has a dramatic effect on attitudinal and performance variables and how management is perceived.

Dr. Barling also discussed how appropriate workload and pace are essential to a healthy workplace. When employees are given unusually demanding tasks, there must be provisions to allow an employee time to recover. Work demands must also correlate to skill. Work schedules and role clarity also impact health and must be compatible with outside roles and demands.

Workplace justice or fairness was highlighted as key to organizational health. Employees want to know that they are being treated fairly.

continued on page 2

# Start Right Where You Are

That's the advice Marsha would give to others embarking on a healthy lifestyle journey. Marsha Mark decided last January that she needed to make her health a priority. Her busy job as Assistant VP Facilities and Distribution Services for AIM Trimark was no longer a good excuse. After her doctor expressed concern with her blood pressure and cholesterol levels, they discussed a strategy combining healthy eating and exercise.

Marsha decided to start with her diet. "Start with little goals," she says, "because you don't want to be doomed before you start." She made a point of not skipping meals and choosing healthy snacks. "I started to feel more energetic, which was the motivation I needed to keep going," Marsha said.

The next step was activity. Marsha has always believed in fitness but her efforts to stay active have been sporadic.

She approached Assata Mckenzie, the Tri Fit Coordinator of the Energy Zone, AIM Trimark's 5,000 sf fitness facility in their North York headquarters. Assata prescribed a one-hour program consisting of 20- 30 minutes on the treadmill, elliptical cross trainer or bike, strength training and stretching, three to four times a week. "I learned the hard way about the importance of stretching" says Mark, which she now does religiously, even



Assata McKenzie Tri Fit Wellness Consultant (left), and Marsha Mark, Assistant VP Facilities and Distribution Services, AIM Trimark.

when watching T.V.

Marsha said getting started on a fitness program took reprogramming skills. I had to program my brain to bring my gym bag to work. The next step was going to the gym to just sit on the bike for a few minutes. Taking little steps was really important to sticking with it", she says.

Marsha is delighted with the results. "My blood pressure has decreased, my clothes fit more comfortably and my cholesterol has dropped to normal. I'm also not as irritable (or so my family reports) and I have more energy".

Marsha has a few words of encouragement for others getting started. "Forgive yourself if you miss a day. Give yourself

permission to be human, but don't leave it too long." Remember says Marsha, "start right where you are".

## Leading by Example

continued from page 1

Dr. Barling talked about the messages that we often send suggesting that some employees are "worth" more than others. A classic example of this is the parking spot reserved at the front door for the CEO. The message here is that our status not our performance dictates how we are treated.

The quality of social life at work impacts how happy people are at their workplace. Employees want to be able to say that they have a best friend at work.

Dr. Barling finished his presentation by reiterating what most researchers have concluded: that a healthy workplace enjoys lower absenteeism, lower short-term disability, enhanced employee retention and higher work quality.

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