



Letter From the Director



As 2017 winds to a close, this time of year its tradition to reflect and celebrate our achievements, as well as prepare to tackle the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Our devoted SBU community bonds us in times of misfortune and times of joy while helping us turn visions into reality. As we strive for excellence and go *Far Beyond* this coming year, let us renew our promise to ensure success and a brighter future for all.

In this issue, we interview wellness advocate and senior leader LeManuel "Lee" Bitsóí, our University's first Chief Diversity Officer. Colleen's Corner asks you to *live a life you love*; the Environmental Health & Safety team provides winter driving preparedness information; the Stony Brook Medicine Nutrition promotes a positively healthy holiday; and our partners at Island Federal Credit Union highlight the importance of saving.

If you'd like to contribute health and wellness articles to HEALTHIER NUWS, please email me at bryan.weiss@stonybrook.edu. Thank you for reading our newsletter and look for our next issue in the coming months.

Wishing you and your loved ones a New Year filled with passion, purpose, and prosperity.

Bryan Weiss

Leading the Charge

LeManuel "Lee" Bitsóí
Chief Diversity Officer



Q: How do you personally invest in your health?

A: I try to be mindful of eating healthy portions in all of my meals. It doesn't always happen, but I strive for it every day. I also make it a priority to stay hydrated so I drink as much water as I can throughout the day. For exercise, it's important for me to be active in some capacity, in the gym or by taking the stairs and walking. When I lived in Chicago, I walked to most places – including work, but it's harder to do so on Long Island since it is a car culture here so I walk whenever I can, even if there are no sidewalks. *Can we do something about this?*

Q: What do you see as the biggest strength(s) in regards to Stony Brook's diversity?

A: SBU's biggest strength in diversity is our community members. In my conversations with students, faculty, and staff, I infuse diversity and inclusion in some capacity and everyone is open to talking about change. However, people and organizations can be wary of change, especially cultural shifts. So, I look to technology diffusion as a way to transform our SBU community to become even more diverse, equitable and inclusive. For example, when Windows was introduced, not everyone was on board, except for early adapters. Then, as people and organizations discovered the utility in Windows (and the Microsoft Suite) and how they made processes and procedures more efficient and productive, more

people came on board. Now, almost everyone uses the Microsoft Suite, with some exceptions, but it has become the norm. Accordingly, I look forward to the time when every SBU community member understands, appreciates and respects the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in our lives at SBU and *Far Beyond*. Inclusive excellence will be a hallmark of a Stony Brook education.

Q: Let's talk food favorites: First, name three healthy items that are always in your refrigerator/pantry; and second, what is your most beloved holiday indulgence?

A: I like to have vegetables (and fruit) readily available to use as ingredients in recipes or to complement meals. I also keep some various types of nuts in my pantry to snack on or use in recipes. Also in my pantry is peanut butter and jelly for PB&J sandwiches! For visiting guests who have nut allergies, I provide cookie butter as an alternative.

Q: When reading books or watching movies, what is your preferred genre?

A: I like to read, but I tend to prefer going to movies, especially for date nights. However, I avoid opening weekends since the theater can be chock full of LOUD snackers and people who text or *tweet* during the movie. *What's up with that?!*

Q: Do you have a New Year's resolution for 2018?

A: My resolution for 2018 is to heal humanity. Or cut french fries out of my diet. *Which one is easier?*



Colleen's Corner

EAP for a Happier U

By Colleen Stanley, MFT, CEAP
Lead Coordinator
Stony Brook University Employee Assistance Program

You Deserve to Live a Life You Love

At the end of each year I reflect, taking time to acknowledge my successes and challenges. I make a point to verbally acknowledge my loved ones for their accomplishments that I have witnessed over the course of the past year. This helps us to focus on what is not wrong and to be grateful for how we have navigated whatever life has brought to us. With compassion and open-hearted curiosity, I review my choices and actions and become aware if they were in congruence with my top values. I ask myself *what do I need to change?* What do I want to let go of? What would I like more of? I notice if my values shifted.

Understanding your top values influences your priorities, and then enables you to make conscious choices about where to spend your time, money, and energy.

The past 8 years my son's education has been a priority. He is graduating in 2018, so happy travel can now become a priority. As I set intentions for the New Year I see us enjoying adventures and resting more. Acknowledging the health challenges both my husband and I have had in 2017, being healthy moves to the biggest priority for us. Last year we made a choice to become members of a cooperative farm and eat a cleaner more plant-based diet. Getting my stress under control and getting more exercise and fun was a priority, so I took a course in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and bought a couple of kayaks. This year spending money on yoga and massage will be added to our budget, and less money will be designated to dining out.

You may remember me telling you about the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Course in my June 2017 Healthier U article. I am happy to announce that we will be offering an 8-week MBSR Course onsite early next year. This supportive and intensive stress reduction program is powerful in helping participants learn a variety of mindfulness skills and adaptive strategies in order to become more active in their own health and well-being. Mindfulness and compassion practices are two of the most powerful agents of positive brain change and resilience known today. Class size is limited; call me at 632-6085, or email me, for program details. You can learn more about MBSR here <http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/eap/happieru/mindfulness.html>.

If you have used the EAP in the past year, please fill out the [client satisfaction survey](#).

Thank you and wishing you all a healthy and joyous New Year!



Be Prepared for Winter Driving

By Clifford Knee
Safety Training and Environmental Compliance Manager

Winter road trips - even short ones - are a great way to celebrate with family and friends. But as we all know, driving in the winter can be dangerous, especially where ice and snow conditions exist. Here are some tips to follow to help ensure your safety.

Check the Weather Before You Go:

- If the weather is frigid, you're going to want to warm up the car before you drive in it.
- Remove all snow and ice from the car before you leave.
- If the forecast looks suspect, wait out the storm; if possible. But if you must travel make sure you share your travel plans and route with someone before you leave.

Prepare Your Car for Winter:

- Before the winter season arrives, have a mechanic check your car to make sure it is working properly and is ready for winter driving.

Don't Leave Home Without These (*National Safety Council recommends having these with you at all times*):

- Properly inflated spare tire, wheel wrench, and tripod jack
- Shovel
- Jumper cables
- Tow and tire chains
- Bag of salt or cat litter for better tire traction or to melt snow
- Tool kit
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Reflective triangles or flares
- Compass
- First aid kit
- Windshield cleaner
- Ice scraper and snow brush
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Scissors and string or cord
- Nonperishable, high-energy foods like unsalted, canned nuts, dried fruits, and hard candy
- Blankets, mittens, socks, and hats

Know What to Do to Avoid a Crash:

- Never mix radial tires with other types of tires
- If possible, avoid using your parking brake in cold, rainy and snowy weather
- Do not use cruise control in wintery conditions
- Look and steer in the direction you want to go
- Accelerate and decelerate slowly
- Increase following distance to 8 to 10 seconds
- Know whether you have antilock brakes, which will "pump" the brakes for you in a skid
- If possible, don't stop when going uphill
- Keep your gas tank at least half-full
- If you do get stranded, don't try to push your vehicle out of snow, signal distress with a brightly colored cloth tied to the antenna or in a rolled up window. Or if you become stranded in an unfamiliar area, do not leave your car. Light flares in front and behind the car and make sure the exhaust pipe is not blocked by snow, mud or any object.

Core Nutrition

A Positively Healthy Holiday

By Kathryn Hughes and Byrd Schas

Dietetic Interns, Department of Family, Population and Preventive Medicine, Stony Brook Medicine

Nothing can undermine our healthy intentions like the holiday season. Every year we enter this period vowing to keep our portions small and our gym membership active, but it isn't long before the holiday cheer begins to build, free time wanes, and our healthy routines are replaced with cookies and eggnog. Here are a few realistic, positive changes to help keep us in optimal health during this season of excess.

Eat Mindfully

Eating while distracted can cause us to ignore internal signals of hunger and satiety, and lead to overeating. Instead of continually grazing at holiday events, try this: Make a plate of the foods you really want and leave behind the ones you can live without. Sit down and take time to chew each bite completely, paying close attention to the foods' smells and flavors. Aim to spend at least 30 minutes eating a meal: this will allow you to continually assess how you're feeling, and best determine when you've had enough.

Stay Balanced

It often feels natural on the day of a big meal or holiday party to "save calories" and refrain from eating until the big event. But fasting all day makes us feel ravenous by mealtime, and more likely to overindulge. It also tricks our body into thinking it's starving, which slows our metabolism. On the big day, consume balanced meals composed of lean protein, healthy fats like olive oil, avocado, and nut butters, and fibrous vegetables to prevent party-time binges (and the guilt that follows).

Pile on the Veggies

Non-starchy vegetables are extremely low in calories but high in fiber, so can fill you up without contributing to weight gain. Try to fill half your plate with a variety of these at all meals and snacks. Incorporate veggie-based side dishes into holiday meals, like Brussels sprouts pan roasted with olive oil and a pinch of Parmesan, or blanched green beans tossed with sliced almonds and a drizzle of flax seed oil.

Freeze or Gift Leftovers

Hosting a holiday is stressful, and avoiding the post-party leftovers is even worse. Prepare yourself with disposable containers and large zip lock bags to send your guests home with treats! Still have some left? Pack them up and store them in the freezer for the next family gathering or special occasion.

Engage in Some Form of Exercise...and Like It!

The holidays are a time to be thankful, and what more to be thankful for than the ability to use our body? Try to stop thinking of exercise as a chore and start looking at it as a privilege that not everyone is fortunate enough to enjoy. After all, exercise is proven to help with weight maintenance, and improve mood and self-esteem. Take a family walk after a holiday dinner, check out a new workout class with visiting family members, or get a trial membership to a gym or fitness facility that interests you.

Healthy Money

The Importance of Saving

By Catherine Roger

Director - S.B. Business Unit, Island Federal Credit Union

Throughout your life, you will be faced with many decisions about saving and spending. Your goals can vary from smaller purchases such as a new smartphone to larger purchases, such as a car or a house to long-term savings for retirement and any unknowns. There are some life events that you can plan and save for, like higher education or starting a family, but it's impossible to foresee unplanned expenses. That's what makes saving important - so you'll be prepared for any type of expense by having money set aside.

Many Americans spend more than they save, and nearly one in five people are saving less than 5 percent of their income (according to a 2015 Bankrate survey). If you're reluctant to start saving or believe it isn't possible, think of it as a path to self-reliance and freedom from debt. You can avoid racking up debt if you have the savings to pay for the things you need and to cover emergencies. Chances are you'll need the funds for unexpected situations throughout your lifetime, good and bad. Here are some basic steps to get you started:

- *Create a budget and stick to it.* Try to take a hard look at your expenses and think about what is

a true need or a want. By putting aside some unnecessary purchases you may be able to find some money to save. Skip your cup coffee or bring lunch make sure you put what you would have spent in your savings.

- *Start small.* Put your change in a jar every night and deposit it every month in your savings.
- *Pay yourself first.* Determine a set amount of money to put away every month and treat it like any other bill. Put away part of every paycheck through direct deposit so you never really see it.
- *Set up different savings accounts for different goals.* You can set up a holiday club, vacation club and/or a set-aside savings account for things you want to buy, like new furniture.
- *Be ready for the unknown.* Create an emergency fund with three to six months' worth of living expenses in case unexpected costs arise. Pick one monthly expense at a time as a goal. First, save enough to cover your food bill, then add enough to cover your rent or mortgage. Keep adding small goals until you have reached the three to six months of expenses.
- *Set financial goals to keep you on track.* Use specific and measurable goals so you know exactly how much you want to save and how long it will take to get there. When you set clear goals, it's a lot easier to track your progress. Example - I will need \$1500.00 to go on vacation next year, so I will put \$32.00 in a vacation club each week.

If you need help to get started or would like more information about how savings can impact your financial goals, please feel free to [email me](#).

Upcoming Programs & Events

Target Fitness: Professional Nutrition Therapy Program

Are you ready to lose weight permanently in 2018? This 10-week nutrition education, wellness, and lifestyle program led by Registered Dietitians will help you reach your target weight! The team of nutrition experts provides participants with:

- Sustainable, customized nutrition program you can follow for life
- Body composition analysis (measure of body fat and muscle)
- Intensive education on research-based strategies for permanent weight loss
- Personalized short and long-term weight goals
- An introduction to stress reduction, mindful eating, and behavioral change techniques
- Training on innovative tools that will change your relationship with food
- Guidelines on reading food labels and a supermarket tour!

To provide greater flexibility, Target Fitness will now be offering evening and afternoon opportunities! See program details below:

- Evening Series
 - When: Tuesdays, 1/23 - 3/27
 - Time: 5:45 - 6:45pm
 - Location: 181 Belle Mead Road, East Setauket.
- Afternoon Series
 - When: Thursdays, 1/25 - 3/29
 - Time: 12:30 - 1:30pm
 - Location: Main/West Campus, Student Activities Center (SAC) Room 302
- Cost: \$190/person for either 10-week series

Target Fitness is offered by Stony Brook University Hospital Department of Family, Population & Preventative Medicine (Nutrition Division) and sponsored by Healthier U.

For more information, and/or to register, please call Health Connect at 631-444-4000. Space is extremely limited; don't delay, sign up today!



STAY CONNECTED:

