

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**Media Contacts:**

Michael Jenkins, michael.jenkins@searhc.org, (907) 463-6666 (Juneau, SEARHC Corporate Communications Director)  
Charles Bingham, charles.bingham@searhc.org, (907) 966-8504 (Sitka, SEARHC Corporate Communications Specialist)  
Bradelle Padon, bradelle.padon@searhc.org, (907) 364-4404 (Juneau, Steps to a Healthier SE Alaska Schools/Workplace Coord.)

### **Catholic Community Service honored for employee wellness**

**JUNEAU, March 28, 2008** — The Juneau Employee Wellness Coalition has honored Catholic Community Service with its Well Workplace of the Month Award for March. The monthly award recognizes the efforts of Juneau organizations that promote employee wellness within their worksites.

Catholic Community Service recently held a kick-off event for its employee wellness program. When employees registered for the program and filled out a questionnaire about their health goals, they received a free pedometer in order to count their daily step totals. The program also includes information on healthy eating, presentations about selected wellness topics for employees from area physicians and health professionals, daily physical activity logs, a lending library for health topics, and prize awards for participation. The employee wellness team is trying to introduce healthier food and drink choices at all meetings, too.

“We, as an agency, are very excited to start our wellness program,” said Cameryn Flynn, Assistant Agency Director and Employee Wellness Team Coordinator for Catholic Community Service.

Being able to reduce health care costs was one of the major reasons for starting the wellness program, Flynn said. By teaching employees how to make healthy choices, the agency and its employees will be able to better manage their health care costs. But economics isn’t the only reason for creating the program.

“In addition to reducing demand for medical services, wellness programs provide economic benefits by reducing absenteeism, reducing on-the-job injuries and workers’ compensation costs and reducing disability management costs,” Flynn said. “Although we are not planning to measure the economic impact of these aforementioned reasons employers endorse wellness programs, we know that having a wellness program will indirectly affect our absenteeism, our on-the-job injuries and overall staff morale. We hope to assure FUN is in the process and allow celebration for even minor steps toward improved health.”

The Juneau Employee Wellness Coalition is a community-wide organization promoting workplace wellness and the group is open to all Juneau workplaces interested in designing and implementing effective employee wellness plans. The coalition was created as a follow-up to the Working Well in Alaska employee wellness training seminar held in October in Juneau, and is co-sponsored by the SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) and the SEARHC Steps to a Healthier SE Alaska program. Participants in the coalition may be able to apply for small grants from the Steps to a Healthier SE Alaska program to help promote employee wellness within their organizations.

The Juneau Employee Wellness Coalition hosts its next monthly brown-bag lunch meeting from noon to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, April 9, at Conference Room B of the SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) Ethel Lund Medical Center in Juneau, 3245 Hospital Drive. Conference Room B is downstairs in the main clinic building. For more information on the Juneau Employee Wellness Coalition, contact SEARHC Steps to a Healthier SE Alaska Program Schools and Workplace Coordinator Bradelle Padon at 364-4404.

###