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## **Midsized Company winner**

# **Healthiest Employers: Millennium Partners Sports Club Management**

Keith Regan, Special to the Journal

Payroll coordinator Brande Ventura admits she was skeptical when she first heard about the Live Well program at Millennium Partners Sports Club Management.

"I've read countless articles and books telling me to eat this, do that, don't do this," she said. "I expected the same old song and dance."

To her surprise, the wellness program delivered a message that clicked almost immediately with Ventura. She soon learned tips, nutritional advice and exercises that inspired and motivated her — and went beyond what she already knew.

"This program has taught me something that nothing else has — that my health should be the No. 1 priority," Ventura said. "I've never been able to follow a program with such consistency before and gotten such amazing results."

As developer and operator of the The Sports Club/LA and Reebok/NY clubs in Boston, San Francisco, Miami, New York and Washington, D.C. — including a new, smaller style of club that opened recently in Chestnut Hill and is meant to be more sustainable — midsized company Healthiest Employer winner Millennium knows it has to practice what it preaches when it comes to health and wellness, said Chief Marketing Officer Teresa Coffey-Gordon.

"For us to serve our membership base, we have to understand our community and what motivates them and how our services and products can improve people's lives," she said. "And the best way to understand that is to experience it first hand."

Chief Executive Officer [Smairya Million](#) said the firm was pleasantly surprised by a nearly 80 percent participation rate when the Live Well program was launched, with employees eager to take part in online education and phone-based coaching to help customize programs.

Results came quickly, with a 9 percent drop in the average claim per doctor visit, according to feedback from the firm's health insurance provider, United Health Care, and its insurance broker, EBS Capstone in Newton, which have helped develop the wellness approach.

"If you're looking for metrics to figure out what the programs are doing — and as good business people, we want to measure everything — the return is certainly there," she said.

With a relatively young and fit workforce, Millennium knew it needed a program that could push past what employees already knew and focus on all areas of wellness, from stress reduction to nutrition, fitness to weight loss. Financial incentives have helped keep employees from seeing health insurance premium increases, while group challenges at work have helped foster a sense of camaraderie.

"Of course, most of our employees know at least a little something about physical fitness," Million said. "We had to give them something above and beyond that existing knowledge."

"People are definitely enjoying it," Coffey-Gordon said.