

UHS
Health
Promotion
Office
EVER BETTER WELL-BEING

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT



UNIVERSITY of
ROCHESTER

WELCOME

At the UHS Health Promotion Office, we know that promoting positive well-being is fundamental to students' academic success and can create deeper learning experiences and meaningful engagement.

While students ultimately have an individual responsibility for their own health, they will be significantly more successful if the environments which they live and learn in are centered around well-being. Rather than self-care, I believe we need to emphasize community oriented and compassion centered care. This approach will begin to create a culture where our living environments, classrooms, programs, services, policies, and people all work together to support student well-being.

We have a responsibility to cultivate student flourishing, connectedness, mindfulness, resilience, grit, purpose, belonging, and self-compassion so that our students can become ever better.

Amy McDonald

Director,
UHS Health
Promotion Office



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OUR MISSION: The UHS Health Promotion Office leads campus-wide health promotion action to advance a culture of well-being, cultivate student flourishing, and positively influence student health.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES:



ALWAYS BE STUDENT CENTERED: Put students at the center of our work, using participatory approaches to engage and amplify their voices.



PURSUE EVER BETTER WELL-BEING: Help students develop the skills of resilience, acceptance, self-compassion, and experience a sense of belonging and connection.



PRIORITIZE EVIDENCE-INFORMED INTERVENTIONS : Utilize UR specific and national data, published research, and best practices to create high-impact programs and services.



USE COLLECTIVE ENGAGEMENT: Focus on intentional collaboration, with the understanding that our work is far greater than our individual reach.



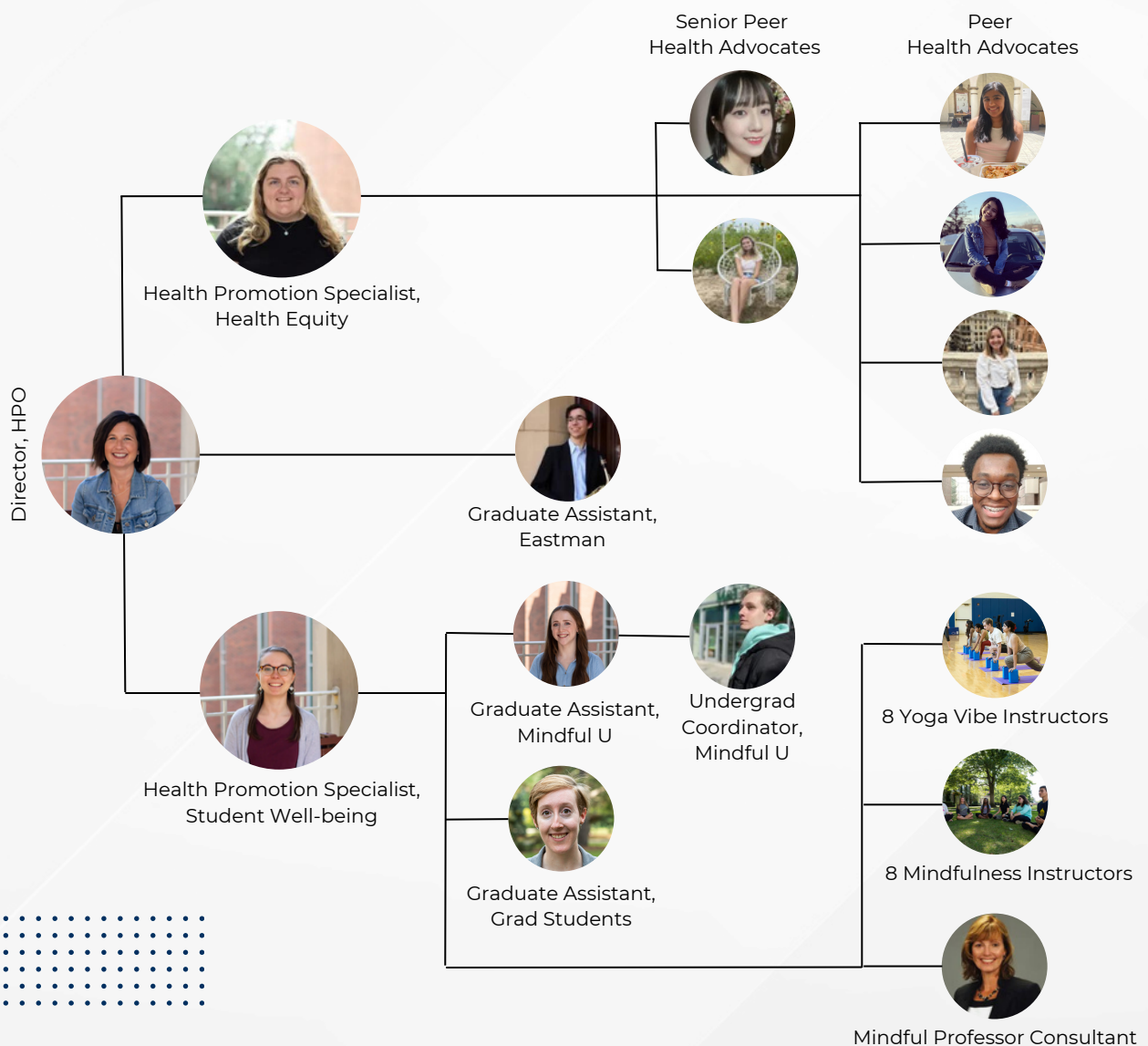
THINK WHOLISTICALLY: Use settings and whole-system approaches, rather than solely individual interventions, to embed well-being into campus culture.

UHS
Health Promotion Office
EVER BETTER WELL-BEING

OUR TEAM



We are not a team because we work together. We are a team because we respect, trust, and care for each other.



OUR COMMITMENT TO DEI

The UHS Health Promotion Office is committed to fostering a culture which values diversity, equity, and inclusion. We strive to cultivate sustainable and impactful health promotion and well-being action that can be embedded into our campus community. Our work values the uniqueness of each student's ethnic/indigenous/racial identity, nationality and citizenship, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender and gender expression, age, ability, body shape / size, and socio-economic status, veteran status, as well as the intersectionality of these social identities.

67

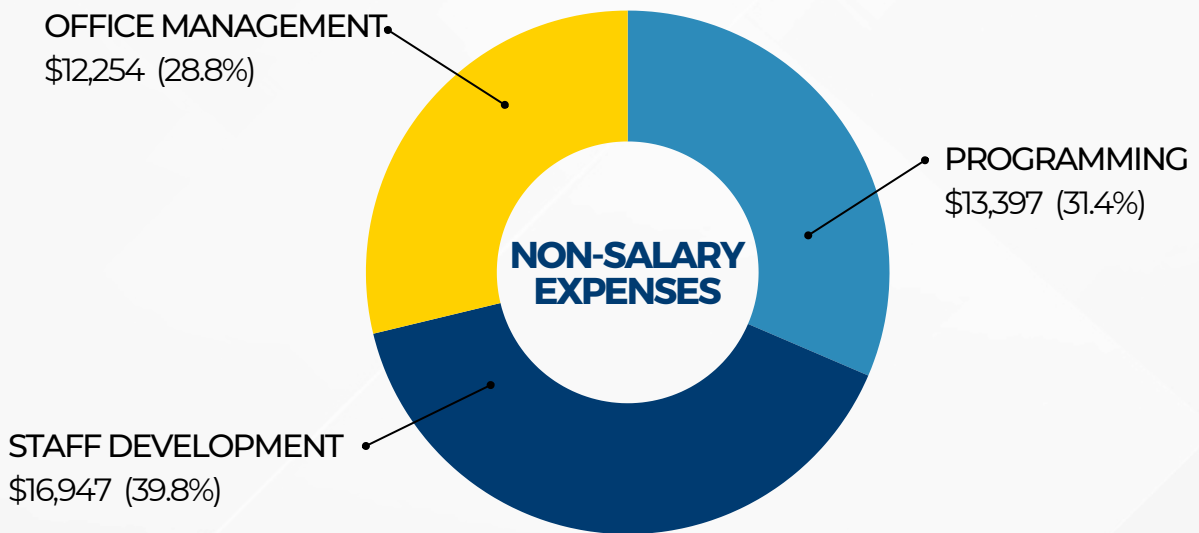
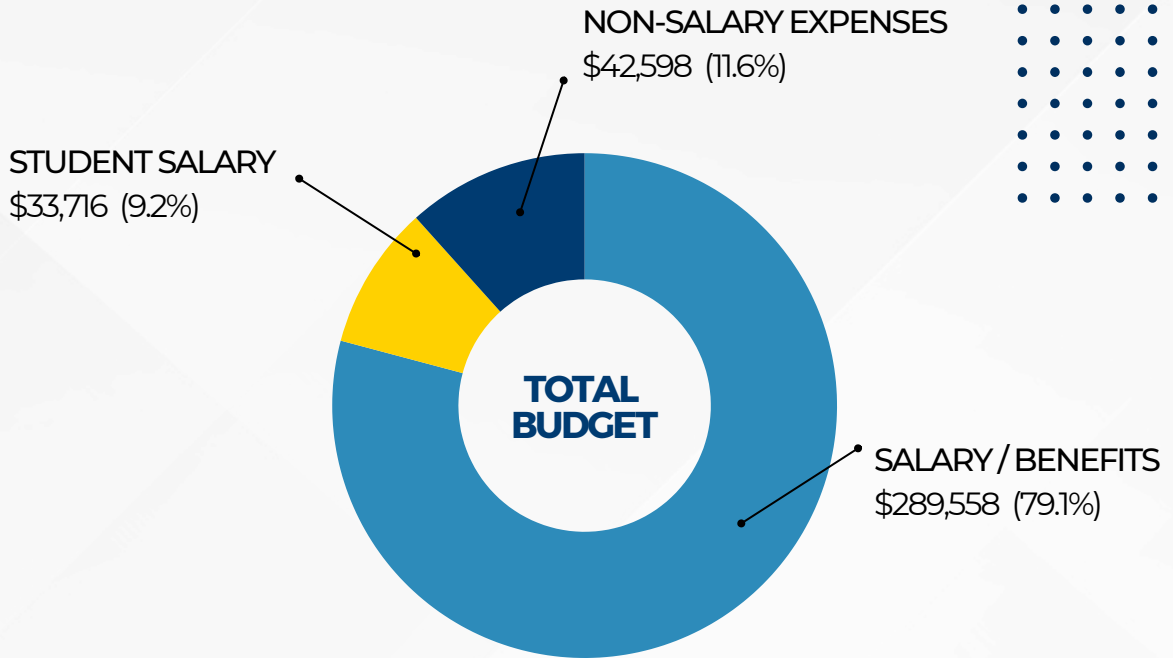
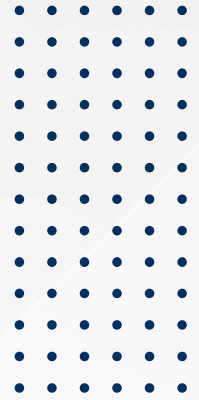
HOURS OF DEI TRAININGS COMPLETED BY HPO STAFF IN 2023 - 2024

Here is a sampling of the trainings we attended:

Transgender Health
Exploring Women's Narratives
Bringing Family Therapy to Trans Youth
Why Mental Health Equity is Critical for Student Success
Chinese Name Pronunciations
Emerging NCHA Data on Queer and Trans Student Well-Being
Reproductive Injustices
Inclusive Leadership
Development of Asexual Stigma Inventory
Understanding Queer Families
Religious Diversity in the Classroom and on Campus
Understanding Intergenerational Cultural Scripts to Unlock Our Power
Addressing Weight Bias and Stigma for a More Inclusive Future
Creating Accessible Documents
Safe Space Lab
Enhancing Knowledge & Skills in Working with First-Gen Students
Creating Accessible Public Health Communications
Navigating the PWI as an Underrepresented Minority Student
Mental Health Care for Transgender and Gender Diverse College Students
Where I Feel Safe: What Makes and Environment Affirming
Improving Healthcare for Autistic Patients
Practical Strategies to Cultivate First-Gen Student Success
Teaching Yoga for Disabled Folks
Intro to Digital Accessibility
Creating Accessible Public Health Communications
A University's Journey to a Size-Inclusive Campus



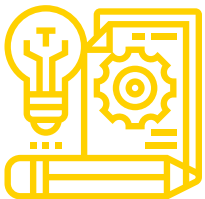
FINANCIAL SUMMARY



A YEAR IN REVIEW PROGRAMS & SERVICES

★ **13,288** ★
STUDENTS

Engaged in Health
Promotion programs &
services this year.



266 Total
Programs

12

Resource
Fairs

44

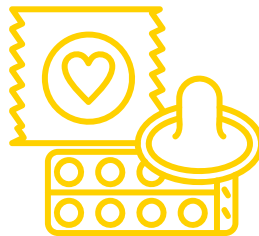
Student
Workshops

47

Staff
Trainings



**491 Safe Sex
Express Orders**



**1,525 Students:
Condom Kits**



**71 STI Testing
Appointments**

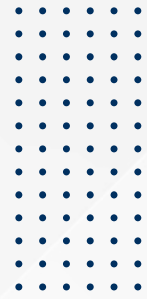
2,272 PARTICIPANTS

engaged in
contemplative
practices such as yoga,
meditation, and
mindfulness.



16 students
became
mindfulness
facilitators

The well-being of a student does not exist in isolation. There is an undeniable link between campus environments and the students who live in them. The spaces where a student sleeps, eats, learns, and connects all influence their capacity to flourish. Therefore, we must consider how we can create campus environments that support students, rather than ones which create barriers to and hinder their well-being.



An ongoing and systematic assessment of the campus viewed through the lens of health promotion is an important component in the creation of supportive environments. The Health Promotion Office will focus on six primary environments, assessing ways in which we have the capacity to infuse well-being into them via our programs, services, or other interventions.

- **Built Environment** – residential buildings, dining halls, athletic centers
- **Natural Environment** – outdoor spaces, connection to nature
- **Learning Environment** – classrooms and other academic spaces
- **Economic Environment** – connections to support for basic needs
- **Cultural Environment** – welcoming diversity in all UHS spaces
- **Social Environment** – spaces where students can connect

PILLAR #1: CREATE SUPPORTIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENTS



PILLAR #1

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Well-Being for Life & Learning Training Program: Launched this year with **245 staff & faculty program registrants**. **50 training workshops** were provided by our team of collaborators. A total of **51 participants graduated** from the program this year.



Hosted **325+ students** in the Wells Brown Oasis for Distress Fests, meditation sessions, and other events.



Worked with community yoga studios to **bring daily yoga classes to campus with 2,225 participants** this year.

Student Health Advocacy

8 UR Student Health Advisory Committee (URSHAC) Meetings

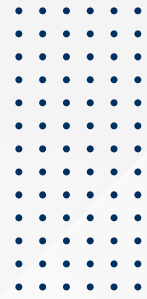
Contemplative Spaces

Met with all schools to begin creating contemplative spaces across campus.



Conducted the **National College Health Assessment** in February. Achieved an **18.4% response rate** with 923 student responses. Obtained disaggregated reports for LGBTQ+, international, and first-generation students.

Like college students from across the country, many at the University of Rochester have been struggling with their mental health, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic. According to the National College Health Assessment (2022), a substantial number of UR student respondents (81% undergraduate / 70% graduate) report experiencing moderate to severe psychological distress in the last 12 months. Mental health struggles have also negatively impacted their academic performance, including depression (31% UG / 56% G), anxiety (35% UG / 46% G), and stress (51% UG / 47% G).



We aim to take a whole student approach when addressing student mental health, identifying ways in which we can cultivate student flourishing, rather than solely focusing on the absence of depression, anxiety, or stress. Flourishing can be defined as “a state in which all aspects of a person’s life are good” and includes features such as happiness and life satisfaction, mental and physical health, meaning and purpose, character and virtue, and close social relationships (Vanderweele, 2017).

We will utilize the evidence-based practice of social-emotional learning as a foundation to create supportive programming for students. Building on that, our initiatives to cultivate flourishing will also teach students how to achieve psychological flexibility, incorporating mindfulness, acceptance, equanimity, gratitude, and valued engagement.

PILLAR #2: CULTIVATE STUDENT FLOURISHING



PILLAR #2

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Created **Calming U**, a 4-week class teaching the skills of mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and self-compassion. **Twenty-eight sessions** were held throughout the year with **162 attendees** and **57 completing all four workshops**.



Calming U Participant Outcomes:



- **95%** better understand mindfulness
- **97%** motivated to practice meditation
- **98%** intend to continue their meditation practice
- **72%** better able to manage life demands

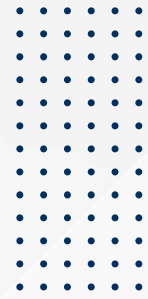
Continued the **Mindful Professor Training Program** with **15 graduates from 5 UR schools** this spring. This program equips faculty with tools to be present, utilize mindful leadership skills, enhance teaching effectiveness, and learn how to best support students' well-being.



OVER
400
Students Attended

Held the **2nd annual Flourish Festival**, a full day event centered on providing students with a variety of wellness and mindfulness activities to engage in.

According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, health equity occurs when “everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.” Creating conditions that improve health and addressing the social determinants of health are fundamental to health equity.



To successfully advocate for health equity, we must first identify important health disparities within our student population. Starting with a robust data set and then disaggregating the data will allow us to better understand the needs of students with marginalized identities. Then we will be able to explore ways to change and implement policies, programs, services, and practices to reduce inequities in the opportunities and resources needed to achieve optimal well-being (Braveman et al., 2017).

We recognize that future initiatives must be designed and delivered to encourage uptake and overcome barriers to access, eliminating unfair and institutional social conditions that give rise to these inequities. We also recognize that equity is not the same as equality. To achieve equity, those students with worse health and fewer resources need more efforts expended to improve their health (Braveman et al., 2017). And finally, we recognize that in this work we need to be mindful of our own privileges and biases and commit to doing our part to create an ethic of care at UHS through continual learning and growth.

PILLAR #3: ADVOCATE FOR HEALTH EQUITY



PILLAR #3

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

First-Generation Well-being Ambassadors

5

UHS staff became well-being ambassadors.

273

Students reached out to by our ambassadors

Began a **two-year cultural study** to better understand how cultural filters shape the way our students pursue health and well-being. Conducted a **literature search**, launched a parent **survey**, started the creation of an **orientation program**, and planned for fall **focus groups**.

Hosted mindfulness offerings such as OUTbreath for LGBTQ+ folks and a Meditative Guide for Us for the UR Black community.



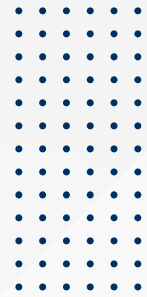
Thirty students attended the annual **LGBTQ+ Resource Fair**.



Kicked off new programs which focus on students basic needs:

- SNAP Benefits Webinar (**16 participants**)
- Wellness on Wheels (**engaged 914 students**)
- Wellness on Demand Vending (**16,812 items dispensed**)

Health education and disease prevention programming has been the primary focus of the Health Promotion Office for decades, and it will continue to be an integral part of our work moving forward. We aim to develop and create opportunities to build competence and personal capacity so students can reach their full potential.



Data from our bi-annual Consumer Attitudes Survey helps to focus our programming on areas that are most salient to our students. Topics such as sleep, managing stress, intuitive eating, self-care, and sexual health were among the top areas of interest identified in the fall 2021 survey. Students also indicated pet therapy, fitness classes, study breaks, sexual health screenings, and wellness fairs as programs they would find most beneficial and supportive.

Through our health education initiatives, we increase knowledge, build skills, and influence students' motivation to adopt healthy habits, as evidenced on our program evaluation surveys. Through our prevention programming, we offer opportunities for students to engage in practices which reduce their health risks. The foundation of our work is centered around a community development approach, recognizing the robust strengths and competencies of our students. We must look to our students to identify and define their struggles and understand that we as professionals are resources rather than problem solvers, as each student is ultimately responsible for their own health and well-being.

PILLAR #4: SUPPORT PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



PILLAR #4

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Sexual Health Services & Programming:

255 attendees at the Sex and Chocolate Carnival, with an **overall satisfaction rating of 9.2/10**



300 students attended the Sex in the Dark orientation program.

Peer Health Advocate Team Accomplishments

Held **4 Destress Fests** with over **326 students** participating

100+ Hours of Outreach

13 Tabling Events Engaged with **388 students**

Launched the Graduate Student Well-being Needs Assessment and **received 390 survey responses.**



Nine programs for Graduate Students were held with a total of **116 participants.**

Continued to expand programming for Eastman students. Participation highlights include:






117
Pet Therapy

207
Orientation

65
Wellness Fair



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