

Cougars Wellbeing Newsletter

March 2026 | Issue 67

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**FEBRUARY
RAFFLE WINNER:**

Home Pilates Kit
Barb Utrup

Congratulations!

MARCH



As March brings in the first signs of spring, we're reminded that growth is a natural and meaningful part of life. This season offers each of us an opportunity to evolve in our own wellbeing journey. Spring invites us to step into the light, breathe deeper, and reawaken healthy habits that may have felt dormant over winter. Whether it's taking a walk, choosing healthy foods that fuel your energy, prioritizing restful sleep, or simply making time for mindfulness, small intentional changes can lead to meaningful transformation. Let this season remind you that growth doesn't have to be dramatic to be impactful—every positive choice is a seed planted toward a healthier you.

Your feedback is important to us so continue to communicate with us through wellbeing@csc.edu about your wellbeing interests. There are more exciting wellbeing activities on the horizon.

Remember, HR SUPPORTS YOUR SUCCESS.

Dr. Nic



**Biometric Screening on
Columbus campus open to
all employees.**

**March 24, 2026 | 8am – 3pm
MH-AEP Boardroom**



[Wellbeing | Columbus State Community College](#) (for more information)

National Nutrition and Colon Cancer Awareness Month

“Discover the Power of Nutrition” [National Nutrition Month®](#)

[Nutrition tips for healthy eating | UnitedHealthcare](#)

[Everyday nutrition | UnitedHealthcare](#)

[Mindful eating | UnitedHealthcare](#)

[Colon cancer symptoms and treatment | UnitedHealthcare](#)

Visit the CSCC Wellbeing webpage for more resources and to stay connected:

[Wellbeing | Columbus State Community College](#)



*****Wellbeing 360 Rewards Program Eligible*****

(One registration covers the entire series, no need to re-register if you've registered previously.)

- TUE MAR 3** **Exercise Series | Neck and Upper Back Pain: Breaking the Desk Job Cycle**
11am EST | REGISTER NOW!
 Prolonged sitting, screen time, and poor ergonomics often lead to chronic neck and shoulder pain. This session focuses on posture, workstation setup, and targeted mobility and strengthening exercises to reduce pain and tension in the upper body.
- THR MAR 5** **Kitchen Series | Discover the Power of Nutrition**
11am EST | REGISTER NOW!
 Celebrate National Nutrition Month by exploring how small changes can make a big impact. Learn practical ways to boost your health through nutrient-rich foods and mindful eating. Chef Mike will prepare Buffalo Chickpea Salad Wraps.
- WED MAR 18** **Nutrition Series | Cancer Prevention Through Diet: Evidence-Based Eating Patterns**
12pm EST | REGISTER NOW!
 Explore the latest research on how dietary patterns may help reduce cancer risk. We'll discuss the evidence and learn practical ways to incorporate cancer-fighting foods into your daily routine.
- THR MAR 19** **Self-Care Series | Making Space for Yourself**
12pm EST | REGISTER NOW!
 Learn how to protect your time, energy, and attention so self-care can feel possible even when life is full. You'll explore practical ways to navigate real-life pressures like time scarcity and caregiver stress and identify approaches that can help you keep yourself on the priority list with more ease and less guilt.

For cancer-related questions: (855) 366-7700
For questions about these events: hello@mycancerbridge.com

Financial Wellbeing Seminars (*Rewards eligible)



- TUE MAR 31** **Retirement Planning for Women**
 Voya Financial Services,
 Barnett McGowan, JD
12:00 pm | Link to join: [Join the meeting now](#)

Employees and spouses/domestic partners on UHC health coverage:



Participation in the Wellbeing 360 Engagement Program is necessary to maintain paying 20% of healthcare premium.
(2 activities to complete by JUNE 30, 2026)
(The Engagement Program does not apply to employees who are members of CSEA or Teamsters.)
Details: [Wellbeing 360 | Columbus State Community College](#)



Meditation Moment

Take a mindful pause in your week! Certified meditation teacher Professor Mark Earley invites CSCC Community to join a welcoming, low-pressure space to explore the fundamentals of mindfulness and meditation together. No experience necessary. Learn what meditation is (and what it isn't) while discovering a simple practice you can use anytime, anywhere. This is a great opportunity to pause, de-stress, and focus on your own wellbeing.

When & Where: In-Person/Virtual

Mondays, 8am-8:30am

307 Davidson Hall or via Zoom at:

<https://cscceu.zoom.us/j/98130092797?pwd=wAwlxvp8QWWWhiWZrPkBOVwGKtdYQr2.1>

Meeting ID: 981 3009 2797

Passcode: 441176

Thursdays, 12:30pm-1:00pm

314 Davidson Hall or via Zoom at:

<https://cscceu.zoom.us/j/98821403619?pwd=45B2sbh8tMTMZW7rgG0vTQjVDUCkOO.1>

Meeting ID: 988 2140 3619

Passcode: 844298

Get Involved with AccelWELL!

THU
MAR
26

Virtual 1-on-1 Health Coaching

10:00am – 3:00pm

Wellbeing 360 Rewards Program Eligible



AccelWELL

Inspire Purpose • Drive Performance

HOW TO SIGN UP:

From your AccelWELL 3.0 [portal](#) or WellSteps app, select the **menu** in the upper right-hand corner. From there, select the **calendar tool** to be redirected to a calendar view of the month's events. Find the correct day and event and click the blue **R**. Select your reminder preference, enter your preferred phone number in which to be reached for your telephonic session, and select a timeslot that best works for you. Lastly, click **Register**.

After signing up for a time, your Coach will call you at the number you provided when registering.



March 2nd – April 5th

Join us in the Habit Builder: Goal Setting Campaign! You'll learn how to create realistic, meaningful goals to work towards throughout the length of this campaign.

Here's what you can expect:

Weekly Focus: Each week, you will receive tips to help you clarify your goals, break them into manageable steps, and stay on track.

Daily Task: Simple, achievable tasks will guide you through incorporating goal-setting practices into your day, helping you to stay focused and intentional.

To complete the Campaign:

Starting Monday, March 2nd, visit the **Campaign** page on your [portal](#) each week throughout the campaign and complete the weekly tasks.

New tasks are available each Monday, so we recommend setting a calendar reminder to keep yourself accountable!

Complete all tasks within the campaign by 4/5 to earn entry into a raffle to win a [Power Bowl Cookbook & bowl set!](#)

If you are unable to participate in this campaign due to health restrictions, you may be entitled to a reasonable accommodation or an alternative standard. You may request a reasonable accommodation by contacting coach@accelwell.com.

Your Feedback Matters – Take our Satisfaction Survey!

Your feedback is very important to the AccelWELL Team and the success of your program. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to complete this year's satisfaction survey.

Thank you for your continual support!

If you have program questions or need assistance creating your account, please email coach@accelwell.com for support.



WORKOUT OF THE MONTH

MINDFULNESS WORKOUT

Move your body to support your mind

How It Works

- Move through all 6 exercises
- Rest 30 seconds between moves
- Work for 30–60 seconds each
- Repeat the circuit 1–2 rounds

1 Arm Circles with Breath



Slowly circle arms forward and backward while breathing deeply.

Mental health benefit: Releases upper-body tension and promotes calm.

Modification: Make circles smaller or perform seated.

2 Heel Raises



Lift heels off the floor, then slowly lower back down.

Mental health benefit: Improves circulation and grounding.

Modification: Hold onto a chair or wall for support.

3 Standing Side Raises



Reach arms overhead and gently lean to the side, alternating.

Mental health benefit: Creates space in the body and encourages openness.

Modification: Keep reach low or perform seated.

4 Seated Torso Rotations



Sit tall and gently rotate the torso side to side.

Mental health benefit: Encourages spinal mobility and mindful movement.

Modification: Keep rotations small and slow.

5 Forward Fold to Stand

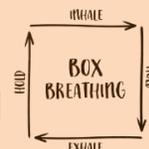


Gently hinge forward from your hips, then slowly return to standing, coming up one vertebrae at a time.

Mental health benefit: Helps release mental and physical tension.

Modification: Fold only halfway or keep hands on thighs or shins.

6 Box Breathing



Inhale 4 sec → hold 4 sec → exhale 4 sec → hold 4 sec.

Mental health benefit: Regulates stress and improves emotional control.

Modification: Shorten counts or breathe naturally.



SILENCING YOUR INNER CRITIC

WHAT IS THE INNER CRITIC?

Your **inner critic** is the voice inside your head that judges, doubts, and scrutinizes your thoughts, actions, and abilities. While everyone has one, its volume and influence can vary greatly.

It may sound like:

“I’m not smart enough for this.”

“I always mess things up.”

“Why even try if I’ll fail?”

Over time, these thoughts can impact confidence, motivation, and overall well-being.

REFLECTION VS. CRITICISM

Self-reflection helps us learn and grow.

Self-criticism is harsh, personal, and rarely helpful.

A good rule of thumb:

- If you wouldn’t say it to someone you care about, it’s likely criticism — not reflection.

Why It Matters

The way we talk to ourselves shapes how we feel, act, and respond to challenges.

When we practice more supportive self-talk, we build resilience and confidence over time.

Bottom Line:

You can’t always stop critical thoughts — but you can change how you respond to them.

Become Aware of Your Thoughts

When a critical thought shows up, pause.
Ask yourself: *Is this fact or assumption?*
Would I say this to a friend?

Awareness creates choice.

Switch Your Self-Talk

Replace harsh, absolute thoughts with balanced ones.

Instead of: *"I always mess this up."*

Try: *"I'm learning, and I'm making progress."*

Language shapes belief.

Practice Self-Compassion

Everyone makes mistakes — it's part of being human.

Try speaking to yourself with the same kindness you offer others.

Grace helps growth.

6 TIPS TO SILENCE YOUR INNER CRITIC

Use Positive and Realistic Language

Affirmations work best when you believe them.

Choose statements that are specific, honest, and supportive.

Believable words build trust.

Stay Present With Mindfulness

Negative thoughts often pull us into the past or future.

Pause, breathe, and refocus on what's happening right now.

Presence quiets the noise.

Reframe Mistakes as Growth

Mistakes don't mean failure — they offer information.

Ask: What can I learn from this? What will I do differently next time?

Growth comes from reflection, not perfection.

ACTIVITY OF THE MONTH



ATTACK YOUR INNER CRITIC



Follow along with the prompts in the boxes below to take action on each step in the process of eliminating your inner critic.

Become aware of your thoughts

Write one thought from today that was from your inner critic. Challenge it using the tactics discussed in the education.

Practice self-compassion

Acknowledge one time in the last week in which you could have treated yourself kinder. What would you have done differently?

Use positive but realistic self-talk

Recognize one phrase you use often to attack yourself. Reframe it to be positive and realistic.

Tell yourself positive affirmations

Fill the space below with three affirmations to tell yourself each morning.

Stay present through mindfulness

Write your favorite grounding technique and one time you can use it throughout your day.

Reframe failure as growth

What is one "failure" that happened this week? Write out something you learned from this instead of focusing on the negative.



ITALIAN SAUSAGE AND WHITE BEAN SOUP

Ingredients (Serves 6)

- 1 lb Italian sausage
- 1 small sweet onion
- 3 carrots, peeled and diced
- 3 celery stalks, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp poultry seasoning
- 1 tsp Italian seasoning
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- ½ tsp black pepper
- Pinch red pepper flakes
- 3 Tbsp flour
- 4 gold potatoes
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 2 cans white beans, rinsed and dried
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 bunch Tuscan kale, ribs removed and thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- Optional: parmesan cheese, fresh herbs, fresh bread for serving

Instructions

1. Heat a large soup pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat and add the Italian sausage, breaking it up with a spoon or spatula as it cooks. Once the sausage is browned and fully cooked through, remove it to a paper towel-lined plate, leaving behind 1-2 tablespoons of grease.
2. Add the onion, carrot, and celery, sauteing for 4-6 minutes, until softened. Add the garlic, poultry and Italian seasonings, salt and pepper, and pinch of red pepper flakes, stirring so the veggies get coated in seasonings, about 60 seconds. Toss in the flour, stirring to coat the veggies. Add the potatoes and chicken broth, bring to a boil, and then reduce to a simmer for 20 minutes until the broth is thickened and the potatoes are fork-tender.
3. Stir in the white beans, Tuscan kale, cream, and sausage. Let the kale wilt down and then finish the soup with 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar and a few pinches of black pepper and/or salt, to taste.
4. Serve hot with optional parmesan cheese, fresh herbs, and a slice of bread!



[Soup Recipe](#)



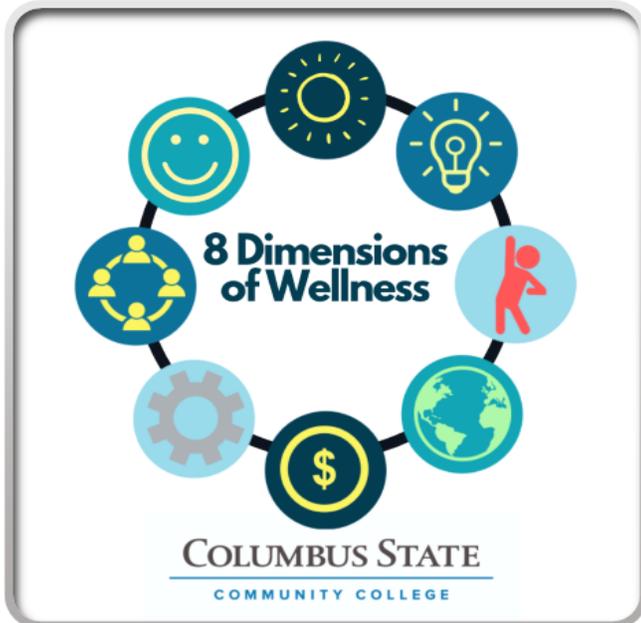
RED WINE VINEGAR



- **Blood sugar management:** red wine vinegar appears to **lower the glycemic index** of foods when used as an ingredient, **reducing blood sugar spikes**. It may also **improve insulin sensitivity**.
- **Heart health:** it contains **resveratrol** and **acetic acid** that has **positive effects on blood pressure and inflammation**. These molecules may also help **lower cholesterol and blood triglycerides**.

Your Wellbeing Advisory Committee:

Nichole Bowman-Glover, PhD, Wellbeing Benefits Analyst



Tommy Tucker, Mitchell Hall

Vena Hill, Human Resources

Jason Love, Human Resources

Yvette Johnson Veterinary, Imaging & Surgical
Technology Department

Terrence Lawrence, Inclusive Advising Innovation

Shawntera Hollinshead, Police Communications &
Admin

Join us on Microsoft Teams: **“Cougars Living Well”** **Join Us Today!**

Cougars Living Well is a place for you to engage in conversations about health and wellness, share resources and words of encouragement, and receive updates about all the wellbeing services and resources available to you. To join this public Team, **log into Teams, click “join or create a team,” search for *Cougars Living Well* and click “Join Team.”** If you have questions or need assistance joining *Cougars Living Well*, please reach out to Nichole Bowman-Glover/Vena Hill.

We’d love to connect with you on [LinkedIn](#) & [Instagram](#)!



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