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## **Well City Milwaukee Expands Efforts to Reach Small Businesses**

### ***MMAC to Host Well City Orientation on March 19***

(Milwaukee, WI)— The Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC), in association with the Wellness Council of Wisconsin, is hosting an orientation to introduce small businesses to the Well City Milwaukee initiative and expand participation in the program throughout the small business community.

The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 19, from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. at the MMAC offices, 756 N. Milwaukee St., Suite 400, Milwaukee. The event is free and open to small businesses with less than 50 employees. Businesses can register at [www.mmac.org/calendar](http://www.mmac.org/calendar).

The orientation is designed to help small businesses learn more about the Well City Milwaukee initiative, understand its many benefits to employee health and an organization's bottom line, and get started on the road to workplace wellness by participating in the program.

Mary Steinbrecher, director of MMAC's Council of Small Business Executives (COSBE), said, "Small businesses are critical to the overall success of our region. Nearly 97% of the 39,000 businesses in the Milwaukee metro area have less than 100 employees. For Well City Milwaukee to be successful, we must reach out to small businesses so they can take advantage of the tremendous benefits of workplace wellness to their individual businesses and to the region."

Past efforts to engage small businesses in workplace wellness have been hampered by CEO concerns about the costs associated with designing and implementing wellness programs in companies too small to support dedicated HR resources. However, because of its affiliation with the Wellness Councils of America (WELCOA), the Well City initiative has a framework for small business that is results-oriented, easy to implement and affordable. It provides the blueprint, guidance and recognition small businesses need to advance health promotion in the workplace.

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The orientation meeting follows on the heels of the MMAC recently being awarded WELCOA's coveted Well Workplace Award in the small business category. The MMAC is the first small business in the state of Wisconsin to receive this national honor.

Janet McMahon, executive director of Well City Milwaukee, said, "The MMAC has set the bar for small businesses by being the first in Wisconsin to achieve the Small Business Well Workplace Award. They have a great story to tell. Their insights and creative approaches to employee wellness have produced the positive outcomes small business owners are looking for. I'm confident their story will convince other small businesses to join Well City Milwaukee's efforts to make Milwaukee one of only a handful of cities to achieve Well City status."

For more information on the Well City Milwaukee initiative, visit [www.wellcitymilwaukee.org](http://www.wellcitymilwaukee.org).

*The Well City Milwaukee initiative was launched in January 2007 through a partnership between the City of Milwaukee, the Greater Milwaukee Committee and the MMAC. Initial efforts were strengthened by support from the YMCA, the Wellness Council of Wisconsin, the healthcare community and several corporate sponsors. To be considered for Well City status, 20 percent of a community's working population must be employed by Well Workplace Award-winning companies. The goal of Milwaukee's city-wide initiative is for enough employers to become WELCOA-designated Well Workplaces by 2010 to earn the Well City Milwaukee designation.*

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