

A Higher Purpose for Higher Education

Nearly seven thousand strong, the University of Delaware's faculty and staff come from a diversity of backgrounds and experiences. From the perspective of many of these employees, "wellness" would show up in the form of a one-off walking challenge or month-long spotlight on nutrition, then go dormant for months. UDEL's Employee Health and Wellbeing team was determined to change that perception.

In 2015, EHW took a big jump and re-tooled the framework and moved from wellness to well-being with a huge emphasis on individual and organization purpose. A central organizing tenet of its revitalized program was the creation of six pillars to help guide the effort: community, connection, emotional, financial, physical...and purpose.

Enter Kumanu.

UDEL was looking for a way to rally its employee population around a deeper experience of emotional and social wellbeing; to use purpose to integrate and infuse wellbeing throughout the fabric of the organization. After meeting Kumanu CEO Vic Strecher at a conference, Beth Finkle, UDEL's Director of Employee Health and Wellbeing, became convinced she'd found a partner who could help turn that vision into a lived experience for her thousands of internal "customers."

A Large Public University

Key Challenges:

An aging approach to employee wellness with low adoption and poor emotional wellbeing and engagement

Solution:

A new, integrated wellbeing strategy with purpose as a central tenant and custom content to align with other HR initiatives.

42% Net Promoter Score

54% Improvement in resilience anxiety reduction (book of business)

60% Engagement in life for those at risk of burnout (book of business)

1 A strong partnership evolved, with plans for a celebratory Day of Purpose kick-off event to be held on...

March 27, 2020.

Then, quite suddenly, the whole world moved online. Like so many staggering in the wake of COVID-19's arrival, universities were hit hard. A study conducted by Kumanu and The Harris Poll in September 2020 revealed the staggering effects of the pandemic on U.S.-based employees:

- 34% screened positive for depression
- 65% showed signs of anxiety disorder
- 57% were not fully engaged in their work

UDEL was no exception. In the face of mounting challenges like these, the UDEL / Kumanu collaboration quickly pivoted online, too. Tight integration with UDEL's L&D, DEI, and Talent groups helped the UDEL team introduce Kumanu's integrated, multi-modal Purposeful Experience to the organization. Frequent planning sessions, fostered by Kumanu's ongoing consultative process, developed tactics and tools to maximize impact including:

- A virtual onboarding workshop for the UDEL Health and Wellbeing team
- Creation and delivery of monthly themed purpose toolkits for

wellbeing ambassadors

- Timely Pulse surveys sent via Kumanu's Insightful analytics and reporting platform
- Monthly PurposeCasts hosted by Kumanu CEO Vic Strecher
- Kumanu-crafted, feature content for inclusion in UDEL's internal wellness newsletters

By partnering with UDEL in ongoing custom content creation for their wellbeing site and other HR initiatives, they have seen an increase in sustained engagement especially with the multi-modal features like Kumanu's PurposeCast and Purposeful tip of the day. These types of features have led to a positive 42 net promoter score that has pleased stakeholders as it significantly exceeds the wellbeing program average of -51.

UDEL's early embrace of purpose and subsequent partnership with Kumanu forged a unique opportunity to counter the effects of the pandemic. With an eye towards a return to in-person learning in the coming months, the UDEL / Kumanu relationship continues to flourish in an atmosphere of mutual trust and collaboration.

2 Positive Proof

54% of those at risk for increased stress improved their resilience—a key factor in combating stress. And nearly one-third of those moved from the high to low risk category. *Kumanu Book-of-Business Outcomes Study, 2020*

3 What's Missing in your Wellbeing Lineup?

Traditional views of “wellness” have tended to focus mostly on physical health with only a secondary nod towards mental health needs. Now, a mounting body of science- and data-driven insights has revealed the powerful influence of purposeful living on emotional, social, and physical wellbeing. Living into one’s purpose, in life and at work, helps generate a range of positive responses including increased resilience, a stronger sense of commitment, improved focus and self-control, and a lowering of defensiveness to change. Other associated impacts, including

reductions in stress, anxiety, and sleep disorders, cross over into the physical realm and are associated with additional benefits including, remarkably, an ability to produce more antibodies; something we could all use these days!

Finally, and just as striking, recent findings show that people having a strong sense of purpose combined with a positive experience of workplace “dignity” (multi-faceted indicators of respect) are 34% less likely to report symptoms of depression than those who do not.

4 About Kumanu

Kumanu is a new kind of wellbeing technology company. We help customers address employees’ essential needs, cultivate a stronger sense of purpose and more profound connection each day. Organizations looking to deliver on what’s missing in their wellbeing strategy rely on our customizable platform and consultative process to deliver a better experience, engagement, and results.

To learn more about building a purpose-driven culture and improving employee wellbeing, contact:
getpurposeful@kumanu.com