

# Challenge: 250,000 miles of exercise by March

Kate DuHadway, Lansing 6:57 p.m. EST January 24, 2015



(Photo: Robert Killips | Lansing State Journal)

LANSING – For this year's Winter Warm Up and Blues Community Challenge, organizers have set an ambitious goal for the greater Lansing region: Record 250,000 miles of exercise by March 22.

The Blues Community Challenge is an eight-week event aimed at helping Michigan residents be active, said B.J. Puchala, senior community liaison for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, which sponsors the challenge.

"We have a commitment to helping Michigan's resident and our members elevate their personal health," Puchala said. "We know a big part of that is through things like exercise, healthy lifestyle choices."

Last year, the Blues Community Challenge pitted mid-Michigan communities against one another to see which community could record the most number of miles, Puchala said. This year, the challenge is a little different. Participants are encouraged to meet their own fitness goals and work together toward the larger goal of 250,000 miles recorded for the whole region.

Puchala said any physical activity, as long as it "reflects a deliberate decision to exercise," can be recorded for the challenge and converted into miles.

To help get mid-Michigan residents moving, there are free or low cost activities offered nearly every day in many of the communities in the tri-county area as part of the Winter Warm Up, an eight-week program organized by the Community Partners in Health.

Charlene Crosby, one of the "healthy champions" for this year's Winter Warm Up, said adopting an active lifestyle doesn't have to be overwhelming. During the winter months, she gets her daily walks in by doing laps around the Lansing mall.

"Start small, start simple, look up community exercise programs in your area," Crosby said. "Every day, make a measurable step."

To sign up for the Winter Warm Up and Blues Community Challenge, and for a free calendar of community events, visit [www.cphlansing.com](http://www.cphlansing.com) (<http://www.cphlansing.com/>).

For daily reminders and ideas for living an active lifestyle in the greater Lansing community, follow LSJ reporter Kate DuHadway on Twitter: [@k8rouse](https://twitter.com/k8rouse) (<https://twitter.com/k8rouse>) or Instagram: [@movelansing](http://instagram.com/k8duhadway) (<http://instagram.com/k8duhadway>).

## Health rally

The Winter Warm Up and Blues Community Challenge kicked off Saturday as part of the Capital Area Health Alliance's Choosing Health rally at the Lansing Mall.

Participants sampled nutritious food from local restaurants, got a free fitness check and connected with local organizations about free and low cost ways to improve their health.

At least 400 people representing a wide variety of ages and walks of life came to this event, making it their most well-attended rally yet, said Kathy Hollister, outreach director for the Capital Area Health Alliance.

The semiannual Choosing Health rallies are funded by grants through Michigan's 4 x 4 plan, Hollister said, and aim to encourage physical activity, healthy eating habits, mental health and prevent substance abuse.

The next Choosing Health rally will be May 2 at the Fenner Nature Center. For more information, visit [www.choosinghealth-caha.org](http://www.choosinghealth-caha.org) (<http://www.choosinghealth-caha.org/>).

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