

'I want to be healthy for...'

Boeing employees share their stories about why staying healthy matters

By Susan Birkholtz

People want to be healthy, to feel their best and enjoy the people and things that life has to offer. But sometimes getting there can require assistance. Boeing provides a number of Well Being programs, tools and resources to help employees and their families get healthy, stay healthy and manage chronic health conditions. One such tool is the online Health Assessment, which allows eligible employees and their spouses or same-gender domestic partners to identify health risks they may have. Accessible via www.boeingwellness.com, the Health Assessment is available through Nov. 30, 2010.

As part of the Health Assessment "What's your reason" campaign, Boeing employees were invited to share their reasons for wanting to take the Health Assessment and be healthy. Here are three of the stories they shared.

SECOND CHANCE

Verner McPherson
Quality Assurance inspector, Charleston, S.C.
"Having a healthy lifestyle is important to my family and me, especially after fighting and surviving lung cancer. Now that I have beaten

the disease and am in recovery, it's very important that I keep myself healthy and in good shape. I want to be healthy for my husband, who has been there for me throughout my illness, and for my 10-year-old daughter. I want to see her graduate from college and, hopefully, still be around to see my grandchildren. I want to take them to the park and have the energy to chase them around."

MODEL BEHAVIOR

Tammie Orzel
Industrial Security specialist, St. Louis

"I decided it was time to get into better shape the day my doctor told me that I was 'severely de-conditioned.' I went to see him because I was feeling short of breath when I walked from my car into work each day. I started adopting a healthier lifestyle on Jan. 1, exercising and eating right. The key for me was setting goals and working toward them. One of the first things I did was find a picture in a magazine of a woman in a swimsuit—I wanted to be fit enough to wear a swimsuit like her. Six months later,

I was in that swimsuit. The hard work is paying off, and I feel so much better. I've always wanted to be a model, so late last fall, I submitted some photos to a modeling agency—and was accepted. I have done runway modeling in six fashion shows, and at 50, I have been the oldest model there. This is all incentive for me to keep doing what I am doing, not only for the health benefits but also for the confidence it has given me to go out and achieve my goals."

SCARED STRAIGHT

Jerry Van Ness
Quality Assurance specialist, Wichita, Kan.

"My reason for wanting to get and stay healthy stems from fear—fear of not seeing my children grow up and start families; fear of not being with my wife for many more years; and fear that I may not be healthy enough to take care of myself when I'm finally able to retire. In the past six years, I've had to deal with stage 2 melanoma skin cancer and, most recently, diabetes. I had been borderline diabetic for some time, so I didn't worry. That

changed with my last doctor's visit—my blood sugar levels were so elevated that my doctor said I needed to be concerned about the possible ramifications—hearing loss, vision loss and limb loss. That woke me up. Diet? What should I eat? Exercise? Absolutely. Now I'm using my treadmill and it's losing its dusty appearance. I may even join a gym. I've come a long way." ■

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For more information about Well Being programs, tools and resources, visit the Boeing intranet at <http://wellbeing.boeing.com> or Boeing's wellness website at www.boeingwellness.com

PHOTOS: From left, Verner McPherson, Tammie Orzel and Jerry Van Ness all have good reasons for wanting to get and stay healthy. Eligible participants who take the online Health Assessment by Nov. 30 will receive a \$50 gift card simply by completing it.

VERNER MCPHERSON PHOTO: BOB FERGUSON/BOEING; TAMMIE ORZEL PHOTO: PETER GEORGE/BOEING; JERRY VAN NESS PHOTO: TED WHITESIDE/BOEING

