



---

**TO:** UMass Chan Medical School community

**FROM:** John Lindstedt, Executive Vice Chancellor, Administration and Finance

**DATE:** January 5, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Recognition for the UMass Chan Office of Well-Being

---

I am pleased to share that UMass Chan Medical School—recently named one of [Forbes'](#) and [The Boston Globe's top employers](#) of Massachusetts—has been recognized as a [2022 WorkWell Massachusetts Awards](#) program winner in the “large group” category for exemplary worksite health promotion through its [Office of Well-Being](#) (OWB).

The awards, powered by Healthiest Employers, recognize UMass Chan’s achievements in providing best-in-class wellness programs and supporting employees through a culture of well-being. UMass Chan received its honorable mention WorkWell Massachusetts award at a Dec. 13 event.

OWB’s [Wellness](#) and [Employee Assistance](#) programs help promote a culture of wellness for members of the UMass Chan community through many offerings, including free lifestyle coaching, workshops, confidential and free mental health counseling, and virtual and onsite fitness programs.

“On behalf of UMass Chan and the Office of Well-Being, I am proud to accept this award, which symbolizes that we are on the right track in how we’re positively, proactively, and creatively impacting our employees’ lives,” said OWB Director [Valerie Wedge](#), LICSW, CEAP. “This recognition reinforces that, after only one-and-a-half years of programming, our leadership’s commitment to the health and wellness of the UMass Chan community—faculty, staff, and students—speaks volumes about what UMass Chan is all about.”

Launched in 2021 as part of UMass Chan’s Human Resources **People Strategy** and **IMPACT 2025** overall strategic plan, OWB ensures that employees have access to health and wellness resources and opportunities to move toward their optimal health.

“It was a timely innovation during the COVID-19 pandemic to develop OWB within the six dimensions of wellness (emotional, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and spiritual),” said Wedge. “Wellness is well established with research that demonstrates it improves the engagement and performance of employees. We’ve been told that our program is one reason new hires choose to sign on to work for UMass Chan; they want to engage in our programs, platforms, and overall educational and coaching offerings.”

Meanwhile, EAP has a strong reputation for confidentiality, mental health referrals, problem resolution, and emotional wellbeing.

“EAP is the foundation and essential component of the Office of Well-Being,” said Wedge.

WorkWell Massachusetts Awards is a corporate award program created by Worksite Wellness Council of Massachusetts (WWCMA), a non-profit member organization dedicated to the advancement of worksite wellness programs. WWCMA has partnered with Healthiest Employers, a trusted national awards program that recognizes people-first organizations taking a proactive approach to employee health.

The judging is based on each organization's Healthiest Employers Index—a metric focused on six categories: culture and leadership commitment, foundational components, strategic planning, communications and marketing, programming and interventions, and reporting and analytics. The questionnaire, scoring, and benchmarking were formed with the help of a national group of representatives from the academic, medical, and wellness communities. The assessment is scored rubric style on a 1-100 scale, with each question totaling .25 - 3 points.

“Given all of the unique challenges that organizations have been facing over the last few years, our goal is to recognize those companies that are finding ways to approach well-being in a more holistic way, and meet the needs of employees and their families,” said Jenna Carter, WWCMA Board Director and Awards & Recognition Committee Co-Chair.

UMass Chan was named last month to *The Boston Globe's* 2022 list of Top Places to Work in Massachusetts. It is the only institution of higher education in the commonwealth to be included on the 2022 list, which includes just 150 organizations of all sizes and industries. In August, the university was named one of the top 50 on the [Forbes' list of America's Best Employers by State 2022](#).

“With the tremendous pressure to be an employer of choice, there's an emphasis to build well-being into the fabric of their workplace. These organizations foster an environment where employees can thrive in and are empowered through various tools, resources, and communication to be their best selves,” said Archana Kansagra, WWCMA Board Director; Awards & Recognition Committee Co-Chair, and founder of the WorkWell Massachusetts Awards program.

“We are proud to recognize these innovative employers for their outstanding wellness programs focusing on the health and well-being of their employees, especially with the challenges of a new hybrid work environment,” said Kristie Howard, WWCMA Board Chair.

**RELATED:**

[Podcast: Programs, services support health and wellness for UMass Chan community](#)