

ENGAGE NEWSLETTER

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EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



RAJESWARI SIVASUBRAMANIAN

Rajeswari (Raji) has been with Iowa State since 2011. She has held a variety of positions including Database Administrator, WorkDay Security Admin, and Tech Lead for Workday Student implementation.

Raji is currently Workday Security Analyst- Team Supervisor on the Information Technology Services (ITS) Workday Operations team.

Raji is an active participant in Adventure2, and has also utilized other ISU WellBeing programming including Mid-Morning Mindfulness, Friday Walk and Talks, and workshops.

"I strongly believe health is wealth," said Raji. "From the time it [Adventure2] was introduced, I loved participating in whatever I could. It has great flexibility and there is something for everyone."

One of Raji's favorite aspects of the Adventure2 program is the Well-being Assessment, which provides users with their baseline well-being results and areas for improvement. "It's like your annual check-up with your doctor," explained Raji.

She also noted her appreciation for the program's encouragement to visit your doctor annually for health screenings and complete routine tasks like benefits open enrollment.

Adventure2 has impacted Raji's well-being and work/home life by helping her stay on

These reminders to log in and track activities also help Raji increase her points. As points accumulate, users reach new levels and earn prizes.

"I love those points you get by entering your progress," said Raji. "It's a small pleasure, and the virtual tool is keeping you accountable."

Raji would recommend Adventure2 to any Iowa State employee because she believes there is something for everyone in the program.

"It [Adventure2] gives you new ideas and tips in all areas, including physical, mental, emotional, and financial wellbeing," said Raji.

"I see it as a virtual buddy that encourages and rewards you for taking care of your health and engages you in a friendly way. Based on everyone's comfort level, they can engage themselves individually or as a team."

Interested in joining Raji and other colleagues by getting involved in

track. The program sends regular emails that remind you to complete activities, which serve as a good reminder for Raji to update her step tracker, take some courses, or watch a health-related video.

Adventure2? [Check out our website](#) to learn more getting started with Adventure2 and other ISU WellBeing programming.

How to Utilize Adventure2 This Winter

It can be hard to focus on your personal well-being during the winter months. For some of us, it's the dreary weather that gets us down. You might feel overwhelmed by holiday plans and gift buying, or maybe you feel lonely during this time of year. The winter blues are common, but we don't want them to consume the next few months.



Mental, physical, financial, and workplace well-being are all areas that are easily neglected. Adventure2 offers activities that cater to each of these well-being areas, as well as incentives to stay on top of them! Keep reading to learn how these areas can suffer in the winter, and what Adventure2 activities we recommend to combat these issues.

Mental Well-being

Unfortunately, mental health seems to suffer in the winter. **Seasonal Affective Disorder** (SAD), is a type of mood disorder related to the change of seasons that affects an estimated 10 million Americans every year.

Seeking help from a licensed therapist should be your first line of defense, but Adventure2 activities can help you stay accountable outside of therapy.

Recommended Activities:

- Connect with an Optimist | 25 points, five times
- Mindfulness: A Beginner's Guide | 15 points (*launches December 11*)

Financial Well-being

The holiday season often results in extra spending on gifts, food, travel, and more. That being said, it might be a good idea to take some time to do a financial reset and consider places you could save extra cash.

Recommended Activities:

- Enrich Financial Wellness Checkup | 100 points
- Bring Your Lunch to Work | 10 weekly points (*launches December 11*)

Physical Well-being

When the weather gets cold, it can be hard to stay active! It's tempting to live a more sedentary lifestyle during the winter, but we encourage you to find ways to keep moving.

This is a great time to experiment with indoor workouts like weightlifting, yoga, or indoor walking. YouTube is a great resource for free exercise videos that you can do in your home.

Recommended Activities:

- Track 5,000 Daily Steps | 10 weekly points
- Exercise to Relieve Stress | 10 weekly points (*launches December 11*)

Workplace Well-being

There's no better time to reflect on your well-being at work than the start of a new year. As we close out 2023 and enter 2024, reflect on what went well this year and how you could improve your workplace well-being moving forward.

Recommended Activities:

- Overwhelmed at Work? Ask for Help | 25 points
- Manager: Block Your Calendar for Heads-Down Time | 60 points (*launches December 11*)

Holiday Self-Care for Caregivers

Ready for more peace and less stress this holiday season? Like exercising the muscles in our body, we can exercise our mind to be more adaptable and resilient. A clear mind is the foundation for creativity, confidence, connection, and joy.

RethinkCare, our partnering vendor for the Adventure2 [Parenting Success Solution portal](#), is offering programming related to self-care during the holidays throughout the month of December! This content is catered toward parents and caregivers.



Podcast

Behaviorally Speaking, RethinkCare's podcast, posted a new episode for the month of December called [Prioritizing Parental Self-Care and Work/Life Balance](#).

Hosts Angela Nelson, MS, BCBA, and Kristin Bandi, MA, BCBA, are Board Certified Behavior Analysts with expertise on human behavior and child development. Check out this month's episode to learn about where the concepts of self-care and work-life balance come from, their importance, and ways to integrate them into your busy life.

You can download it on Apple Podcasts, Google Play, Spotify, or wherever you find your podcasts.

Webinar

The Power of Mindfulness: How to Train the Mind for Calm, Focus, and Connection

December 21 at 11 a.m. | [Register now](#)

Mindfulness is the ability to be aware and present with clarity and ease. When we are aware and present, we can see ourselves, others, and our surroundings with curiosity and compassion. One of the most exciting discoveries in neuroscience is that we can train in specific ways to increase how we observe and interpret what is happening as it is happening with more skill and less stress. With practice, we can become present with an open, receptive mindset.

Join Laurie Cameron, National Geographic author and mindfulness teacher, to:

- Discover what mindfulness is, and how it can help us navigate difficulty, uncertainty, change, pressure, and challenging emotions
- Understand the neuroscience and benefits of mindfulness and meditation
- Learn mindfulness-based practices for working with challenging daily life situations, difficult emotions, and mind states



Parent Discussion Groups

December's parent discussion group topic is **Managing Family Dynamics Through the Holidays**. When you join a small group, you connect with parents who have children your age, take away best practice tips, and network on navigating parenting challenges. Sessions are led by RethinkCare's Board Certified Behavior Analysts in groups of no more than twelve parents.

Several dates and times are offered for preschoolers (2-5 years old), elementary school (5-12 years old), and teens (13-18 years old).

[Click here](#) to learn more and get enrolled in a discussion group.



Adventure2 Wall Push-Up Flash Challenge

Adventure2 features occasional flash challenges that run for two weeks in the program. These are typically fitness-based challenges with a numerical goal that you complete with a group of colleagues. Most recently, teams worked together to collectively track a total of **1,000 wall push-ups in two weeks**.

Congratulations to the five teams that accumulated the most wall push-ups in the recent flash challenge!

Top Five Teams

1. **Cool Cats:** 23,060 push-ups
2. **JPEC:** 12,545 push-ups
3. **VDL and Friends:** 6,490 push-ups
4. **Clover Crew:** 4,445 push-ups
5. **Swole in LAS:** 3,670 push-ups



85,195
TOTAL PUSH-UPS

41
TEAMS FORMED

28
TEAMS HIT GOAL

Upcoming Programming and Events

Mid-Morning Mindfulness Tuesdays and Thursdays | 10-10:15 a.m. (*Resumes Tuesday, December 5*)

Health and Well-being Symposium
February 2 | 9 a.m.-3 p.m. |
Memorial Union

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