

**Blue & You Fitness Challenge**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# News Release

## The 20<sup>th</sup> Year of the Blue & You Fitness Challenge Concludes with Impressive Results and Statewide Winners

**LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (June 23, 2023)** — Over the past three months, hundreds of teams across Arkansas have competed -- boosting their physical activity and working to improve their overall health. The 20<sup>th</sup> year of the Blue & You Fitness Challenge ended May 31 with winners from around the state, from Mountain Home to Hot Springs and communities in between.

Each year, Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, the Arkansas Department of Human Services and the Arkansas Department of Health host the Blue & You Fitness Challenge, a fun competition encouraging people to be more active and focused on their whole health.

This year, participants finished the three-month Challenge logging 1.2 million miles and completing just under 240,000 healthy behaviors such as meditating or drinking water.

"As the Challenge has evolved over the past 20 years, we've become more focused on improving wellness mentally and physically, and Arkansans are responding," said Kristen Lippencott, Challenge administrator and Arkansas Blue Cross manager of well-being and health solution strategies. "Participants dedicated themselves to not only being more active but finding time for meditation, getting a good night's rest and health education."

The Arkansas Department of Health won this year's Challenge among the founders.

A PROGRAM OF  
Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, the Arkansas Department of Health & the Arkansas  
Department of Human Services



“The Blue and You Fitness Challenge is always a great way to kick off the year by getting active as a community,” said Renee Mallory, ADH Interim Secretary of Health. “While the competition is fun, we are so glad to see so many involved participants this year, and we hope to see even more next year!”

Plans are already being made for the Challenge’s 21<sup>st</sup> year in 2024.

“We are so proud to take part in the Blue & You Fitness Challenge each year because it gives our staff a fun incentive to focus on staying active,” said Human Services Secretary Kristi Putnam. “Of course, we are disappointed not to finish in first place among the three founding organizations, but we are thrilled that hundreds of DHS employees logged more than 41 million combined steps – quite an impressive total! We’re already thinking about ways we can top that total next year.”

The Blue & You Fitness Challenge will continue its focus on both physical wellness and maintaining good mental well-being.

“Physical and mental well-being go hand-in-hand,” said Arkansas Blue Cross President and CEO Curtis Barnett. “Many Americans and Arkansans today are experiencing mental health crises, so it’s important to remember that maintaining good mental health is just as important as keeping in good physical condition. That’s why we have programs like this Challenge and why we’re offering free Mental Health First Aid certification training around the state. We are invested in improving behavioral health across Arkansas.”

This year, new divisions were announced, organizing teams into groups such as schools, non-profits, friend groups and general businesses. The winners are:

#### General Businesses

1. The Law Group of Northwest Arkansas (Fayetteville)
2. Democrat Printing (Little Rock)
3. K&K Veterinary Supply (Tontitown)

#### Non-profit Organization

1. Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance (Little Rock)
2. Northwest Arkansas Food Bank (Springdale)
3. The Little Rock Regional Chamber (Little Rock)

#### Government or Municipality

1. DFA – Revenue Legal Counsel (Little Rock)
2. Champions of Water (Little Rock)
3. City of Jonesboro (Jonesboro)

#### Founders

1. Arkansas Department of Health (Little Rock)
2. Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield (Little Rock)



3. Department of Human Services (Little Rock)

#### Friends & Family

1. LAPS (Heber Springs)
2. Spin Doctors (Little Rock)
3. Healthy Divas (Conway)

#### Higher Education

1. Team UACCB (Batesville)
2. ASU – Newport (Newport)
3. ASU – Beebe (Beebe)

#### Hospital

1. Baptist Health Medical Center (Little Rock)
2. Baptist Health Medical Center (Stuttgart)
3. Unity Health (Searcy)

#### K-12 School or District

1. Carolyn Lewis Elementary (Conway)
2. Lawrence County Schools (Walnut Ridge)
3. Mountain Home High School (Mountain Home)

#### Civic or Community Organization

1. Jonesboro Zumba Fitness Crew (Jonesboro)
2. Hurricane HYPE Center (Pine Bluff)
3. St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church (Benton)

#### Healthcare Provider (non-hospital)

1. New Hope Therapy (Hot Springs)
2. Jennifer T. Scruggs, MD, PA (Little Rock)
3. Nurses of CARTI (Bryant)

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