



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

For Immediate Release:
August 2, 2010

Contact: Jo Anita Miley
JoAnita.Miley@us.army.mil

Yoga power **Huntsville Center uses Gentle Yoga at fitness center to promote readiness, improves quality of life for employees**

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. -- Huntsville Center's Fitness for You director Marsha Russell believes she's found a sound discipline for employees wanting an alternative to a traditional "work-out" in the fitness center.

Russell is providing gentle mid-day yoga classes to employees as an opportunity for exercise and some down-time away from their desk.

"Yoga is been acknowledged to bring about stress relief due to combined techniques of controlled breathing, meditation, physical movement, mental imagery, and stretching," Russell said.

"Acknowledging the things that put undue pressure on your life and then doing something positive and constructive to manage that pressure can cut stress off at its roots," Russell said.

Russell said yoga is accessible to most people and teaches practitioners to listen to their body and realize its limits.

During a 45-minute trial class offered July 20, Heather Griffin-Eubanks, an Installation Support and Programs Management contract employee with Geeks and Nerds, Inc., (GaN) combined soft music and gentle breathing exercises (pranayama) with stretches and bodywork (asana) to teach the class attended by more than 10 Huntsville Center employees.

Griffin-Eubanks, a technical advisor with the Furniture Program, is a certified yoga specialist.

According to Griffin-Eubanks, the goal of gentle yoga is to reduce tension and stress and restore balance and inner peace.

"Gentle yoga is a form of classical Hatha yoga taught in the Iyengar style practiced at a gentler, slower pace to make it more accessible to people of all sizes, ages, and fitness levels. Many interpretations of the sport also assist with stress reduction, calorie burning and weight management," Griffin-Eubanks said. "This class is about doing what your body can do."

Russell said Life Center staff continuously looks for innovative ways to keep Huntsville Center employees healthy and physically fit because developing and sticking with a good exercise program is beneficial to an employees.

One attendee said she had always heard that yoga is very relaxing, and a good pick-me-up during the workday. “I really feel energized,” Suzanne (Nikki) Dean, Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate, said. “It will be great for (fiscal) year end (business).”

Dean said she especially enjoyed the relaxation technique and since gentle yoga is designed to nourish and replenish energy, it’s always a plus during peak workload periods.

Russell said she plans keep to the gentle yoga class at the Life Center for as long as there is a demand and due to the amount of interest in yoga classes, she will add more forms of yoga to the fitness program in August.

“This (gentle yoga) is the class for times of high stress or low energy, giving you an opportunity to nurture yourself as you safely build and refresh your mobility and flexibility – even if you’re healing from injury or illness, Russell said. “Students leave class feeling refreshed and balanced.”