

Patricia Ramos

Hidalgo County Wellness Program Champion of the Month

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Patricia Ramos, Budget Analyst III, Department of Budget & Management

The road to being healthy is not necessarily determined by the number on a scale, it’s more of the process you put yourself through to reach your goal, according to Patricia Ramos.

“Your expectations can do you wrong, so don’t rely on that too much. Because you have a certain image in your head and when you don’t reach that image, you’re disappointed,” explained Ramos. “But who created that image? You did.”

Ramos has worked for Hidalgo County for nearly nine years. She says she had gotten into really good shape just as she started working for the county. She was down 45 pounds leading up to her employment and was proud of her accomplishment.

However, as most office jobs consist of, Ramos says the department she was previously working in would always have treats.

“They would bring treats. Every Friday morning! Then also we have a gas station in our parking lot, and that made it easy to take a break and get a breakfast taco.” Ramos snickered.

Ramos says she would wake up early enough to get some exercise before work but then switched over to a different department, where her workload increased. She explained she was mentally exhausted by the end of the day. All she wanted to do was just rest when she got home. She felt the weight of self-disappointment when she stopped going to her workouts.

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“Don’t rely too much on your expectations. Focus on the process,”

“I would be mad if I didn’t go [to the gym]. My mental health was beating myself up over it,” she said. “The obstacle is how easy it is to be stagnant. It’s just so easy just stay in a chair and not do anything. But then your mental health kicks in, because physically you’re just sitting doing nothing and mentally you’re also there [thinking], ‘What am I doing? Why am I like this?’ That’s an obstacle.”

Ramos explained she was instantly interested when she first heard about the Hidalgo County Wellness Program at its inception about three years ago.

“It just gave you all these options that before I wouldn’t have known about. I didn’t know there were dietitian services available at H-E-B. The Wellness Program is what has given me the opportunity to meet with other health experts out there that I wouldn’t have known about otherwise,” said Ramos.

She says she took advantage of the services provided by Vera Whole Health in Edinburg, a clinic exclusively available to county employees and their dependents.

“I liked meeting with their health coach,” she said. “It’s a really great experience because it’s not just talking about your physical health. They ask how you are doing, what are your goals you want to set for yourself.”

Ramos shared an experience she had with Airrosti Rehab Center, a center that offers chiropractic rehabilitation services to county employees. She had an issue the weeks before her wedding. She did not want to be bandaged up making her way down the aisle.

“I had three sessions scheduled with them for my shoulder. It was pinched. We got it done in two [sessions]. But before what would’ve been my third session, I had issues with my Achilles tendon,” she said.

“I ended up going to urgent care for it, they did x-rays – nothing was wrong. They wanted to do an MRI, but I couldn’t walk. I was using crutches.”

So when Airrosti called Ramos to remind her about her last session, she told them about her Achilles tendon. They told her to go in and they would treat it.

“I went in with crutches and walked out without them!” Ramos. “They’re so great.”

Ramos added she also took part in the Texas AgriLife Extension cooking classes that were offered free to staff before the pandemic. She still makes some of the recipes.

She expressed that cooking really makes her happy. So much, that Ramos swears she has four six-foot-tall bookcases dedicated to recipe books.

In addition to cooking, Ramos loves being out with her miniature dachshund, Georgia, “She’s a senior, so she can’t do too much. But being outside with her helps me, so I got a K9 Sports Sack. So I can put her in a backpack meant for dogs. Strap her to my back. We go on bike rides together.”

Ramos mentioned she and Georgia also go on walks frequently and participated in an annual doggie dash, an event where runners take their dog out for a one mile run.



“If I can be happy while I’m outside, I’m gonna do it. So if happiness comes with taking my dog with me, I’m gonna do it,” she said. “It’s a workout because I’m not sitting down, but it’s at my pace. I like it.”

Her and her husband also schedule a weekly movie night watching old film from the 40s and 50s. “That’s me enjoying my time relaxing. We call it movie mode. We don’t look at our phones. No interruptions,” Ramos said.

Ramos became a Wellness Ambassador for the Department of Budget and Management after an email calling for representatives was sent to county employees. She suggests activities related to health and wellness to the department to participate in.

“I had asked if we could bring back a fruit challenge that was done in previous years. It was called the Rainbow Fruit Challenge. So you had to create a display using fruit and vegetables,” she said. “It was really fun when we did it. You’re just making art with your edible fruit and veggies and then you just eat it. Share with the staff.”

Her family has also gotten involved in spending time outdoors. Ramos recalled an after hours event where people in her department met at a nearby park and just went for a walk.

“My dad showed up!” Ramos chuckled. “He showed up in his motorcycle and he changed into his walking shoes. Then we walked the park.”

Ramos credits her husband for making sure they watch what they eat and stay active. “He’s more about weights than I am,” she said. “He’s also like me. He’s more strict on what he eats, than I am. He says, ‘No, we can’t go over there.’ If it’s 8 o’clock, we’re not eating the rest of the day. If you’re hungry, just have water.”

Ramos expressed that she’s grateful for the county establishing the Wellness Program.



“I see a big difference here at work,” Ramos said. “Before the program, we didn’t have walks together. We didn’t all get together to meet at a certain place and say, ‘Hey guys, let’s take a breather. We have such great weather today, let’s go for a walk.’ That didn’t happen before. It happens now. I like that, because we have the whole building. When else do I see the employees from the tax office or auditors or purchasing or treasurers? I won’t, unless they come outside. And that’s good!”

She highlighted the resources offered through Deer Oaks, such as the financial planning assistance, short-term counseling and webinars. “These programs have become easily accessible to us.” Ramos said. “The Wellness Program helps check everything off. Like, ‘Hey! Want to get your diet together? Want to get your mental health together?’ Wellness has it. I like the YouTube videos too. They vary! That’s what we need.”

Ramos is aware she is not at the weight where she was nine years ago, but she doesn’t let that fact bother her. She says she’s more focused on how she can stay healthy and that she’s happy along the way.

“Don’t rely too much on your expectations. Focus on the process,” she urges. “It doesn’t have to be the weight. It doesn’t have to be like, ‘Ugh, I really wanted to be a medium, but I’m still not fitting in it.’ But how are you doing mentally? I’d rather take the mental over the physical, because that’s what gets you through every day – your mental. Remember, you’re your biggest hurdle, so just let it go. And breathe.”