



Thrive

@ RUSSELL SAGE

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2024-2026 YEAR-END REPORT



At Russell Sage, health and well-being aren't just priorities, they are part of who we are. Through Thrive@Russell Sage, we've continued to build a campus culture where students, faculty, and staff can truly thrive, and over the past two academic years, that impact has only grown.

As we look ahead, our work is now further informed by the Limerick Framework for Action—new global guidance that builds on the Okanagan Charter and helps bring health-promoting campus efforts to life in more actionable ways. It highlights ten key areas: fostering shared responsibility, taking action, adapting to our campus, leading collaboratively, embedding health into policies, engaging our community, strengthening partnerships, empowering students, supporting research and innovation, and celebrating progress.

These priorities align closely with Sage's Strategic Plan, especially our commitment to helping every student thrive, advancing social mobility, and supporting holistic well-being. Together, they reinforce a shared vision rooted in equity, inclusion, and a whole-campus approach to student success.

Over the past two years, Thrive has significantly expanded its reach and impact both on campus and beyond. Three RSC Thrive representatives were invited to present and serve on expert panels at the International Health Promoting Campuses Conference in Ireland in June 2025. Their contributions helped inform the development of The Limerick Framework for Action: Advancing the Global Health Promoting Campus Agenda, elevating Russell Sage's work to an international stage and contributing to discussions shaping the future of health-promoting practices in higher education.

On campus, Thrive has continued to foster a culture of well-being, inclusion, and engagement through initiatives that create meaningful opportunities for learning, connection, and personal growth. Programs such as National Disability Employment Awareness Month increased awareness of disability inclusion, advocacy, and workforce participation, while Wellness Wednesdays provided ongoing support for students across all eight dimensions of wellness, helping to strengthen student well-being and campus belonging.

We've also strengthened our commitment to community engagement. Events like World Refugee Day brought local youth to campus for a day of connection and belonging, while partnerships like SHRED gave Sage students the opportunity to mentor youth and engage in meaningful, hands-on experiences that promote confidence and well-being.

Mental health and well-being have remained at the forefront, with initiatives like NAMIWalks, campus-wide wellness programming, and the 21 Day Harmony Journey helping to reduce stigma, build resilience, and support both students and employees.

We've also focused on meeting everyday wellness needs in accessible ways, from wellness vending machines to relaxation spaces, while continuing to create opportunities for joy and connection through events like pickleball leagues, color runs, and fitness programs that bring our community together.

I'm incredibly proud of what we've accomplished and excited for what's ahead as we continue to grow Thrive as a catalyst for connection, well-being, and positive change.

The attached report highlights some of the activities conducted in support of our Thrive@Russell Sage College initiative over the 2024-2026 academic years. This work is made possible by the collaboration and dedication of our campus community, along with the continued generosity of CDPHP. Together, we are creating a culture where well-being is not just encouraged, it's embedded in everything we do.

With gratitude,

Tawana Davis

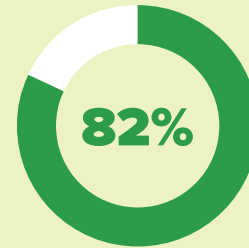
*Associate Vice President for Student Life for Student Wellness
Chair of Thrive@Russell Sage*



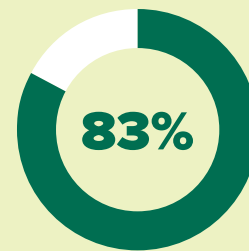
FRESH CHECK DAY

Fresh Check Day aims to create an approachable and hopeful atmosphere where students are encouraged to engage in dialogue about mental health and helps to build a bridge between students and the mental health resources available on campus, in the community, and nationally.

After Fresh Check Day:



82% of students said that they are more likely to ask for help if they are experiencing emotional distress.



83% of students said they are more comfortable talking about mental health and suicide.

NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

During National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), Russell Sage College welcomed John Robinson, President and CEO of Our Ability, to campus. A nationally recognized disability advocate and White House Champion of Change, Robinson has dedicated his career to expanding employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities through innovative, technology-driven platforms. Students said the presentation inspired them to “be your own advocate” and “accommodations matter”.





WELLNESS WEDNESDAYS

Implemented a comprehensive summer wellness program for HEOP students focused on the eight dimensions of wellness: emotional, physical, social, occupational, intellectual, environmental, financial, and spiritual well-being. Through workshops, group activities, interactive sessions, and individualized counseling opportunities, students developed personalized wellness plans to support academic success and overall well-being.

- ✓ The financial literacy component of Wellness Wednesdays positively impacted HEOP students' understanding of financial wellness. After the program, **46.1% of participants reported a greater understanding** of how financial literacy supports academic success and generational wealth, while only 1.9% reported no change.



World Refugee Day

Russell Sage College, in partnership with Thrive, hosted a World Refugee Day Field Day for middle school students from the Albany International Center. The event featured interactive activities, recreational programming, and opportunities for connection, highlighting the College's commitment to community engagement, cultural awareness, and inclusive programming.





Hot Yoga, Pilates, and More

To support well-being and foster campus community, Thrive hosted dedicated Hot Yoga and Pilates sessions. The Hot Yoga class, engaged 12 campus community members. The multi-week Pilates series, led by RSC Nutrition Professor Theresa DeLorenzo, served a dual purpose by welcoming participants from the Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (ACPHS) to strengthen cross-institutional ties during the merger process. **Both initiatives achieved a flawless 100% satisfaction rate**, with all surveyed participants reporting reduced stress, supported emotional well-being, and an inclusive atmosphere.

Employee Wellness Initiatives included:

- CDPHP Wellness Series:
Care for the Caregiver Workshop
- CPR and First Aid Training
- Covered and Cared for: Navigating Leave Benefits
- Mental Health First Aid for Adults
- Being a mindful Co-Worker
- CDPHP's Presentation on Sleep, Stress, and Diet
- Addressing Burnout and Improving Wellbeing
- Tools to Manage Stress:
A Lunch and Learn Opportunity presented by CDPHP



Wellness Vending Machines Launched

Introduced across both campuses to provide 24/7, discreet access to essential health, personal care, and reproductive resources without requiring a Wellness Center visit. Just in fall 2025, there were **over 500+ uses**.

STEPPING INTO THE DIVIDE

Hosted the *Stepping Into the Divide* program, an initiative focused on addressing antisemitism, racism, and Islamophobia through dialogue, conflict resolution, and coalition building. In partnership with three other colleges, 10 staff and faculty members were trained to bring these skills back to their campus communities.



RSC 101/201/301

RSC 101 introduced students to services offered through Student Wellness Services, including the Wellness Center, Recreation & Fitness, and Accessibility Services. Of the 329 students surveyed, 144 reported they were more likely to utilize these resources. Student feedback also identified strong interest in additional yoga classes, pickleball intramurals, and Stay & Play events such as a trip to Six Flags.

An important part of RSC 101 class this year was administering the OHETI. The Occupations in Higher Education Transitions Inventory (OHETI) assesses how well students are adapting to the daily living demands of college life across ten key areas of occupation. Using the theory of occupational adaptation, the OHETI assessment measures three critical constructs: effectiveness (feeling on top of things), efficiency (getting stuff done), and satisfaction (liking what they're doing). Students rate themselves on a 5-point scale from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". This scale helps measure how well students feel they're adapting to each aspect of college life. Students who struggle with daily living are more likely to drop out of their studies or experience mental health concerns.

STEM: STRONG THROUGH EVERY MILE

Thrive, along with RSC's Title IX Office and the Denise Taber Finard '80 Women's Institute, partnered with Strong Through Every Mile (STEM), a nonprofit couch-to-5K program supporting survivors of interpersonal violence and domestic abuse. In fall 2024, the program expanded to include students and employees from Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. Participants received free personalized training, running shoes from Fleet Feet, race entry, t-shirts, and finisher medals.

- ➔ Fall 2024: **21 completed the 5K race — including 13 students and 8 employees.**
- ➔ Fall 2025: **14 completed the 5k race, 3 completed their first half marathon!**

CARNIVAL COLOR BLAST RUN/WALK

The fourth annual Carnival Color Blast Run/Walk brought together more than 80 students, faculty, staff, and administrators on Russell Sage College's Albany campus to celebrate the end of the Spring 2025 semester. The event promoted inclusion, community engagement, and wellness, with **100% of participants reporting they felt included and welcomed** during the event.



Student/Staff Pickleball League

Fostered community building across the Albany and Troy campuses with an inclusive, no-cost league open to all skill levels. The 12-week season featured eight weeks of regular play and a four-week, double-elimination playoff. In both summer 2024 and summer 2025, **100% of the participants experienced stronger social connections within the RSC community**, reported reduced stress levels after weekly matches, and felt the league was inclusive for all involved.



2026 marked the 5th annual Color Run 5k! With **over 60 participants**, it was a great event on our Albany campus for students and staff.



Relaxation Space

This space features a massage chair, zen garden, and weighted blankets. Survey feedback showed overwhelming success, with 90% of respondents rating the space as “very effective” for recharging. Overall, **100% of users expressed satisfaction with the welcoming atmosphere and amenities**, while 90% rated accessibility positively. Future enhancements will focus on student suggestions, including adding mood lighting, background music, and extending session times.

STAFF AND WELLNESS DAY

For the inaugural Staff and Wellness Day, Thrive@Russell Sage delivered campus-wide wellness programming — ranging from fitness classes to chair massages — backed by supervisor-supported schedule flexibility and a subsidized lunch. The initiative successfully fostered workplace well-being, with **66.7% of surveyed employees feeling more relaxed** and 52.4% reporting a valuable mental break.

SHRED

In Spring 2026, Russell Sage College renewed its partnership with the SHRED Foundation, a BIPOC-led nonprofit that empowers marginalized youth through snowboarding and skateboarding. This initiative advances the college’s commitment to equity, wellness, and experiential learning by helping young people build confidence, personal growth, and community connection through action sports.

21 DAY HARMONY JOURNEY

In Spring 2025 and Spring 2026, 25 RSC members across various departments were selected to participate in the 21 Day Harmony Journey, a self-paced micro-learning program focused on recognizing signs and symptoms of burnout and implementing evidence-based prevention strategies. The program combined independent learning with weekly synchronous Zoom discussions, creating opportunities for participants to connect course concepts to well-being initiatives both within their departments and across the broader campus community.

Assessment data demonstrated meaningful gains in participants’ well-being knowledge and practices. **Awareness of self-care and coping strategies increased to 82.4% in 2025 and 90.1% in 2026**, while reported adoption of these strategies increased by 41% and 43%, respectively. Participants also reported substantially greater confidence that Russell Sage College prioritizes employee well-being, with positive responses increasing from 59% to 92% in 2025 and from 56.3% to 86.7% in 2026. These findings suggest that the program not only strengthened individual well-being practices but also enhanced employees’ perceptions of Russell Sage’s commitment to a culture of health and wellness.



CDPHP WORKFORCE TEAM CHALLENGE

Team RSC had its largest participation for the 2026 CDPHP Workforce team challenge with a total of 30 registrants. All members received a thrive @ RSC t-shirt for race day. Feedback from participants was incredible, all team members plan on joining team RSC for the 2027 event, 100% felt a stronger connection with their coworkers, 100% felt more confident in their ability to participate in a 5K, 100% now feel comfortable participating in another 5K, 75% felt a sense of stress reduction post race, and **100% felt motivated to begin a fitness routine on their own**.



NAMIWALKS

The Third Annual NYS Capital Region Mental Health Week commenced with the NAMIWalks on October 11th at Washington Park, Albany, serving as a collaborative effort to raise awareness, provide resources, and combat mental health stigma. Partnering with Russell Sage College athletics, the event saw significant support from various sports teams, with “Team RSC” successfully raising \$439.18 to support mental health initiatives. The event’s impact was profoundly positive among its 20 attendees, with **100% of participants reporting that the walk was inclusive, fostered stronger social connections within the RSC community**, and improved their overall college experience. Furthermore, every attendee (100%) indicated that participating in the NAMIWalk successfully reduced their stress levels, highlighting the event’s effectiveness in promoting student well-being through community engagement and physical activity.

SART CONFERENCE

Thrive supported the Rensselaer County 15th Annual SART Conference in June, whose purpose is to provide the interprofessional members of the Rensselaer County Sexual Assault Response Team (nurses, social workers, physicians, law enforcement, attorneys, and other professionals) with additional knowledge, skills, awareness, and collaboration in the service of victims of sexual assault and intimate partner violence. This event was made possible by multiple RSC offices/programs, in addition to Thrive@Russell Sage, and was open to students, employees, and community members.



Other things we participated in:

- ➔ President Panel and Reception – U.S. Health Promoting Campuses Network Summit
- ➔ Town Hall Panel with the Capital Region community
- ➔ USHPCN Summit Presentation
- ➔ Panelists at the 2025 International Health Promoting Campuses Conference in Ireland
- ➔ NYSABPRHAL Youth Brunch



The USHPCN Presents...

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF HEALTH PROMOTING CAMPUSES

April 25, 2025 | Zoom | 10 AM MT 12PM ET

Dr. Thaddeus Mantaro
Dean of Student Health and Wellness, Dallas College

Tawana Davis
Associate Vice President for Student Life for Student Wellness, Chair of Thrive@RSC, Russell Sage College

Dr. Rebecca Kennedy
Assistant Vice President for Student Health and Wellbeing at University of Alabama at Birmingham

Dr. Megan Brown
Executive Director of Center for Wellbeing, Emory University

Doug Everhart
Director of the Center for Student Wellness and Health Promotion, University of California-Irvine

MODERATED BY:
Kathryn Dailey, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Health Promotion, University of Colorado-Boulder

REGISTER ➔

