

“Inconvenience yourself: Ditch the remote, the garage door opener, the leaf-blower; buy a bike, broom, rake and snow shovel.” - Dan Buettner, author of “The Blue Zones Solution: Eating and Living Like the World's Healthiest People” and “The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer From the People Who've Lived the Longest.”



Staff at BKS Yoga Studio in Naples celebrate earning Blue Zones Project recognition. PHOTOS BY BLUE ZONES PROJECT STAFF

Two more groups earn Blue Zones recognition

Liz Freeman
Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

The Rotary Club of Immokalee and BKS Yoga Studio are the latest entities to earn recognition by the Blue Zones Project in Southwest Florida.

The Immokalee Rotary, which is celebrating 55 years of service, began offering a plant-based meal option at their luncheon meetings and encourages members to have smaller portions, Vicki Gauze, president of the organization, said.

“Blue Zones Project helped Rotary Club of Immokalee to better understand and appreciate the benefits of

offering healthy plant-based options with every meal to our members,” Gauze said in a press release. “Our lunches are served at the Immokalee Technical College by their culinary arts class and students, and they now provide the option to members to choose a healthier option in their cafeteria.”

The rotary places a sign at the beginning of the serving table to promote the healthier option and provides a to-go container to encourage a smaller portion.

The Blue Zones project was introduced to Southwest Florida in 2015 based on the world travels of Dan Buettner, who identified communi-



The Rotary Club of Immokalee is recognized by the Blue Zones Project for promoting better health.

ties worldwide where people share lifestyle traits and live to 100 or older. He wrote a New York Times best-seller about the nine principles of longevity.

The “Power Nine” include moving naturally by being physically active, eating a plant-slant diet, knowing your purpose in life, taking time to re-

lax, having a healthy social network and putting loved ones first. A popular activity is to form walking groups, or walking moais, to use Blue Zones terminology

The philosophy is that over time, healthier choices will become the

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easier choice, and each incremental step can improve health and well-being. Offering fresh fruit and bottled water instead of soft drinks and candy bars in employee break rooms is one example.

To date, more than 117 companies have gained Blue Zones recognition in Southwest Florida. The NCH Healthcare System is underwriting the project expense.

BKS Yoga, at 2900 U.S. 41 N., hosted a

•purposeŽ workshop for its instructors and students to help them zero in on their life's purpose, installed bicycle racks to encourage students to bike to the studio and removed sugary beverages from its vending machines.

BKS yoga offers a variety of yoga classes as well as health and wellness services from its holistic health nutrition program. It also offers tarot card reading, along with massage and spa services.

For more information about the Blue Zones project, visit the website, www.southwest-florida.bluezonesproject.com.