

Naples tops well-being ranks 4 years in a row

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Naples-area residents' sense of well-being ranked the highest for the fourth year in a row, according to the latest Gallup National Health Index.

The No. 1 ranking for the Naples-Immokalee-Marco Island area among 156 communities in the U.S. represents the first time in 11 years that the same area has held the top spot four times in a row, according to Gallup.

Naples-Immokalee-Marco Island moved into first place in 2014-15. Gallup tracks well-being using two-year rolling averages.

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Well-being

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Salinas, California, follows with the second highest well-being, followed by Boulder, Colorado; Santa Rosa, California; and Ann Arbor, Michigan, for the top five.

Cape Coral-Fort Myers has the sixth highest sense of well-being while Tallahassee is 15th on the list of 15 cities with the lowest sense of well-being.

The Gallup well-being score is calculated on a scale from 0 to 100 with 100 as the highest score. The survey focuses on five elements: career, social well-being, financial well-being, community, and physical health.

"I think I am thrilled," said Naples Mayor Bill Barnett.

He attributes Naples' standing to the Blue Zones Project of Southwest Florida, a healthy lifestyle improvement initiative launched in 2012 by the NCH Healthcare System and then-president and chief executive officer, Dr. Allen Weiss.

Barnett said the city of Naples was on board with the Blue Zones Project early on to help residents make healthier decisions for lifestyle changes and to improve longevity.

The Blue Zones was developed by National Geographic explorer Dan Buettner who identified communities worldwide where people share lifestyle traits and live to 100 or older. He wrote a New York Times bestseller about the nine principles of longevity.

The "Power Nine" include moving naturally by being physically active, eating a plant-focused diet, knowing your purpose in life, taking time to relax, and having a healthy social network.

Barnett said city residents practice the Blue Zones lifestyle. He pointed to improvements in walking trails and cycling paths that dovetail with the Blue Zones recommendation of moving naturally for physical activity.

"Our citizens enjoy participating," Barnett said. "It is a lifestyle."

The finding by Gallup bodes well for the tourism in-

How they do it

To compile its National Health and Well-Being Index, Gallup uses an address-based sampling system that is representative of all U.S. households and weighted to match U.S. demographics.

Gallup randomly chooses a member of each household in its sample to respond to the survey based on who has the next birthday and is older than 18. Surveys can be filled out by mail or online. Gallup sends survey invitations once per month for 12 months.

Gallup includes Spanish-language surveys for households with a high likelihood of including a Spanish speaker, based on U.S. Census records.

The sample size for Naples-Immokalee-Marco Island was 295 households.

Source: Gallup



Naples-area residents' sense of well-being is ranked highest in the U.S. ALEX DRIEHAUS/NAPLES DAILY NEWS

dusty, Barnett said.

"People who are health-conscious and looking for a place can look and see (it)," he said. "It will definitely help with tourism."

The five cities with the lowest sense of well-being

are Gulfport-Biloxi, Mississippi; Scranton-Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania; Youngstown-Warren, Ohio; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Rockford, Illinois.

The top ranking for overall well-being is another achievement, similar to Collier County being identified in March as the second-healthiest county in the state based on findings from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, said Stephanie Vick, administrator of the Florida Department of Health in Collier, in a statement.

"The Florida Department of Health in Collier County proudly works with several community partners to address the needs of our community to make Collier County the healthiest place, to live, work, and play," Vick said.

Naples was among the top metro areas across all five scoring categories except for career and physical well-being. The top spot for having a meaningful career goes to McAllen-Edinburg, Texas.

The city of Boulder is first for the second year in a row for highest physical well-being, according to the Gallup findings.

Naples' overall well-being score is 65.7, which slipped from 67.6 last year. The dip reflects a significant decline in overall well-being nationally, according to Gallup.

"Nationally, the U.S. map of highest and lowest well-being cities generally reflects the pattern found across states, with the lowest well-being metro areas found primarily in the South and then winding north up through the industrial Midwest," according to Gallup. "The highest well being cities are scattered primarily across the eastern seaboard as well as the Mountain West and West."

Naples has the highest social well-being score, which is defined as "having supportive relationships and love in your life."

The city also is in the top spot for financial well-being and community well-being, which Gallup defines as "liking where you live, feeling safe and having pride in your community."

For more on how Gallup compiles its National Health and Well-Being Index, go here.