

## Inc. Innovators

A weekly look at Fox Valley up-and-comers and trendsetters



### Nancy Krueger

**Title:** Health and wellness coordinator for the Aging & Disability Resource Center, which serves Outagamie, Calumet and Waupaca counties. It is a division of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

**Primary duties:** Finding and facilitating prevention programs to help people remain healthy and independent longer, thereby reducing long-term care costs; coordinating or participating in committees that follow health issues in the three counties.

**Krueger's background:** Age: 29; originally from Newport, Vt., now living in Sherwood; bachelor's degree in social work from Viterbo University in La Crosse; master's degree in social work from University of Wisconsin-Green Bay; has been in this position since November; was an information and assistance specialist for ADRC in Calumet County and a medical social worker at Holy Family Medical Clinic in Manitowoc.

**Staff:** She is part of a staff of 31 at ADRC in the three county area.

**Web site:**  
www.yourADRCresource.org



Photo by The Post-Crescent by Wm. Glashier

**NANCY KRUEGER** (center) talks with Barb Forbes (right) and Kay Bailey during a meeting of Stepping On at the YMCA of the Fox Cities in downtown Appleton last week. Krueger is the wellness coordinator for the Aging & Disability Resource Center.

### INNOVATOR INSIGHTS

#### FUTURE GOAL

**"A big part of what I'd like to do is identify all the wellness programs in all three counties and make a guide so everyone knows what's available, where it is, how much it costs and how to access it. For example, if you didn't have a ThedaCare doctor, you might not know what's available at Theda."**

#### PREVENTION FOR ALL

**"We are making sure that our prevention programs are not just for seniors, but for all the populations we serve. Health, physical activity and nutrition are a commonality in all populations."**

## Coordinator aims to help keep people healthy, independent

By Maureen Wallenfang  
Post-Crescent staff writer

**Q** You're 29 and the people you help are easily 40 or 50 years your senior. What kind of challenges does that present?

**A** I always have worked with that population in my career, and even beforehand. My mom worked in a nursing home and took me with her. So I've always been around that older generation and found it fascinating to learn from their wisdom. I learn more from them than I feel they learn from me. I enjoy every aspect of it.

**Q** What was it about this job that seemed like a perfect fit?

**A** My whole time at ADRC in Calumet County, I always promoted and wanted to do prevention. Prevention is a big part of the ADRC in general. We want to postpone or prevent long-term care costs. Hospitalization, nursing home stays. That's what's really costing the state and the federal government a lot of money.

**Q** This is a newly created position. Did the ADRC feel the prevention side was missing?

**A** Prevention is not new, but they decided they needed someone to focus on it fulltime.

**Q** What preventive measures are you taking?

**A** One thing our consortium has been working on for the past two years are falls. In Wisconsin, we're ranked No. 2 in falls, unfortunately. There are so many factors. People could blame our weather, but falls can be prevented in other states with the same weather. It could be more drinking that we have. I'm sure that plays a part.

**Q** If you can prevent a visit to the hospital or a long-term stay in a nursing home, how much do you save?

**A** The American Geriatric Society states that nationally the average ER cost per fall of a person aged 65 and over is \$9,400. The average inpatient hospital stay costs \$19,400. They also state that falls cost the U.S. \$19 billion in 2000 and falls are projected to cost \$43.8 billion by 2020.

**Q** Many seniors aren't paying for this because they have Medicare and supplemental insurance poli-

cies. Who sees the bills?

**A** Medicare is the federal government. We're all paying into Medicare from our paychecks, so the more people who fall, the less there will be for us later. If (seniors) have Medicaid as a secondary, then the county is going to see that bill.

**Q** What are you doing about it?

**A** We're offering Stepping On, a seven-week falls prevention workshop program (that started March 18). It teaches strength and balance routines. We have a physical therapist come in and teach the proper techniques. We go through everything that plays into fall prevention: medications management, the type of shoe you choose to wear, hazards around the house as well as lighting.

**Q** What's your role in the program?

**A** I'm bringing it to this area (Fox Cities). It comes from Australia. The state just started training facilitators. We were the first set of facilitators trained.

**Q** Was it your idea to bring it here?

**A** The state was promoting it. I definitely en-

couraged it.

**Q** Besides that, any other new things you hope to bring this area?

**A** I'm being trained in another program called Strong Women. It's a workshop that teaches women 40 and above strength training as well as healthy eating. It's proven to prevent osteoporosis, heart disease and depression. Initially I'll be the only one trained, so I'll (teach) it. One more workshop is Living Well with Chronic Disease, which hits all ages, anyone living with chronic disease from diabetes to multiple sclerosis. It's a six-week workshop that teaches people to self-manage their condition.

**Q** You're the first person to hold this newly created job. Have you been able to shape the job?

**A** It's complicated because there are three counties involved. We do have monthly meetings (where) we get supervisors from all three counties together. Each county is unique. Calumet is more rural than the Appleton part of Outagamie. I have to make it unique in each county.