

In the **Q**: Feeling 'Blue' in the MedQuarter



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Several organizations and restaurants in the MedQuarter are feeling 'Blue' – Blue Zones that is!

Two years ago the Blue Zones Project® came to Cedar Rapids and was embraced by City leaders in its mission as a “community well-being improvement initiative designed to make healthy choices easier through permanent changes to environment, policy, and social networks.” Over the last two years a great deal of effort has gone into implementing these initiatives – the reward for which will be Cedar Rapids receiving designation as a certified Blue Zones Community®. In order to accomplish this goal many things need to happen, not the least of which is for worksites, restaurants, grocery stores and schools to earn designation. A designated location will have met a spectrum of criteria that provide the employees, patrons, customers, students and school staff healthy choices in their day-to-day activities.

Like any effort that intends to implement long-lasting changes, especially changes in human behavior, the impact is not immediate or great. Instead, the changes are meant to be sound and enduring, such as providing healthier meal choices at restaurants – even sports bars. The idea is to make better options available to more people in more venues so that healthier choices can be made.

The MedQuarter is in sync with the Blue Zones Project. Our mission statement includes the goal to “improve the quality of life” of people in our region. With this, who better to embrace and exemplify the Blue Zones Project than us? To that end, the following MedQuarter organizations have become designated:

Blue Zones Worksites®

CarePro Health Services
Mercy Medical Center
Unity Point – St. Luke's Hospital

Blue Zones Restaurants®

Brewed Awakenings – 1st Avenue
Brewed Awakenings – St. Luke's
Phong Lan Vietnamese
Riley's Café – 1st Avenue

Visiting the MedQuarter not only provides area residents, patients, employees and visitors with great healthcare options, it also provides them with healthier work environments and dining options which will help them live longer, better lives!