

# Local team inspired to Shape Up

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WEST WARWICK — The women at Cornerstone Group in West Warwick will not be spending their lunch hour sitting and snacking.

Instead, they said, they plan to strap on their sneakers, slide on their gloves and head outside to walk.

It is part of their commitment to fitness that is being inspired by the Shape Up Rhode Island 2010 public health campaign. Shape Up RI is a statewide exercise and weight loss challenge. According to information about the campaign provided by its organizers, over the past four years that the program has existed, nearly 35,000 Rhode Islanders have participated and lost thousands of pounds, walked millions of miles, and proven that teamwork is a powerful tool to help people meet their goals.

The campaign is held each year in the spring for 12 weeks. This year's spring kick off event was Saturday, but a group of women from the Cornerstone team decided to jumpstart their own training by heading out last week to walk.

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"We are committed," said Cathleen Alexander, one of the members of the Cornerstone team.

Each of the members has set their own goals, although many have similar aspirations. Diane Sherman said she hopes to shed 20 pounds, while Mary Ann DiChristofaro said that 10 pounds would make her happy. Ann Sac-

coccio said she is hopeful that she will lose some weight like her co-workers, but was also hoping to get a "firmer butt."

The members of the Cornerstone team are invited — as all teams are — to participate in statewide group fitness classes and other fitness for life programs that are created to help motivate teams, introduce them to new forms of

physical fitness and keep them committed.

Sherman participated in the program last year and lost 50 pounds. She said it is a wonderful program and hopes she and her colleagues will have just as much success this year as she did last year. The team spirit and group motivation is a real support, she said.

Shape Up is still accepting teams for the spring program and registration is going on now. Pam Thomas, one of the event organizers, said "people still have time to be inspired, sign up and get off the couch or out from behind the desk" and should. More than 800 teams have already signed up for this year, but there is always room for more, she said.

Thomas said it costs \$20 to register, and participants get a free pedometer and access to the online tracking program, plus a chance to try out hundred of free exercise classes, cooking classes and health programs at various local places.

To learn more, visit the Web site [www.shape-upri.org](http://www.shape-upri.org) or call Ray Rickman at 421-0606 for general information about Shape Up and how and why it works.

Last year, more than 15,000 Rhode Islanders, almost 400 from Coventry and about 250 from West Warwick participated, and Thomas said Shape Up would like to see that number increased this year.

