Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Fall River and National Fitness Campaign Make Fitness Free for Everyone in Fall River

State-of-the-Art Outdoor Fitness Court® Coming to Britland Park

(FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS – JULY 26, 2023) —Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (Blue Cross), Fall River, and National Fitness Campaign (NFC) today announced a partnership to bring an outdoor Fitness Court® to Fall River. The Fitness Court, located at Britland Park on 73 Wordell St., will open August 23rd at 10 a.m. with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.



This Fitness Court was developed by Blue Cross, Fall River and NFC to expand free access to high quality workouts and create equitable access to exercise for communities around the state. The Fitness Court is the world's best outdoor gym that lets people use their own body weight to get a complete workout using seven exercise stations.

Created with people aged 14 and over and with all abilities in mind, the workouts are adaptable for all fitness levels, allowing participants to move at their own pace. Users also may download the free Fitness Court App which acts as a coach-in-your-pocket and enhances the outdoor gym into a digitally supported wellness experience.

"Blue Cross is committed to helping people live healthy lives and eliminating the physical and social barriers that lead to health disparities," said Jeff Bellows, vice president of corporate citizenship and public affairs at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. "We're proud to partner with NFC and Fall River to launch a Fitness Court that will provide Bristol County residents a communal gathering space and access to premiere free outdoor fitness opportunities."

Bristol County is one of 15 outdoor Fitness Courts in a series of Blue Cross Fitness Courts that are currently open or will be constructed in easily accessible public spaces this year. Blue Cross' sponsorship of NFC is part of the company's strengthened corporate citizenship commitment to promote health justice in communities across the Commonwealth. Over the next five years, Blue Cross will provide $16 million in grants and volunteer support to not-for-profits working to address food, environmental and racial justice in Massachusetts communities. This work supports the company's overall pledge to be a leader in addressing health inequities across the Commonwealth.

"Every day, we are looking to improve our parks for the health of residents. The Fitness Court is an addition to Britland Park and a great way to give the community an accessible and cost-free fitness resource to benefit them," says Mayor Paul Coogan.

"National Fitness Campaign is proud to welcome Fall River to the campaign as a leader in Massachusetts, championing health and wellness for their residents" said Mitch Menaged, founder of NFC. "We are proud to continue our mission of getting people moving outdoors and helping communities combat the fiscal and humanitarian costs of inactivity."

The Fitness Court® features artwork by Abigail Collins. Collins is a photographer and mixed media artist based in Fall River, Massachusetts. She is a recent graduate of Bridgewater State University with a focus in studio art and art history. In her practice, she makes work that inspires others to be their authentic selves and connect with the world and people around them. She is passionate about her community and the people in it, which can be seen in her array of photographs, paintings, and graphic designs. Her work has been featured in local publications, as well as displayed in local galleries throughout Massachusetts.

When asked about her inspiration for responding to the Fall River Fitness Court call for artists, Collins explained, "As an artist, I'm always trying to challenge myself and inspire others around me to do the same. When submitting my work in the call for artists, I had multiple ideas about what this fitness court would mean to the city of Fall River. I wanted something vibrant,

motivating, and unique that captured the essence of the court and appealed to everyone. My goal was to create a mural that was inclusive, and showed that fitness is something that can be accomplished by anyone, regardless of ability level. I hope that this fitness court is something that the community can use to come together and encourage people to achieve healthy lifestyles while living in the City."

"We are proud to introduce the inaugural Fitness Court® in Massachusetts that showcases the remarkable artwork of a local artist." said Ashley Occhino, Executive Director of FRACC, "This collaboration between fitness and art marks a groundbreaking moment, establishing Fall River at the forefront, leading the way in blending fitness and art, and creating a dynamic space that celebrates both physical activity and artistic expression. FRACC extends our heartfelt appreciation to the City of Fall River for their support in fostering local artistic expression and promoting a vibrant community."

The vibrant energy of Abigail's work is a fitting backdrop to the circuit training system, which provides a full body workout in less than seven minutes.

Residents are invited to attend the Launch Event on August 23rd at 10 a.m. to try the Fitness Court. For more information, contact Mayor Paul Coogan's Office at 508-324-2600. For more information on Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Massachusetts' support of NFC, please visit https://nationalfitnesscampaign.com/massachusetts.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (bluecrossma.org) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We are committed to the relentless pursuit of quality, affordable and equitable health care with an unparalleled consumer experience. Consistent with our promise to always put our members first, we are rated among the nation's best health plans for member satisfaction and quality. Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

About Fall River
Fall River was founded around the late 1600's. Now a city located in Bristol County, Fall River is the 10th largest in Massachusetts. The city is home to a variety of noteworthy museums, cultural attractions, and places of historical significance. Fall River is committed to increasing fitness and wellness resources and initiatives that will promote mindfulness, stress reduction, and overall health for its residents. Partnering with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and the National Fitness Campaign is a positive step in the right direction for creating free fitness resources for those in the community.

About FRACC
The Fall River Arts & Culture Coalition (FRACC), a committee of the One SouthCoast Chamber, is a collaborative, member-based organization dedicated to advancing arts and culture to create a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable creative economy. FRACC consists of individual citizens, artists and creatives, cultural organizations, businesses, and government officials. Membership is free and open to all, and the coalition holds monthly meetings open to the public on the second Monday of each month at rotating locations.

About NFC
Founded in San Francisco in 1979, National Fitness Campaign (NFC) is a wellness consulting firm that provides programs and services to cities, schools and sponsors with the mission to build healthy communities. NFC delivers an integrated wellness initiative, centered on the world's best outdoor gym: The Fitness Court®. The Campaign is planning its 500th Healthy Community, uniting the country's largest public-private partnership in support of wellness with the goal of building a Fitness Court within a 10-minute bike ride of every American. Follow us on social media @NatFitCampaign and #Fitnesscourt.

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