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## Helping create a healthier workplace

By MAUREEN MILFORD / The News Journal  
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Marketing strategist Kay Keenan said the only company-sponsored health program she thought was worthwhile was when the speaker used his personality to bring pizzazz to a discussion on nutrition and stress.

"It's something I still think about," said Keenan of Wilmington. "But most of the programs tended to be too broad and under the safety umbrella."

Unfortunately, many work site health promotion programs are not effective, said P. Michael Peterson, director of the health promotion program for graduate students at the University of Delaware. Most tend to focus on medical issues and deliver the information through lunch presentations. Often, they don't address the problems in the workplace that make many people ill, such as high demands from managers, but low control and low rewards, he said.

Now, Elizabeth A. Browning, 49, a former DuPont Co. executive, is working to change that through her company LLuminari, a health education company on the Christina River waterfront in Wilmington. Her mission is to bring "consumer-quality programming" to the workplace. Not only does the company look at bodily health, it incorporates mental health and spiritual issues into its programming, Browning said.

"I want something as interesting as something you would read or watch on your own, personal time," Browning said.

Since every major company is working to reduce health costs, the market for LLuminari's services is broad, Browning said. The privately held company, founded in 2000, does not release revenue figures, but Browning said it is profitable.

"Companies recognize that they can't be competitive if they have unhealthy, stressed-out people," Browning said.

Instead of creating a traditional one-size-fits-all program, Browning and her co-founders attempt to understand the needs of a company through the voices of the employees. Her two co-founders are Dr. Nancy Snyderman, a head and neck surgeon known for her work as a correspondent for ABC News, and Susan Love, author of "Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book." The company has nearly 30 experts available for programs, including Peterson. Besides the experts, it employs 15 people.

Ideally, LLuminari's first step in dealing with a client company is to study the employees' health issues by gender and ethnicity. From the study, LLuminari creates a diagnosis for its client companies so that leadership understands what its issues and needs are. For example, are there perceptions of unfairness among managers, something that is very important to female employees.

LLuminari then develops a program for the client that attempts to have the same quality standards and appeal of a television program. A typical program developed by



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Elizabeth A. Browning, of LLuminari, said companies cannot be successful if workers are stressed-out.

LLuminari could be a discussion with a panel of celebrity scientists, like Dr. Benjamin S. Carson, director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Children's Center. LLuminari's client list includes Johnson & Johnson, GlaxoSmithKline and PepsiCo Inc. Programs can range in price from a minimum of \$25,000 and can run up to more than \$1 million.

But one of the most important factors in success of a program is commitment by top management, Browning said.

"It will be difficult to have healthy employees in an unhealthy culture," she said.

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