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Contact: Symphony Chau, 212-227-2831, symphony@centerforactivedesign.org

The Fitwel Certification System Gains Widespread Adoption from Globally Renowned Champion Companies, as they Commit to Certify over 50 Buildings

Fitwel has garnered significant market traction during its soft launch phase through its Champion and Ambassador programs and is recognized as a 2017 Most Innovative Company in Social Good by Fast Company

New York, February 13, 2017— Today, Fitwel is honored as one of the 2017 Top 10 Most Innovative Companies in Social Good by *Fast Company*, recognizing Fitwel's ability to catalyze industry transformation of workplaces to promote health. **Most Innovative Companies** is one of *Fast Company's* most significant and highly anticipated editorial efforts of the year. To produce the 2017 list, *Fast Company* reporters survey thousands of enterprises across the globe to identify the most notable innovations of the year and trace the impact of those initiatives on business, industry, and the larger culture. The Center for Active Design also announces five new Fitwel Champions, leading companies and institutions that have committed to applying Fitwel's evidence-based design and operational strategies in all or a portion of their real estate workplace portfolios.

Champions are leading companies who are adopters of Fitwel's innovative approach to health and wellness, and are key to advancing Fitwel's mission of creating a workplace culture that embraces performance-enhancing, health and human-centric environments. Champion companies will certify their own properties and advise Fitwel on future versions of the tool. Fitwel is proud to partner with diverse organizations that will prove all buildings can impact health, regardless of size, budget, and year built. Champions have committed to applying Fitwel to properties across the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. during the soft launch period.

The Center for Active Design is also excited to announce that over 100 individuals from leading design, development, and sustainability companies have registered to become Fitwel Ambassadors. Fitwel Ambassadors are leaders in the healthy building movement who are well versed on the evidence-based connection between workplaces, health, and productivity. They are also trained on how to best use the Fitwel Digital Scorecard to help companies track progress and attain Fitwel certification.

Demand for workplace environments that support occupant health has increased as companies are recognizing the significant impact on employee health and their bottom line. A recent survey conducted by CoreNet Global and CBRE Group, Inc. found that companies that focus on employee health and wellness report decreases in absenteeism and increases in engagement and retention rates. Furthermore, 90 percent of firms surveyed report that they have already piloted or are currently implementing workplace designs that promote health. Of the companies that have



focused wellness goals, 19 percent reported a decrease in absenteeism, 25 percent reported increased retention, and 47 percent reported increased employee engagement.

“The early success of Fitwel is an indication that companies are now, more than ever, eager and excited to use design and operational strategies that are supported by scientific evidence when seeking to promote the health and productivity of employees or tenants,” said CfAD Executive Director, Joanna Frank. “We thank each of our Champions for taking a leadership position in setting a standard for health promotion within the workplace.”

The Center for Active Design announces the following Fitwel Champions:

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the nation’s health protection agency, co-led the development of Fitwel, by reviewing over 3,000 research studies and bringing together experts in public health and design. CDC applied Fitwel to the current home of the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, and received a 3-star Fitwel rating—the top rating available. CDC will remain Fitwel’s research and evaluation partner moving forward, ensuring that updated versions of the rating system remain true to the scientific evidence available.

“As part of our commitment to healthier workplaces for our staff, CDC is evaluating our own buildings against the Fitwel framework. Fitwel provides evidenced based strategies that support a healthy workplace environment. The Fitwel certification process was easy to implement and it helped us pull together stakeholders to talk about the ways our facilities support health.” – Liz York, Chief Sustainability Officer.

EYP Inc., a global provider of high-performance building design, research, and consulting services, has committed to using Fitwel’s strategies as a guide for workplace design. EYP will be using the Fitwel tool to optimize the design and operations of its workplaces to support and advance the health of its staff. EYP will also use the tool on behalf of their clients, ensuring their design solutions are maximizing health and human performance. EYP’s strong evidence-based design approach and commitment to Fitwel will assist in advancing health-promoting design for workplaces.

“We believe strongly in designing workspaces that support human health and performance and will be using Fitwel to inform the expansion and upgrade of several of our own offices over the next few years. We believe using and testing research-based tools like this one is critical to understanding how space and business operations impact design. In the short term, we will be using Fitwel to better understand how buildings impact the health of our employees, but longer term, we hope to use it with our clients.” Leigh Stringer, Workplace Strategy and Research Leader, EYP.

Hord Coplan Macht (HCM), an award-winning architecture firm that practices an integrated approach to design excellence with environmental sustainability, has committed to applying Fitwel to office spaces in Baltimore, MD, Denver, CO, and



Alexandria, VA. HCM has already successfully integrated many health-promoting features within its offices, including providing staff with fresh fruit and vegetables and locating in areas with high WalkScores. HCM is proud to partner with Fitwel to elevate health as a priority within its offices and build capacity and knowledge among its staff.

“Fitwel provides a metric based program to measure the physical, emotional and mental well-being of people in the workplace. Hord Coplan Macht strives to act as a practicing model for employees and clients to promote healthy behaviors and occupant wellness,” says Rachel Cowen, Architect, and Andrea Swiatocha, Architect.

Integral Group is a global engineering firm delivering green sustainable solutions to buildings and communities with a focus on health and wellness for our staff and clients. To that end, Integral consciously provides a nurturing working environment for its team, and has committed to applying Fitwel to four offices in three countries. As Fitwel Champions, we take pride in helping create and shape the built environment by supporting key initiatives for a better future, and our Fitwel Ambassadors look forward to helping create healthy, safe, and nurturing spaces.

“We always challenge ourselves to push the needle forward towards regenerative and healthy buildings, and we look for partners with the same vision. As Fitwel Champions, we can continue our ongoing commitment to sustainability and wellness for the industry at large, beginning with healthier and happier workspaces for our employees,” explains Integral Group CEO & President, Kevin Hydes.

Menkes Developments Ltd is an award-winning, fully integrated real estate company involved in the construction, ownership and management of office, industrial and residential properties. Founded in 1954 by Murray Menkes, the company is one of the largest private developers in Canada, with a primary focus in the Greater Toronto Area. Menkes knows that buildings play a critical role in promoting health & wellness to its occupants, and is proud to become a Fitwel Champion. As earlier adopters of the Fitwel certification system, Menkes will utilize this new evidence based standard to implement improvements at its managed office buildings to help promote opportunities for occupants to improve their health and wellbeing.

“Our goal in designing and managing work environments is to provide opportunities for occupants to live a healthier lifestyle. Fitwel will be used as a measuring stick in creating healthier works environments ” says Jon Douglas the Director of Sustainability for Menkes. “ We understand that people spend a large portion of their time indoors at work, and that the building has an impact on their health. We are making health & wellness a priority by working to create opportunities for occupants to be able to make choices that improve their health during their busy days.”

About Fitwel

[Fitwel](#) is a cost-effective, high impact building certification system that optimizes building occupant health and productivity through targeted improvements to



workplace design and operational policies. Fitwel has a vision for a healthier future where every building is enhanced to support the wellbeing of its occupants and surrounding communities. Fitwel's development was led by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the General Services Administration. The Center for Active Design is the operator of Fitwel, leading its widespread adoption and future development. Learn more at fitwel.org and follow Fitwel on twitter @fitwel.

About the Center for Active Design

The Center for Active Design (CfAD) is the leading international non-profit organization that uses design to foster healthy and engaged communities. CfAD takes a multi-disciplinary approach to translating research into practical design solutions. CfAD guides the creation and implementation of initiatives that respond to unique community priorities and result in measurable outcomes. For more information about CfAD, please visit www.centerforactivedesign.org and follow CfAD on Twitter @active_design.

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