



Choptank Transport

A Healthiest Maryland Businesses Success Story

Feel Well, Work Well

Choptank Transport is a leading 3PL (third-party logistics) provider that specializes in analyzing the logistics needs of shippers to determine the most suitable and efficient mode of transportation for their goods—such as refrigerated trucks, flatbed trucks, dry vans, rail or air services. Choptank has over 13,000 certified carriers in its database offering shippers and carriers alike a very valuable service.

Choptank's core segment comes from truckload freight – primarily food products, but its flatbed and intermodal divisions have grown as well. In June, Choptank launched a new refrigerated LTL division which is part of its aggressive plans for expansion.

The company's headquarters was founded in 1984 in Preston, Mary-



Choptank's workout room: (L-R) Charlene Keller on the treadmill, David Gardner on the multi-purpose bars, and Ernie Beath, lifting weights. This room is also used to provide exercise classes.

land. Over the last three years, the company has opened offices in Atlanta, Nashville, Denver, and Tampa with other major metropolitan locations planned.

Commitment to Employees

Choptank's mission statement exemplifies the company's commitment to its employees. "By providing an exceptional work environment, our team will be better able to provide superior service to our

customers offering effective and efficient freight movement solutions."

No one has shown this dedication more than Choptank's President/CEO, Geoff Turner, who strongly believes in the importance of offering education on health and wellness along with on-site access to exercise. When Choptank's first addition was built in 2005, an oversized office was changed into an exercise room.

Then, during the follow-

Choptank at a Glance:

- **Type of Business:**
Sales, Logistics, Warehousing
- **Location:**
Preston, MD; Atlanta, GA; Nashville, TN; Denver, CO; Tampa, FL
- **How Long in Business:**
29 years
- **Number of Employees:**
135
- **What worked:**
Making environmental changes that made on-site exercise and healthy eating easier; offering a variety of wellness options; fostering teamwork and camaraderie among employees





The beautiful James T. Wright Memorial Park near Choptank Transport, where employees often take a physical activity break.

ing expansion five years later, a larger exercise room was constructed that included a full shower and washroom along with a flat screen TV and additional exercise equipment.

Another environmental change to boost employee health was a vending machine overhaul. In 2012, Choptank took a closer look at its vending machine and asked the vending company to put healthier choices on the top racks and charge less for them. In addition, next to the vending machine is a 'fruit table' that is always fully stocked with bananas and either apples or oranges for .50 each. Other employee wellness activities include:

- ◆ Free annual flu shots
- ◆ Monthly massage days—a 20 minute massage is available for \$20
- ◆ Biggest Loser contests
- ◆ Blood pressure screenings
- ◆ Biometric screenings
- ◆ Smoking cessation classes

Exciting New Program: Real Age Wellness Series

The Real Age Wellness Series is a year-long program generating a lot of excitement at Choptank Transport. Participating employees are asked to go online and complete a real age test that evaluates their current health status through questions about diet, exercise, mental health, smoking and other topics. They are provided with personalized recommendations to improve their health based on their responses.

Then, participants attend monthly lectures led by Paula Greer, MSN, a nurse-midwife with over 30 years' experience and a passion for promoting wellness and preventive care throughout Maryland. Through her lectures, Paula provides encouragement, support and guidance on reaching health and fitness goals. Employees who make the most progress toward their health goals are eligible to win one of three prizes: a weekend retreat with a personal trainer on the Choptank River; \$500 gift certificate for exercise equipment of the winner's choice; or the grand prize—an all-expense paid trip to New York City to be in the audience of the Dr. Oz Show.

Measurable Successes

Overall, Choptank's wellness efforts are making a measurable difference: in the first three months of the wellness program, average employee weight dropped by 15 pounds and av-

erage BMI dropped from 31 to 29.8. Additionally, three employees with blood pressure readings over 140/90 had reduced readings by the third wellness visit, and 57 percent of participants had lowered at least one number.

Choptank's management team takes employee health and wellness very seriously. A healthy workforce tends to be a happy workforce and working toward a healthy lifestyle together creates teamwork and camaraderie.

Pam Hutchinson, Choptank's Human Resources Manager, says, "Some companies might view a wellness program as merely an unnecessary expense, but we view it as an investment. After all—if you ran a manufacturing facility, you would take the time to maintain your equipment so it could operate in the most efficient manner possible. Why wouldn't you give your employees the same consideration? It's the right thing to do and it's just good business."



The 'Fruit Table' in the break room is always stocked with bananas, apples and oranges, available for .50 each.