Their BeWell story
James F. Fayne and Anatol Shmelev, PhD: First prize BeWell winners!

James F. Fayne, Library Specialist at the Hoover Institution Library and Archives (HILA), has been a BeWell Program participant for six years. Learning of this year’s BeWell Refer-a-Colleague Program, James convinced Anatol Shmelev, PhD, Robert Conquest Curator for Russia and Eurasia, to join the BeWell Program — and per contest rules, both completed their Screening & Advising by August 15 and were entered (as a pair) into a drawing for taxable cash prizes.

James and Anatol each won the top prize: $1,000 each!

Here’s their BeWell story.

How do you two know each other?

Anatol began working at Stanford in 1997. James joined in 2011, and immediately started participating in the BeWell Program. Since they work together, they often eat lunch at the Arrillaga Dining Room. Anatol realized that James had had great results with BeWell and had learned a lot about nutrition.

How did this referral come about?

Through their work collaboration/friendship, Anatol’s respect for James led him to participate in BeWell again in 2017 after a hiatus of several years. To quote Anatole, “James is an inspiration to me.”

Referrer: How long have you been with BeWell, and what do you especially like about the program?

When James joined Stanford in 2011, he did the BeWell Screening & Advising. At the time, he wanted to stop smoking, he weighed 253 pounds and his HDL was very low HDL and he was advised to contact his doctor. However, as a former Marine, James liked a blunt, straightforward approach. He told the BeWell coach that he was going to stop smoking on his own and if he couldn't do it within the next year he would come back and ask for a referral.

One year later, not having been able to stop on his own, he was referred to the program run by Jayna Rogers. It was a huge success. James has just celebrated his fifth year of not smoking. He wants to give a special shout out to Jayna and her program. Additionally, he wants to give a shout out to both Sarah Meyer and Amanda Perez, his earlier BeWell Coaches, who made him feel very comfortable. He says he refers smokers to Jayna’s program all the time but he recognizes that “they are ready when they are ready.”

BeWell has literally changed James’ life. He likes the accountability in addition to the financial rewards. He prepares for the program by making sure that he loses a little weight before he comes. He lost significant weight thanks to the BeWell program and an app called Fat Secret.

Referred: Tell us about your first experience at BeWell. What perks and resources are you looking forward to trying out?

Anatol came to BeWell shortly after it started and also received some stern advice. However, he had a different reaction than James. He felt he was being nagged and didn't feel that the financial incentive was worthwhile.

However, having known James over the years and having seen him stop smoking and then lose weight, thanks to BeWell, Anatol decided to go back in 2017. His coach was Marlon, and Anatol said he had a “much better experience.” Marlon was very supportive. Anatol intends to return
next year. In addition, he would be happy to refer others. He recognizes especially that as we grow older it is critically important to pay attention to your numbers. He says it is much easier to catch bad habits before you face illness — and coming to BeWell is quicker and easier than having to make an appointment with your doctor. In addition, both he and James believe that money is a significant motivator.

**If we were to do another Refer-A-Colleague program in the future, what words of wisdom would you give to those who did not participate this year?**

James’ advice is to register early and set your goals for the year. In other words, don’t wait. James also recommended that everyone’s goal should be a small movement in the right direction. “You don’t need to move the rock of Gibraltar.”