Javier Velez has worked for the County for 28 years, 17 years in the Health and Hospital System and the last 9 as a Utility Worker for Facilities and Fleet at the County Government Center.

**His story:** He has been on a mission to change his lifestyle since his last annual health exam about a year ago when Javier was diagnosed as a prediabetic. With a family history of diabetes, he knew that he “needed to change my lifestyle” not just “go on a diet.”

**Changes to be made:** With his newfound motivation, Javier has lost over 30 pounds by eating healthier and letting go of his fondness for sweets. “I had to let go of ice cream and cookies,” he shared. Instead of soda, Javier chooses water. By bringing lunch to work, he can control the portion size and type of food he eats. Lean proteins such as chicken and fish are his favorites along with plenty of vegetables.

**Physical Activity:** Javier also makes exercise part of his everyday life by walking every evening after dinner with his wife. He also occasionally plays basketball and participates in the annual EWD activity campaign March Into May. He enjoys the at-work physical activity programs because his coworkers participate together and they motivate and inspire one another. The team camaraderie, laughter and positive attitude help to make work fun.

**Healing habits:** He recognizes the importance of sleep as a part of maintaining his physical and mental well-being. Taking a nap when he gets home from work allows him to do more throughout the day, by simply resting a bit.

Finally, Javier also credits his faith and spirituality in helping him manage his stress. He works at enjoying his life and being grateful for his good fortune in health and well-being.

Javier credits the changes he made for feeling better, improving his health status and overall well-being.

"I needed to change my lifestyle and not just go on a diet."