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IDEA Health & Fitness Association Announces Results of Fitness Industry Salary Survey

Sixth Bi-Annual Compensation Survey Demonstrates Stable Salaries and Benefits for Fitness Professionals while Reinforcing High Earning Potential for Pilates and Yoga Instructors

San Diego – May 16, 2005 – IDEA Health & Fitness Association, the leading membership organization of health and fitness professionals worldwide with nearly 20,000 members in more than 80 countries, has released the results of its 2004 IDEA Fitness Industry Salary Survey. The findings reveal an overall positive outlook, bolstered by continued employment growth as well as an increase in salaries and benefits for fitness professionals. For the first time, the survey also tracked wages for Pilates and yoga instructors, a group that reported the highest wages among fitness professionals.

The sixth bi-annual survey polled more than 500 IDEA business, program directors and personal trainer members across North America, representing a cross-section of owners, program directors and personal fitness trainers at multipurpose health clubs, personal training gyms, fitness-only health clubs, Pilates or yoga studios, college campuses, corporate and hospital fitness centers as well as parks and recreation programs. Regardless of their location, 81 percent of fitness staff surveyed reported tenure of one year or longer with the same business.

This year's survey also disclosed that Pilates and yoga instructors earn more per hour than most personal trainers. The 2004 criteria for hiring and determining pay were similar to IDEA's previous compensation surveys. Overall, some salaries rose while most wages stayed the same or increased between \$1 and \$4 per hour. Salaries kept pace with inflation while most wages lagged. The outlook for pay raises in 2005, however, was rated as "very likely" or "somewhat likely" for full-time fitness/program directors and personal training directors. Unlike other salaries surveys, IDEA also collected unique information, including the top three criteria for hiring and promotion. According to the survey, the most important considerations are skills and abilities, certification and years of experience.

According to Kathie Davis, executive director and co-founder of IDEA Health & Fitness Association, this bi-annual survey provides a vital benchmark for choosing and compensating a wide range of fitness professionals. "IDEA's Fitness Industry Salary Survey offers a crucial snapshot of salary and wage trends along with the industry's latest hiring and pay considerations," she said. "Now more than ever, fitness professionals have greater opportunities to inspire the world to fitness while building highly rewarding and profitable careers."

Employment in the fitness sector is expected to grow, as indicated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. According to a 2005 U.S. Department of Labor report, fitness trainers and group exercise instructors are among the fastest growing occupations in the United States, with faster

than average growth expected through 2012. “Growing interest in fitness activities is partly responsible for the rising tide of job choices in the industry,” continued Davis. “IDEA continues to take a leadership role in collecting important salary and compensation data to assist both employers and fitness professionals in making informed decisions.”

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In comparing the latest survey results to the previous survey conducted in 2002, other noteworthy trends were identified:

- For directors paid by salary, hours stayed stable and salaries increased. For those paid hourly or per class/session, wages were stable and hours worked increased;
- Group exercise coordinators paid by salary had a small drop in pay but also worked fewer hours than in 2002. Coordinators paid hourly worked more hours, while their wages decreased slightly;
- Personal trainers worked one hour more per week and earned \$1 more per hour in wages;
- Fitness instructors affiliated with wellness and recreation programs in corporations, colleges and hospitals continue to demonstrate a steady increase in hourly wages as well as in hours worked, although they still work part-time primarily;
- Hours and wages for group fitness instructors teaching classes such as step and mixed-impact, stayed the same;
- Insurance coverage and child-care discounts have improved since 2002;
- Pay raises for staff positions are not likely in 2005. Owners and managers reported that a pay increase was likely for directors, group exercise coordinators and fitness floor staff. However, raises are unlikely for personal trainers and instructors; and
- The fitness industry excels in offering free or discounted childcare options in comparison to other businesses as reported in the U.S. 2004 National Compensation Survey (NCS);

The complete IDEA Fitness Industry Salary Survey results, including multi-year comparisons and breakdowns by geographic region and type of business are available for a fee by calling 1.800.999.4332, ext 7 or through www.ideafit.com/pro_education.

About IDEA Health & Fitness Association

IDEA Health & Fitness Association is the world’s leading membership organization of health and fitness professionals, with nearly 20,000 members in more than 80 countries. Since 1982, IDEA has provided health and fitness professionals with pertinent information, educational opportunities, career development programs and industry leadership while helping them enhance the quality of life worldwide through safe, effective fitness and lifestyle programs. For more information on IDEA events, publications, educational products, member services or other activities, visit www.ideafit.com.

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