

## New Fitness Court in Gardner

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, City of Gardner, and National Fitness Campaign Make Fitness Free for Everyone in Gardner

***State-of-the-Art Outdoor Fitness Court® Coming to Gardner High School***

(GARDNER, MA - December 2, 2022) — Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, the City of Gardner, and [National Fitness Campaign](#) (NFC) today announced a partnership to bring an outdoor Fitness Court® to Gardner, Massachusetts. The Fitness Court®, located at Gardner High School, will open Wednesday, December 7, 2022 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10:00am.

This Fitness Court® was developed by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, the City of Gardner, and NFC to expand free access to high quality workouts and create equitable access to exercise for communities around the state. The Fitness Court® is the world's best outdoor gym that lets people use their own body weight to get a complete workout using seven exercise stations.

Created with people aged 14 and over, and with all abilities in mind, the workouts are adaptable for all fitness levels, allowing participants to move at their own pace. Users also may download the free [Fitness Court App](#) which acts as a coach-in-your-pocket and enhances the outdoor gym into a digitally supported wellness experience.

“Blue Cross is committed to helping people live healthy lives and eliminating the physical and social barriers that lead to health disparities,” said Jeff Bellows, Vice President of Corporate Citizenship and Public Affairs at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. “We’re proud to partner with NFC and the city to launch a Fitness Court® that will provide Gardner residents a

communal gathering space and access to premiere free outdoor fitness opportunities."

Gardner is one of 15 outdoor Fitness Courts® in a series of Blue Cross Fitness Courts that will be constructed in easily accessible public spaces throughout 2022-2023. Blue Cross' partnership with NFC is part of the company's strengthened corporate citizenship commitment to promote health justice in communities across the Commonwealth. Over the next five years, Blue Cross will provide \$16 million in grants and volunteer support to not-for-profits working to address food, environmental and racial justice in Massachusetts communities. This work supports the company's overall pledge [announced in 2021](#) to be a leader in addressing health inequities across the Commonwealth.

"We have made a lot of investments lately to increase our recreational opportunities in Gardner," said Gardner Mayor Michael Nicholson. "This new Fitness Court® will help our schools' physical education classes expand their offerings and also bring a new option for the public at large to use and increase their fitness opportunities. I am grateful to the National Fitness Campaign, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, and Congresswoman Trahan for assisting the City in obtaining the funding needed to make this project happen. I can't wait to see the new opportunities the Fitness Court® will open up for the City and its residents."

"As a former high school athlete, I know just how important it is to invest in public fitness facilities for both students and city residents alike,"

said Congresswoman Lori Trahan. "I'm proud to see funds from the American Rescue Plan being used to support the installation of a new outdoor Fitness Court®. I commend Mayor Nicholson for his decision to make this important investment and his deep commitment to the health of Gardner residents."

"The Fitness Court® installation will not only benefit our school programs (physical education classes and interscholastic athletics), but also our recreational programming," said Gardner Public Schools Athletic Director and City Recreation Director Dan Forte. "We are committed to

finding creative, quality and immersive opportunities for our students to stay active and this opens up a new set of opportunities for us.”

“National Fitness Campaign is proud to welcome the City of Gardner to the campaign as a leader in health and wellness for their residents. We look forward to their continued partnership and investment as a healthy community in Massachusetts,” said Mitch Menaged, Founder of National Fitness Campaign.

Residents are invited to attend the launch event on Wednesday, December 7, 2022 at 10am to try the Fitness Court®. For more information, contact the Office of Mayor Mike Nicholson at 978-630-1490. For more information on Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts’ support of NFC, please visit <https://nationalfitnesscampaign.com/massachusetts>.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts ([bluecrossma.org](https://bluecrossma.org)) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We are committed to the relentless pursuit of quality, affordable and equitable health care with an unparalleled consumer experience. Consistent with our promise to always put our members first, we are rated among the nation's best health plans for member satisfaction and quality. Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), and [LinkedIn](#)

About the City of Gardner

Gardner, established in 1785, incorporated as a City in 1923, is home to 21,287 people (2020 Census). The City is governed by a Mayor and City Council. Gardner lies 30 miles northwest of Worcester and 60 miles northwest of Boston.

About the National Fitness Campaign

Founded in San Francisco in 1979, [National Fitness Campaign](#) (NFC) is a wellness consulting firm that provides programs and services to cities, schools and sponsors with the mission to build healthy communities. NFC delivers an integrated wellness initiative, centered on the world’s best outdoor gym: The Fitness Court®. The Campaign is planning its 500th Healthy Community, uniting

the country's largest public-private partnership in support of wellness with the goal of building a Fitness Court within a 10-minute bike ride of every American. Follow us on social media @NatFitCampaign and #Fitnesscourt.