

Jan Nolen

Office Manager

5 years with The Beach Company

Jan Nolen has been an instrumental part in The Beach Company's sustainability efforts throughout the past few years. The Sustainability Committee interviewed Jan to get her insights on many of the initiatives that she has helped to implement in our office to help our employees become more conscious of impact to the environment and our own personal health and wellness.

Question 1: "What are three things most beneficial changes that you've made since starting at the Jasper?"

There have been many positive changes within our office, some big and some small, that have been very well received by many of our employees. One of our most impactful improvements is the fact that we have now completely eliminated bottled water and canned sparkling water with the installation of a BEVI machine in our café area. It is estimated that we will have an annual savings of 17,280 bottles of water (small 8 oz.) and 12,000 aluminum cans from landfills based on our 1-year consumption prior to the Bevi install. This elimination of waste is not only great for the environment, but it also gave the company a cost savings of approximately \$730,000 annually from purchasing bottles and cans.

We also were thrilled to add a second SKYWELL water machine in our Jasper office. Both office levels now have sources of fresh, purified water to put into reusable cups/glasses. SKYWELL generates up to 5 gallons of clean drinking water per day, hot or cold, from the natural humidity in the air. The machine offers an interactive touchscreen to encourage usage and offers water consumption data and environmental facts.

My third favorite change that we made in 2023 was expanding our glassware, dishware, and flatware offering in The Jasper HQ office (i.e. coffee cups, dishes, bowls, silverware, glassware, silverware) to encourage our employees to use real dishware vs. paper/plastic when eating in the office. All associates are encouraged to use the dishware and place used items into the 3 dishwashers our new office has available between both office levels.

Question 2: "Besides the elimination of plastic and cans, what else have you been focused on in the office to help us minimize waste?"

We have drastically narrowed our office supply purchases to only items that we use on regular basis. We continue to focus on ordering our supplies in bulk as opposed to only when needed. I have found that this significantly helps to eliminate excess cardboard box waste along with internal packaging material waste. This focus on our office supply orders has quickly reduced excess items being purchased and never being used (ending up in the trash) as well as challenges our vendors to eliminate use of oversized boxes on smaller orders.

Question 3: "We've seen a lot of ergonomics changes that you've been implementing at our employee workstations. Could you tell us a bit more about this?"

As an initiative to help improve and sustain employee comfort and productivity at his or her respective workspace, I helped to create an Ergonomics committee with employee volunteers. Each committee member attended an ergonomic training class conducted by HUB International before reaching out to fellow associates. Ultimately, reference materials and self-assessments were sent to all our of associates that referenced ideal office set up from chairs, monitor, keyboard and general workspace to ensure proper ergonomic form. The goal was to generate awareness of key contact stress points, repetition, awkward posture and positions, etc. that could negatively affect employee health and ability to be productive in the workplace.

Once the Committee reviewed all the self-evaluations, an “ergonomic test workstation” with was created for employees to test out new equipment that would help alleviate the identified issues. Employees were encouraged to request any and all of the ergonomic workstation improvements that best fit their needs. The Committee continues to explore new workstation improvements to make sure our employees are comfortable throughout the workday.

Question 4: What are some other employee offerings that you have helped create or have promoted for mental and physical wellbeing of our team members?

Our Beach Company office was strategically designed to have many community spaces built throughout our two floors. These spaces include several outdoor balconies with seating for meetings, phone calls, or simply to catch one’s thoughts. It is encouraged by management to use these spaces and be mindful not to disturb fellow associates when in use.

Our HQ office also offers a personal-use wellness room with an oversized chair, footrest, sink and mini refrigerator with ability to lock door for privacy. The wellness room was specifically designed to allow an associate to come, relax and use the space for a number of reasons such as a new mother privacy room, not feeling well and need a place to close your eyes for a brief period, or turn the light off if needed and take a few moments yourself.

From the physical wellbeing standpoint, our employees have regular, complimentary access to a state-of-the-art fitness facility. This gym includes cardio machines, weights, and other exercise equipment, and the locker rooms include saunas and showers. In addition to the Jasper gym, I have strategically worked with our ground-floor high-end fitness studio, BASELINE, to set up a program where employees have the opportunity to participate in group fitness classes twice a week for free, led by the professional training staff in the studio. This has been a very well received fitness offering for many of our employees.