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Happiest place in California

Study: Sonoma County ranks first in state, fifth in nation for well-being

By [NATHAN HALVERSON](#)
THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

Published: Tuesday, February 16, 2010 at 4:03 a.m.

Do you have a smile on your face and a little extra pep in your step? Well, so does your neighbor.

A massive study released Monday determined that people in Sonoma County are happier and healthier than anywhere else in California -- and ranked fifth overall in the nation.

The Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, based on interviews with more than 353,000 Americans during 2009, asked people to assess their jobs, finances, health habits, mental attitudes and communities.

People in Sonoma County assessed themselves as having especially healthy behavior: meaning they ate healthy, consumed fruits and vegetables every week, exercised weekly and didn't smoke.

The Boulder, Colo., area ranked first in the nation overall. Also ranking higher than Santa Rosa overall were Grand Haven, Mich., Honolulu, and Provo, Utah.

Three other California areas ranked in the top 10: Santa Barbara, San Jose and Thousand Oaks.

At the bottom of the list was the area of Huntington, W. Va. Overall, the Southern states ranked worse than other regions.

The USA Today has [a complete list of the rankings](#)

Gallup surveyed 753 people in Sonoma County. The survey consisted of 42 questions that indexed results into five categories: life evaluation, emotional health, work environment,

physical health, healthy behavior, and basic access to things such as clean water, safe neighborhoods, fruits and vegetables, and health care.

Sonoma County ranked fifth overall in healthy behavior and 16th in work experience, which measures job satisfaction. It ranked 32nd in physical health and 33rd in emotional health.

You can reach Staff Writer Nathan Halverson at 703-1577 or nathan.halverson@pressdemocrat.com.

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