



KEY EVENTS 'N YOUR AREA

Central Arkansas & Beyond!

W.O.W. Fitness Marks 15 Years With Open House



by Today's Communique staff

"Don't give up. I don't care if you march in place. Don't let what everyone else looks like, stop you. We're all on different level and on different fitness journeys."

~Chanda McCuien-Olive, W.O.W. Fitness client-turned-instructor

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that in 2022, Arkansas ranked #6 in the nation in obesity with nearly 40% adults reporting being obese. Kameelah Wesley Harris, founder and owner of W.O.W. Fitness has been working to change that number, one pound at a time.

Nestled directly behind the Simmons Bank on University Avenue at 5523 Mabelvale Pike, W.O.W. Fitness celebrated its 15-year anniversary on Saturday, July 15 and Kameelah was excited for day. The 'community-gym' as she puts it, is open, airy, and has a welcoming vibe. The walls are aglow with photos on canvas of classes as well as clients-turned instructors. Proof that the 'War On Weight' is in high-gear!

With 15 years under her belt, Harris reflected on both successes and trials. Remember Zumba? 'Everyone' was into fitness then, she recalls. However, Covid-19 was something altogether different. Initially, it was tough; but W.O.W. was able to pivot. Says Harris, "We overcame it just like the world did." Still, "With fitness...you can't give it away and you cannot sell it. People have to want to have the fitness experience and over the years I've been able to market that experience."



W.O.W. Fitness Founder, Kameelah Wesley Harris (center) with her parents James and Therressa Wesley

The engineer-turned trainer was a client of someone else's when she decided to give training a try. Kameelah launched W.O.W. Fitness as its sole trainer and now the gym has 8 certified instructors, all of whom were once clients. Combined with virtual students, W.O.W. Fitness boasts a clientele of over 150 and counting.



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Dr. Sharon Richardson, a longtime client of W.O.W. Fitness has had Harris as trainer from almost the beginning. For Richardson, the client-trainer relationship has been much more than reaching a weight loss goal; Harris' energy keeps her coming back. "She has a wonderful spirit and encourages you and there is nothing, as far as she is concerned that you cannot do", Richardson says.

Richardson is not alone. "There are no strangers at W.O.W. Fitness; no matter who comes," exclaims Chanda McCuien-Olive. McCuien-Olive, was a client for 3 years prior to getting her trainer certification. Receiving the certification, however, was not the intended goal. In steps Harris.



*Dr. Sharon Richardson, Karla Scott, Darnetha McFarland,
Chanda McCuien Olive (kneeling)*

Kameelah saw the potential in McCuien-Olive and pushed her to get outside of comfort zone. For Kameelah, encouragement to get fit goes beyond seeing the pounds and inches melt away. A trainer was transitioning away from W.O.W. so she encouraged Chanda to try leading a class, especially since she'd been coming so frequently, she knew the routines. After some gentle nudging, Chanda gave it a try and the rest is history. She got her trainer certification and is now a staff member. As a student-turned instructor her advice to new students is simple, "Don't give up. I don't care if you march in place. Don't let what everyone else looks like, stop you. We're all on different levels and fitness journeys."

For Harris, the journey continues beyond the four walls of the gym. With both a solid staff and client roster, Harris is able to work on expanding into corporate fitness and community fitness with children. Just like the meaning of her first name, the future for W.O.W. Fitness is 'perfect and wonderful'.

To view photos from the open house, visit www.todayscommunique.com/

To learn more about W.O.W. Fitness head to www.wow-fitness.com/