

# BRINGING FITNESS TO SENIORS



Frederick  
Griffith of  
Anew Fitness  
offers beneficial  
fitness programs  
for older adults

*By Dean M. Shapiro, Senior Editor*

**F**itness and regular exercise are part of the regimens for millions of people around the world. However, one demographic in particular has traditionally been overlooked when it comes to taking care of their physical well-being: senior citizens.

Astutely perceiving a need to rectify this oversight, Frederick Griffith stepped into that void and is now making these healthy benefits available and accessible to those who are in the later years of their lives. As the founder and CEO of Anew Fitness, he and his team provide fitness programs for older adults throughout New Orleans and the surrounding region.

“What we are doing is changing how fitness is brought to seniors and how it is paid for,” Frederick explained. “A lot of the gym memberships are expensive and most of them don’t even target seniors anymore. So we are filling that gap and making our program affordable and available to them.”

Employing a series of modalities aimed at developing specific skills for his clientele, Frederick takes pride in the success his program has brought to thousands of seniors and he is eagerly looking forward to helping thousands more. And, as his success rate continues to soar, Frederick is envisioning taking his program nationwide.

His exercise programs are offered free of charge for the seniors, with the costs being borne by either the live-in facilities where the seniors are housed or by the city or parish that owns the recreational centers



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where the programs are offered.

Working closely with municipal officials and the owners of properties that house seniors in Orleans and Jefferson Parishes, Frederick is offering his program in more than 40 separate facilities and he expects to add St. Charles Parish to that list as well. Each session is an hour in length and 10 to 20 of them can be offered in a single day, spread out among Frederick’s instructors, Kelley Nelson, Jolanca LaSalle, Enrique Abada and Angele Marrero.

Frederick was inspired to create his Anew program after several years of taking care of his mother, Anna Hampton, who was diagnosed with an acute form of diabetes requiring amputation of half of one of her legs.

“From that day forward, I became her

caretaker,” Frederick said. As he made alterations to their apartment to accommodate her disability, he also began devising a fitness program to help her adjust.

Having diligently studied for many months to earn his personal training certification from the American Council of Exercise (ACE), Frederick mastered the exercise curriculum and became a kickboxing instructor.

His training came in handy when it was focused on the needs of his mother. He paid close attention to her physical therapy visits, noting how they used resistance bands and furniture as functional exercise equipment. One day, after the therapist left his mother’s apartment, she told Frederick, “That was easy. I could do more.”

“I thought to myself, ‘Yes, you can,’”



Frederick recalled. “The physical therapy had been helpful, but insurance would only pay for limited visits, so it was time for me to step in for my mother.”

Taking his trainer knowledge and what he had observed, Frederick developed a fitness plan for his mother. With the COVID-19 pandemic hitting New Orleans, he was unemployed and that provided the time he needed to work daily with her and create standardized training techniques for older adults. These included strength training with resistance bands, light wrist weights for shoulder raises, chair stretches, couch sit-ups and more.

“She became more independent and more of the mom I knew,” Frederick said. “What I realize now is that my mom was still teaching me. She was giving me my life’s path. I always knew I wanted to help people but working with my mother allowed me to target that age group and how I could assist them,” he added.

When the world reopened, post-pandemic, Frederick became a Planet Fitness trainer. He brought something uniquely different to the group classes he taught – specializing in working with middle age to older adults. Soon his classes were packed and he formed partnerships with AARP and the New Orleans Recreation Department (NORD) to recruit more participants.

These partnerships convinced Frederick that “you can do what you love and make a living from it.”

Although his mother passed away in 2022 from cancer, he is grateful that she witnessed the beginning of his success. “She saw what I did with AARP, leading exercises at Senior Fest, and a lot of the other things I did that led me here. When she died, I thought about quitting, but I had to think about the people I was helping. That’s what kept me going.”

Going out on his own with his venture he also added the Council on Aging as one of his sponsors. Their sponsorship, along with AARP, NORD and the privately owned senior facilities allowed him to hire

instructors and expand the program to the level it presently enjoys, with even more participants envisioned.

“I want to publicly thank the sponsors we now have and I’m letting it be known that we would welcome others as well,” Frederick said.

Anew Fitness programs include four modalities – Line Dance, Chair Yoga, Chair Aerobics and Resistance Strength. He explained what each of them accomplishes.

“Line dance is for standing and moving and good for people with balance issues. They can take it real slow and learn how to move their feet in coordination with their mind,” he explained.

“Chair Yoga is good for flexibility and stretching,” he continued. “Chair Aerobics is good for the seniors who are in wheelchairs if standing is too long and too much for their knees. And the Resistance Strength portion uses our own resistance bands and it is built for strength.

“So every modality helps build the strength and confidence in older Americans,” he said.

“My sales pitches to the property owners and the managers and the program directors are that, this program, being held on-site, will get the seniors out of their homes. They’ll come out for it. There’s a social aspect to it in which they’re seeing



other people. My instructors have the music which brings back really good memories for them as they’re working out. It also keeps them living longer. So you have more active, more vibrant seniors in all of your properties.”

*To find out more about Anew Fitness and where a class is being held, call (504) 327-7048, email them at [Info@anewfitness.com](mailto:Info@anewfitness.com) or visit their website at <https://www.anewfitness.com/>. Classes are free and open to all who are interested. No appointments are necessary.*

