



JWCFF FILE PHOTO

Using exercise, nutrition to change lives of the homeless, others in need

The Jim White Community Fitness Foundation provides services and programs that uplift homeless and low-income citizens and help them become healthier and more physically fit. Above, Jim White and volunteer Stacy Ortiz prepare to serve food to people in need. **Page 12**

Team JWCFF volunteer trainers lead an exercise class during a three-week fitness and nutrition program for residents of Atlantis Apartments in Virginia Beach.



JWCFF FILE PHOTO

The Editor's Pen **Teensy, weensy steps towards healthier food**

In case you missed it, within the last month, several mainstream media outlets have reported announcements from major food producers about eliminating unsavory practices that compromise the quality of our food.

Smithfield Foods vowed to do away with gestration crates for pregnant pigs by 2017, and Tyson followed suit. General Mills pledged to eliminate GMO ingredients from Cheerios. Campbell Soups said it would continue reducing calories in its products.

While these changes are worthwhile, they represent tiny steps towards safer food. The proposed improvements are all voluntary. That seems to be just fine with officials at the FDA who're supposed to safeguard our food supply.

Are these efforts genuine? Or are they smokescreens designed to placate growing criticism from safe-food advocates?

It's good that gestrating sows may finally be uncaged. What about the millions of other pigs, chickens, and cows who spend their lives in huge windowless factories, standing in their own feces, barely able to move around, fed antibiotics to fatten them up and keep them alive long enough to be slaughtered? It's not just about humane treatment of animals. It's also about problems with the meat we eat.

What about the enormous amounts of salt in canned soups? Who knew GMO ingredients were in Cheerios? And what about their many other packaged foods?

GMO labeling laws have been passed in two states and are pending in 30 others, Virginia not included. Meanwhile, Monsanto and the Grocery Manufacturers Association are spending billions to keep us ignorant about what's in our food.

The food-activist organizations work hard every day to educate citizens about the many problems with our food supply and resulting health problems. If you're ready to educate yourself about what you're eating, check out the web sites listed on Page 16.

- Loretta Kahn



Team JWFF members pose in one of the studios. Most team members go from fitness to philanthropy.

JWFF file photo

Jim White Community Fitness Foundation (JWFF)

Changing lives of the homeless, others in need through exercise and nutrition

Jim White knows a thing or two about exercise and healthy eating. He's been in the business for more than 10 years and owns two Jim White Fitness & Nutrition Studios in Virginia Beach.

Over the years he's helped thousands of people live happier, healthier, more fulfilling lives by losing weight, getting off medications, and ridding themselves of disease.

His credentials extend far beyond being a gym owner. He holds a bachelor's degree in dietetics. He's a registered dietitian and certified health fitness specialist. And he has enough awards and accolades to fill a large wall.

Mr. White, 33, is also a compassionate Christian with a strong history of volunteerism and a member of Galilee Episcopal Church.

Three years ago, following a divine revelation, he established a nonprofit foundation that helps community citizens who can't pay for his studios' services become healthi-

er and more physically fit.

"What was happening is that when we'd go out with clients exercising down at the beach, we started to see a lot of homeless people in the area, even a lot of obese homeless people," he said.

"So I thought, 'If you can use your spiritual gifts to help people when you're making a profit, why not also do this for people who can't afford to pay?'"

"I have a strong faith background, and I really hold true to Isaiah 40:29-31, knowing that only the Lord's power can empower people, knowing what exercise and nutrition does to change lives."

"We just started from there, volunteering with the homeless and others in need." The idea quickly took off, attracting many eager volunteers with nutrition and/or fitness backgrounds.

Members of the Jim White Community Fitness Foundation (They refer to themselves as "Team JWFF.") have since been

busy helping a multitude of local nonprofits, serving people in many ways.

They've cooked and served healthy meals and conducted exercise boot camps for residents and clients of Seton Youth Shelters, Potters House, Kids in the Kitchen (a Junior League initiative), the UP Center, and other nonprofits.

They've hosted "Lose Your Weight-Lose Your Clothes" clothing drives that benefitted Goodwill and the Salvation Army. The drives targeted studio clients who'd lost weight, urging them to donate their gently-worn clothes that no longer fit to help others.

They've partnered with The Got Sole Project to collect lightly-used shoes and donate them to families in need.

In 2012 Team JWFF collected and donated about 800 pounds of food to the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia, and even more last year. In addition to partnering with community programs to feed the hungry, they've provided Thanksgiving and

Christmas meals to individual families in need.

Some of their many other projects have included donating toiletry packages to homeless citizens and "Stuff the Hummer" toy drives for Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters.

Last month Team JWCF members conducted a three-week program at Atlantis Apartments, a low-income housing complex. They treated residents to exercise boot camps and nutrition education sessions.

Mr. White defines all of these community-outreach projects as "random acts of kindness."

Over time, he came to realize the foundation needed a clearly defined, more-structured approach to its outreach work.

THE L.I.F.T. PROGRAM

He responded to the need for change by creating the L.I.F.T. Program (Lifting spirits, Improving Bodies, Feeding Souls, Transforming Lives).

This four-week program has a standard curriculum, making it easier to implement and replicate. "We've done all of the elements of this program, just not together," Mr. White pointed out.

L.I.F.T. will make its inaugural run with two four-week sessions at the Judeo-Christian Outreach Center (JCOC), beginning March 1. A maximum of 20 residents will be able to participate in each session.

Week One: - Following an orientation, each participant will be given a pedometer, tee shirt, duffle bag, "Fit in 30" book, and other educational materials. They will have two workouts. "At JCOC one of the big things will be our walking/jogging program," Mr. White said. When the weather's inclement, we'll do our boot camp indoors."

Week Two: Nutrition education sessions begin. "We'll teach general nutrition, talk about portion sizes, and discuss what to eat in fast food restaurants," he stated. "These are really a hit; a lot of people are in need of nutrition education." The week ends with two workout sessions and tracking participants' steps for the two weeks.

When asked about fast food selections, Mr. White replied, "Well, of course no supersizing. Look for trade-offs. It's okay to eat a hamburger once in a while, but instead of a hamburger and soda, try the burger with sliced apples and skim milk."

"Fast food restaurants are required to list calories, so I would recommend an entire



JWCFF volunteers prepare healthy food for residents of the JCOC.

JWCFF file photo

lunch with not more than 500 calories. You'd be amazed that some sandwiches have 800 or 1,000 calories plus over 2,000 milligrams of sodium."

"So watching calorie intake, watching sodium, and always looking for whole wheat buns, if they're an option, are some ways to make healthier choices. You can also take off some of the cheese and skip the bacon bits. That might also cut out some calories."

"Salads sometimes are not the best choice. They can have as many calories as some burgers and fries. So if you get a salad, look for balsamic vinaigrette dressing," he concluded.

Week Three: A cooking demonstration begins the session. "We cook something that's easy to make and affordable," Mr. White said. Tuna burgers are one example.

After the demo and sampling, each participant is given a package containing all the ingredients and the recipe. "That way, they can continue learning how to cook a little bit healthier," he added. Two more workout sessions are included.

Week Four: The closing ceremony and motivational session are held. "We bring in a speaker to lift up spirits and help keep participants energized and motivated," stated Mr. White.

"We're also going to have one of our participating restaurants cater the session with a healthy meal."

Certificates will be presented to successful graduates, those who've completed at least 80 percent of program activities. Grocery store gift cards are also donated.

In addition, to help graduates continue their healthy journey, L.I.F.T. has teamed with the YMCA and Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation to give them membership discounts once they leave JCOC.

Throughout the program, Team JWCFF volunteers monitor participants' attitudes, efforts, and attendance rates. The individual with the best overall evaluation receives the honor of being named a "L.I.F.T. Ambassador for Life."

Other selected graduates help with the next program session, giving them an opportunity to demonstrate leadership.

Mr. White notes that participants of all of their charitable programs are called "members," the same designation given to studio clients. "And we give them the same royal treatment we give paying clients coming into our studios," he emphasized.

"We want people to experience what it's like to feel good, have energy, sleep better, and decrease their disease risk. This gives them a chance, even if it's just 30 days. You know, 30 days can develop a habit."

The Judeo-Christian Outreach Center hosts a huge daily community dinner for homeless and low-income citizens. It also shelters up to 50 homeless citizens at a time

and provides an array of programs and services to lift them from crisis to independence.

Supporting the JCOC is far from new to the Jim White Community Fitness Foundation. They've prepared and served healthy meals for JCOC's community dinner program, and they donate to its food pantry on a regular basis.

Another major contribution they made was setting up a workout room on the campus, complete with weightlifting machines and a treadmill, all donated by the foundation. Many residents use the workout room regularly.

Todd Walker, JCOC executive director, looks forward to the new L.I.F.T. Program coming to the facility.

"The Jim White foundation has a great understanding that a homeless person's health is severely impacted when living outside and not eating regularly or sometimes not at all," he said.

"When they're in survival mode, they don't think about staying in shape or eating healthy. Jim's L.I.F.T. program focuses on inspiring our homeless residents spiritually, educating them on nutrition and fitness, and empowering them through workouts."

"We are excited about this program as another component to helping our residents return to being independent and productive members of society."

Following its pilot run at JCOC, the foundation plans to take L.I.F.T. to other shelters — choosing those that align with its mission.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

JWCFF depends on the support of community-minded citizens to carry out its many ambitious charitable programs. There are several ways you can get involved.

**Jim White
Community
FOUNDATION**

757-422-4728 • info@
jwfitnessfo

**Drop off sneakers
- 24 hours - at either Jim W**

1577 Laskin Rd.,
Suite 105,
757-422-4728

He gives strength to the weary and increases their power, the tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall, but they will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

"Lifting Soles:" JWCF has teamed with J&A Racing, sponsor of the Shamrock Marathon and other popular races, for "Lifting Soles," a new fundraiser that's just getting underway.

New and gently-worn men's and women's sneakers, all sizes, are being collected for L.I.F.T. participants. The drive began January 21 and runs through March 1.

Now's a good time to clear your closets of the sneakers you no longer wear. You may drop them off 24 hours a day at either Jim White studio location or at Final Kick Sports store, 2865 Lynnhaven Drive, Suite C-3.

Feeding Souls Food Drive: Providing those in need with healthy recipes and foods to make on their own is one component that makes L.I.F.T. successful. The Feeding Souls Food Drive collects healthy nonperishable items throughout the year for L.I.F.T. participants. Help give back to our community in the battle against hunger.

Foundation Holiday Party. For the last three years, the holiday party has been a major fundraiser for foundation initiatives, getting organizations together and raising awareness.

Volunteers are always needed, especially individuals with nutrition or exercise backgrounds. And small or large donations are always appreciated.

"Giving is one of the top virtues in life; it keeps our world going and fuels the mind, body and soul," Mr. White stated. "We appreciate all we have, and we plan to continue to help our community become stronger and healthier."

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DATION

wfitnessfoundation.com
undation.com

or nonperishable foods
ite Fitness & Nutrition Studio

2861 Lynnhaven Dr.
Suite 110,
757-412-0019

es the power of the weak. Even youths grow
nd fall; but those who hope in the LORD
wings like eagles; they will run and not
— Isaiah 40:29-31