

SHELTER TESTIMONIALS



STACEY MURIE

Development Coordinator at Horizons for Youth Shelter

Bootcamps for Change has made an incredible difference in the lives of the youth at our shelter. Many youth were raised in unsupportive homes and failed to learn healthy behaviours in their early lives. Moreover, the longer a youth remains homeless, the more likely they are to experience declining mental and physical health and nutritional deprivation. Bootcamps for Change provides a critical health intervention for homeless youth by encouraging them to get active and practice a healthy lifestyle in a fun, supportive and engaging manner. Two of our clients have also received Bootcamp for Change Scholarships and became certified personal trainers. Katie helped these youth build connections in the fitness community and find employment as personal trainers, helping them escape from the cycles of homelessness and poverty. I highly recommend Katie. I cannot think of anyone else that can match her natural leadership ability, professionalism, passion, resourcefulness and innovative-thinking.

TANIQUE PARREIRA

Program Facilitator Eva's Phoenix for Homeless Youth



This stands as a reference for "Bootcamps for Change" - to make mention of their involvement in facilitating their workout programs with our agency. Katie and her colleagues successfully initiated and worked with a group of young people who live at Eva's Phoenix. Both Katie and her team members were extremely dedicated in delivering these workshops to our youth and displayed great professionalism, patience and kindness while leading their workshops. We at Eva's Initiatives are very grateful to have had the chance to work with Katie and her team members. This is an organization that we plan on partnering with again in the near future, with pleasure! The rapport that was built between Katie's team and our youth was phenomenal! Our young people looked forward to having Katie come in each week to facilitate the workout sessions, and were very encouraged by interacting with her team.

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



JOSHUA CAYENNE

Personal Trainer

I was lucky enough to have the pleasure of working with Katie and the Bootcamps for Change initiative. This was truly an amazing experience and a great turn out from the youth in terms of participation. I could see the amount of work put in by Katie to build the amazing relationships to get such a turn out. The trainers involved did a great job instructing as well as being very supportive throughout the whole experience. I have worked with youth's from many different backgrounds and it has been a long time since i have been apart of something that has run so smoothly and i was happy to be apart of something so impact-full. I recommend this program to anyone who wants to incite change for those who aren't afforded the same opportunities. You never know, you could be the difference! I would definitely love to come back again.



TY MCDONALD

Head Trainer Body By Chosen

I recently had the experience of working with Bootcamps for Change and they gave me the opportunity to teach a fitness class to youth experiencing homelessness. Katie had reached out to me asking if I'd like to stop by to help out and I'm glad she did. I think what she, along with the entire Bootcamps for Change community, are doing for these youth is incredible and should be supported whether or not you're a fitness professional. Growing up in an environment of poverty and hardship myself, I know that all it takes is for one kind gesture from somebody to completely change the trajectory of an individual's lives. It sure did for me. So there is no doubt in my mind that this program will change the lives of the MANY youth who just need that positive line of support to help take control of their futures. Thanks again for the opportunity Katie and I wish you all the best with your future endeavours.



KELEIGH MCCALL

Personal Training Specialist (GoodLife Fitness), Miss Universe Canada Finalist

This week I had the privilege to teach a fitness class at a Toronto youth shelter for at risk and homeless youth at Horizons for Youth. 7 years of teaching children and adult fitness classes and this was my favourite class that I ever taught. Let's keep working together to become physically stronger, healthier and more fit. It was energizing to be surrounded by people who are focused on moving forward. Thank you Bootcamps for Change for the work you do in Toronto. Let's sweat together again.

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



DAVID KIM-MACKINNON

Group Fitness Equinox, Sweat & Tonic Instructor

I recently had an amazing experience of working with Bootcamps for Change and they gave me the opportunity to teach a outdoor fitness class to youth experiencing homelessness. I first met with Katie and she debriefed me on the whole situation with regards to who I was dealing with and the background on the specific shelter I was going to. I felt very aware of the entire situation, and very comfortable interacting with the youth. I was inspired to give back to my community because I come from a similar background, where I was misguided and troubled as a youth. I also feel that fitness & sports were my healthy outlet and that it allowed me to overcome my hardships. It was an amazing experience and I would definitely do it again and recommend this program highly to anyone in the fitness industry!



KRISTIN DALZIEL

Lululemon Ambassador, Barry's Bootcamp, SoulCycle Instructor

I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to teach at Horizons for Youth in partnership with Bootcamps For Change. I was assisted by one of their scholarship recipients, Hash, who was wonderful and already had a great connection with the participants in the shelter. It was one of the most satisfying experiences getting to show the youth a couple moves they could do on their own and help them overcome any fears they had related to exercise. It was all smiles! I'm grateful to have been a part of such a fantastic cause and can't recommend the team or experience enough. Go do something good today!



ODETA KASA

Equinox, Sweat & Tonic Instructor

Two days ago, I had the opportunity to work with Bootcamps for Change at Horizons for Youth. I always knew I wanted to do something bigger with my fitness background and platform, and I'm so grateful I was given this experience. It brought me so much joy to take the youth through an exercise program, even sharing my love for boxing with them by taking them through a few combos (which they loved!!!), and the excitement and happiness it brought them reminded me why I do what I do. Definitely will be contributing more of my time to this amazing initiative!

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



TANIA ATKIN

WBFF Pro Athlete, Ms. Fitness Canada Oxygen Magazine

I recently had the experience of instructing & mentoring with "Bootcamps for Change" and teaching a fitness workshop to homeless youth at Toronto's "Horizons 4 Youth" shelter. One of my 2019 initiatives as a Professional Fitness Athlete was to provide fitness mentoring and mindfulness to homeless youth in my community. Upon arrival at Horizons, we were graciously greeted by all of the staff with gratitude for the donations and self-care gift bags that were provided by Atkin Athletic. I was impressed with the facility and management team at Horizons; including Katie from Bootcamps for Change. I felt very welcomed and needed by the residents who were very receptive to the "Band Bootcamp" and "Stretch & Mindfulness" class. It's clear to me that working with vulnerable youth is essential in their recovery, reintegration to society and overall health & wellness. Fitness HAS to be available to our entire population; especially vulnerable youth. What I noticed most was a clear shift in the participants' mind state, energy and overall happiness when they left the room. The class was a success!



ALVARO MEMBRENO

Fitness Trainer GoodLife Fitness + Studio Fitness

Community Giving with Bootcamps for Change - I had the honour and privilege to get invited to train and coach at Horizons for Youth (Youth and Homeless Shelter). I was able to get out there on the floor and bring that coaching energy and passion for the young and open-minded. It was really motivating and empowering. The most I got out from this, is empowering those who want to make a change. No matter what that persons' current situation is, helping someone and being able to spark a change or a thought is simple incredible and the most rewarding. Again huge thanks to Bootcamps for Change and Katie Heggteit for giving me this opportunity.



STRIVE LIFE ATHLETICS

Owned by Nike Athlete Ryan Caicco

We have the privilege of certifying Youths part of Bootcamps for Change looking to get into the fitness industry & couldn't be more thrilled with the outcome thus far! Also, we've attended and taught youths at Horizons for Youth & absolutely love what Bootcamps for Change & Horizons for Youth are doing for these kids...They are smart, energetic, lively & are eager to learn! We can't wait to certify the next youth!

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



BRIT MCQUARRIE

FST Level 2, Certified Life Coach

I recently had the experience of volunteering with Bootcamps for Change and teaching a couple of fitness classes to the homeless youth at Horizons for Youth. I was first introduced to Bootcamps for Change through Instagram and reached out to the founder, Katie, to host a class at Forme Fitness with Bruce Waithe to help raise awareness and funds for the cause. Since then I've continued to be inspired by the growth of Bootcamps for Change through everything that they are doing. Bootcamps for Change gives youth an opportunity to learn about and lead a healthier lifestyle. These kids haven't had it easy and they continue to show up day after day and that is one of the most inspirational things of all. This quote was recently brought to my attention, "We do not need policing, we need relationships." And it is SO true. Developing relationships and connections is so important. So, I challenge you to make the time and give back to your community, not just by donating money and clothes (although this is a wonderful way to give back as well) but by getting to personally know and share time with those in need. Bootcamps for Change has given me this opportunity and I look forward to continue to work with them.



RICHELLE RAMIREZ

Personal Trainer (House House Fitness), Track and Field

Last week I taught a fitness class for the vibrant group at Horizons for Youth, a shelter that supports homeless and at-risk youth. I enjoyed the energy that the youth brought coming into my class and the smiles that filled up the room! My experience with Bootcamps for Change has been a valuable one and it was a pleasure to teach such an enthusiastic group that was ready to learn and move! I had the privilege to take part in a variety of physical activities which I am very grateful for and wanted to share my time with these youth so they can have the opportunity to participate in physical activity without the expense that is often attached to it. I believe that everyone should have access to fitness programs because we are all worthy of learning how to exercise safely to prevent injuries and lead a lifestyle to fulfill greater wellness. The one thing I remember most about attending organized sports or classes was the community and how my coach, teammates or instructors made an impact on me. These leaders were people I looked up to who were always patient, understanding and supportive of my growth physically and mentally. I am glad to have learned from great role models and lead others through their example. Thanks to Bootcamps for Change for making fitness accessible to this community and helping these youth grow for a better future!

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



VALERIE TIU

Trainer at Unchained Athletics, Yoga Practitioner

I worked with Bootcamps for Change and I was able to teach yoga classes to youth experiencing homelessness at Eva's in Toronto. I met with Katie, the coordinator and several youth at the Eva's. I received a very informative training package prior to volunteering at the events, and both Katie and Eva's staff were very helpful for any questions I had. I am so grateful for the opportunity to join such an amazing team of fitness and wellness instructors to provide classes that are so needed for everyone, especially youth. It was incredibly inspiring to see the youth so welcoming and open to trying new movements and experiences. Though they are experiencing hardship, the youth are truly resilient, willing to learn and demonstrate incredible potential to grow into leaders in our community. I was motivated to volunteer with Bootcamps for Change when I read about their mandate to make wellness accessible for all, particularly youth. As an active person and wellness provider, I see the healing benefits of maintaining a regular fitness routine. Advocating for wellness is so important because EVERYONE deserves access to physical and mental health. I will most definitely share my time and knowledge again with Bootcamps for Change".

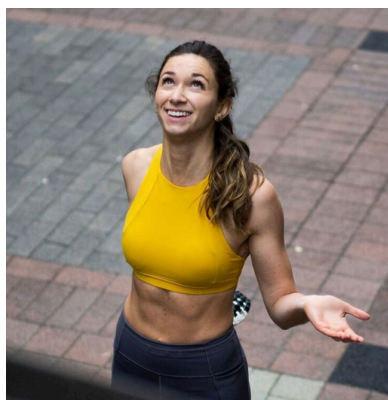


WHITNEY HILLS

Personal Trainer, Nutritionist

I recently had the opportunity to volunteer with Bootcamps for Change at Eva's Phoenix. I was inspired to lend my time to these youth who may not have the same opportunities or access to health and fitness due to their socioeconomic status. I believe that all youth deserve a chance to empower themselves through fitness, and receive the physical and mental benefits that regular exercise offers. Teaching and learning a new skill set is so rewarding for both parties! The program was well structured and organized (Katie-- you are a saint!) and the youth involved were respectful, enthusiastic and willing. I think it is such a gift for the youth to receive reiki/yoga/personal training from a young age, and hopefully to implement these self-care habits throughout their life. As a youth that suffered with mental health issues, I eventually turned to fitness as a way to manage my symptoms and now feel free from some of the issues that I suffered with in the past. I can only hope that some of these youth can learn from an even younger age how beneficial exercise can be to their overall health and well being. I can honestly say that exercise changed my life, and that these programs may change the lives of many youth that do not have the same support systems that I had growing up. I would gladly return to help out again in any way possible-- thank you Katie for all of your hard work. You are a true gem. I am grateful to have the chance to be a small part of your project.

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



SOPHIE POLLON-MACLEOD

CPT Philosophy Fitness, Nutritionist at University of Toronto

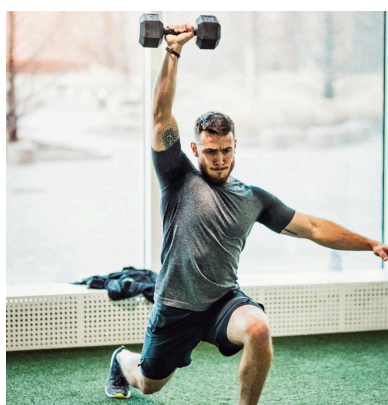
I had the opportunity to volunteer for Bootcamps for Change at one of their weekly fitness Bootcamps at Horizons for Youth. This was an invaluable experience as I got to see the immediate impact that BFC was having on youth. As a nutritionist, personal trainer and future naturopathic doctor, educating youth on the benefits of physical activity is SO important! The youth that I had participate in my outdoor Bootcamp class were excited, motivated, polite and very appreciative. I had such a fun time and I look forward to continuing to see how this organization grows in the future.



CELINE LOLOS

TRX, Bootcamp, Fitness Kickboxing Canada and Megafit

I recently had the experience of volunteering with Bootcamps for Change and teaching a fitness class to homeless youth. What inspired me to volunteer with the homeless youth is the same reason I started teaching fitness in the first place; to help people gain the knowledge and give them opportunity to live a healthier lifestyle, and I feel that's exactly what I accomplished! The youth seemed so engaged and excited to advance their knowledge in fitness and health, it was a truly heartwarming experience. While waiting for the youth to arrive, I read a quote on the wall written by one of the youth that said "We do not need policing, we need relationships." And that's exactly what inspired me in believing that what I was doing was helping. Developing relationships with these kids is such an important initiative many more people need to take and work with our most vulnerable population that doesn't receive the attention and relationships they need and deserve. Bootcamps for Change gave me the experience to help, and I couldn't be happier or more appreciative.



CARLOS SALAS

Calisthenics and street workout expert

BFC is such an amazing initiative. It's wicked to see how much passion and love is put by all the organizers into every single event. Katie and her team care deeply about their mission and they have an incredible road ahead of growth and development. I'm really happy to have been part of the events and always down to help Bootcamps for Change in any way I can!

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



RYAN RAMBARRAN

Personal Trainer

I cannot say enough great things about Bootcamps for Change. The work they do is truly phenomenal and should not go unnoticed. Last month, I had the honour of leading a group workout at Horizons for Youth with Bootcamps for Change. If you haven't heard of this incredible shelter, definitely take time to look into all the great work they do right here in Toronto. It was amazing to connect with the youth and see no matter what your circumstances are, health is still a priority for all. I decided to incorporate a few exercises that the youth are able to complete on their own. That way their fitness journey doesn't stop when we're not there. All in all, it was a fantastic experience that I'm absolutely looking forward to continuing. Thank you to Bootcamps for Change for this amazing opportunity, you guys are fantastic and cannot get thanked enough for all the support you provide to shelters and charities in this city.



CHEVY TONEY

Personal Trainer

I recently had the experience of volunteering with Bootcamps for Change and teaching a fitness class to homeless youth. I am a personal training student and my good friend who is also a fellow classmate introduced me to this opportunity. I met Katie, the organizer the first day I came to help teach the class. She passionately spoke about the organization and the youths at the shelter. You can tell she has put her heart and soul into this organization, and she wants to see it flourish for the benefit of the youths. I was recently looking for an organization to work with and after experiencing a class and speaking with Katie, I want to be a part of seeing this organization grow. Being a part of the class reminds me of the mental health benefits of exercise for everyone. These youths go through a lot and having a moment to exercise and de stress provides a lot of benefits in the long run. I have experienced the mental health benefits of exercise and this is why I am studying to be a trainer and hopefully I can help inspire others to either exercise or pursue a career in personal training as well.



DANIELLA

Manager/Coach at Tempo Fitness Performance

I recently had the opportunity to teach a fitness class to homeless youth with Bootcamps for Change and it was nothing like I expected. I had an incredible experience! I'm normally used to instructing larger bootcamp classes, and usually majority attendees are female. This was a more intimate setting, which gave me a better chance to get involved with all of the attendees, who were mostly male. Something I'm not used to, and I enjoyed it so much. The energy this group and the experience brought me was like no other! I truly support the mission of this company and think it's a movement we should all support as fitness professionals!.

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



COMMON GROUND TEAM

Many thanks to all of our clients who donated their athletic wear and shoes for Bootcamps for Change. It was a great day giving back to the community and we look forward to helping out more in the future! This was an amazing experience volunteering. I thoroughly enjoyed giving back to the community. Growing up I didn't have much. I use to work with underprivileged youth in university as well running sport programs. Fitness is so important in today's society as we are finding ourselves more attached to our cellphones and tv screens and becoming less active. Living a healthier active lifestyle will only be beneficial long term! Thanks again! #SweatierForTheBetter.



ALICIA WOOD

Founder, Camp Fuel, Fitness Instructor

How incredible to be reminded that we're "energized" "confident" "proud" "accomplished" "alive!" I had the honour of leading a class Horizons for Youth with Bootcamps for Change. Thank you to Hash for all of your help!



OLIVIA

Personal Trainer, Group Fitness Instructor

I recently had the opportunity to teach a fitness workshop with Bootcamps for Change and it was inspiring. I have taught different age groups in the past from 8 to 93-year-olds and believe that it is never too late or too early to educate people in the importance of being active and living a healthy lifestyle. Being able to educate others and help them understand the importance of living a healthy lifestyle is an amazing and satisfying feeling. I believe that teaching the youth and providing them with opportunities to learn will motivate and guide them through a positive path. Katie was SO amazing. She has such a pure heart, filled with so much love and kindness. Anyone would be lucky to have someone like Katie in their lives. Thank you, Katie, for giving me this amazing opportunity, I am so excited to see it grow and inspire so many others.

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



DANNA

Holistic Nutritionist, Wellness Coach

What a great experience volunteering with Bootcamps for Change teaching a bootcamp, talking nutrition and doing meditation with some of the homeless & at-risk youth at Horizons for Youth! Some chose fitness, some chose meditation and some chose both! The youth were polite, hard-working and knowledgeable! And the staff at Horizons for Youth were so pleasant and welcoming! Very thankful for this opportunity to give back!



JORDAN

Personal Trainer, Meditation Teacher

I recently had the experience of volunteering with Bootcamps for Change. I taught a fitness class to an amazing group at Horizons For Youth, a shelter that supports homeless and at-risk youth. I don't know the individuals I taught today much beyond their names. I don't know their stories or their challenges and I also don't know their strengths or their own stories of bravery. What I do know is that they showed up today to a total stranger (me), each one of them accepting of me, willing to trust me and to try. To try new exercises, to try a new workout and to try to work together as a team. We moved, we stretched, we laughed and we all learned something new. That is what fitness is all about and today I could not be more proud to be a trainer/coach/instructor to such an open and inviting group. I could not feel more honoured to have been part of an amazing organization providing weekly programming to this community and for making physical activity accessible to everybody. Thank you for the work you do in Toronto, I look forward to working together again in the future.



FRANCES AHN

Trainer, Group Fitness Instructor, Sales & Events Manager at Sweat and Tonic

An amazing team backed up by an amazing purpose. I'm inspired by how dedicated and passionate Katie is about her mission to create opportunities and change lives through health and fitness. I recently had the opportunity to work with Bootcamps for Change, and taught a fitness class at the Horizons For Youth Shelter. It felt great to give back to the community as a fitness professional :) I would definitely do it again!

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



SONJ

Exercise & Mental Health Coach

Last month I had the opportunity to teach a fitness class to the amazing and resilient in-shelter youth. Though they didn't have access to a fancy gym membership or equipment (that we sometimes take for granted) they still showed up because they recognized the monumental benefits that exercise can have on their mental and physical health. They were dedicated and passionate to get sweating and I was thrilled to exercise alongside them. At the end of the class, each youth received a package from Gifts for The Homeless, giving these youth every day supplies. Movement is fundamental for everyone and exercise should be accessible to every individual no matter their socioeconomic status, gender, race, background, sexuality, experience! I'm grateful to be a part of Bootcamps for Change, an organization that has allowed me to take on such an amazing experience as well as attend exciting events that raise funds for these youth, with the hopes that in the future they will also be able to lead fitness classes and advocate for healthy active living. Excited to see their progress along the way and how they pay it forward.



MIKE & HUSSAIN

Ryerson University Coaching & Development

We were proud to join the mission of Bootcamps for Change to provide a educational opportunity combined with a practical experience at the Horizons for Youth shelter. We got the first hand opportunity to experience and instill these youths with experiences that we hope can help transform their lives on a different positive path! There are tons of organizations like Horizons for Youth who are helping and present for these kids. As members of the society it is our responsibility to lend a hand to make sure that we do our part as volunteers to improve the society!



LORENZO

Personal Trainer

We worked through some stretching, cardiovascular drills, and foam rolling exercises. A few youth participated and they were so open-minded about learning new things and trusting me. We laughed a lot as we played our way through ladder drills. I felt so humbled and left with an immense sense of joy for how fitness can make an impact in our communities. I look forward to volunteering again in the future.

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



MATT PAUDERIS

Personal Trainer, Founder of RxFit

Yesterday I had the opportunity to be invited into Horizons for Youth by my friends at Bootcamps for Change to learn more about the health and fitness programs they implement for homeless youth in Toronto. Look, I absolutely LOVE what I do. I actually get a high when I see clients' progressions over time, achieving something they didn't think they were capable of. But what I didn't realize is being able to stay fit and active is something we all take for granted. I know a lot of you are going to think something like "well that's not true, all you need is a pair of shoes and you can run, or train outdoors, or train in a park with no equipment...that's all free." OK, I agree with you on that, but the reason why we all think that way is because most of us are very lucky. Consider this for a second. How easy do you think it would be to workout "for free" in a park if you didn't have access to food? And I'm not taking about organic, healthy food. I'm talking about any food no matter how unhealthy or bad quality it is whatsoever. If you didn't know when your next meal would be (sometimes not even a scrap of food for more than 24 hours a couple times/ week) would you still have the energy or motivation to get to the gym? That's the reality homeless youth face on a daily basis, which is why the initiatives of organizations like those mentioned above are so crucial in Toronto. They literally dedicate all resources to provide food, shelter and active programs for these kids and the quality of their LIVES. Like I said at the beginning, I LOVE what I do, and would do it for free if it meant helping every single person I could become stronger and more confident in themselves...so I will. I'm putting my passion into action by leading a fitness class at the shelter for kids, alongside some other great instructors in our city including my buddy here. I'm not saying that everyone needs to drop what you're doing and go donate everything you have. But we can all be a bit more mindful. I challenge you all to do some spring cleaning this year and DONATE your stuff instead of throwing it out, it goes a long way for these kids!



JAY AUGUSTIN

Flow/Boxing Instructor, BOLO

Bootcamps for Change is one hell of an organization. One of their projects has been getting our industry to chip in on teaching at-risk youth a thing or two about creating a lifestyle around being healthy. We met some amazing people today and if this is something you ever want to be a part of, contact them ASAP.

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



ANN MARIE MEEKS

F45 Master Trainer, Lululemon Ambassador

Bootcamps for Change is an organization that represents my very being; a former underprivileged youth at a foster home/shelter due to an abusive father, playing sports was my only means of escape and hope. Today my fitness lifestyle frees me from the remnant of the abuse which continues to plague my mind. The strength of my character and ambition to genuinely assist others was developed through the experiences of trials. So I know for sure these youths will possess the same resilience and mindset if given the opportunity. Today I am an example of how the life skills and passion acquired through sports and fitness can be used to inspire lifestyle change; if not big, then positive. Bootcamps for Change, I cannot think of a more suitable platform to have recently supported and shared the untold side of my story. Thank you.



TAWNY

Stretch Therapist, Online Coach

When you're doing what you love you shine brighter. I love talking health, fitness and how this industry has impacted my life. Getting to meet inspired youth who want to impact others fills my heart so much. I'm excited to see the next steps he makes with his fitness career. Rooting for him and helping him anyway I possibly can. Thank you once again to Bootcamps for Change for the opportunity.



JOY SOBEL

LES MILLS + Freestyle Fitness Instructor

Last Friday I had the honour of sharing an Animal Flow movement session with the incredible in-shelter youth at Horizons for Youth. What an awesome, impactful, afternoon. The youth were supremely engaged and receptive and lit up the room with their fiery personalities. It was far less of a "class" and far more of a group of people coming together to share movement, stories, some common ground, and a wicked cool vibe. A great reminder of the importance of movement; not to mention the practice of gratitude, and openness to explore the unfamiliar. They rocked the workout and we all came away from the experience with some fresh knowledge and perspective. Thanks Bootcamps for Change for getting us all out of our comfort zone and into a far superior place. We are all just out here winging it to the best of our ability and the support we provide each other means everything.

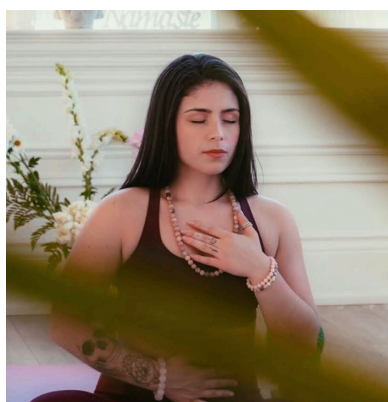
TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



JENNA GARO

Instructor Soul Cycle, Puma Trainer

I recently had the experience of volunteering with Bootcamps for Change and teaching a fitness class to homeless youth at Horizons for Youth. I did a group class out in the field next to the shelter in the summer and it was so fun. The teens had so much life and light to share with us. It was an easy and fun experience. I was just about to turn 25 so I felt a lot of empathy for the people in the shelter. Being peers with them made it all the more special and I was grateful share my day with them. Katie is amazing and made the process so easy, I even got to teach the class with a good friend of mine (she did a yoga portion and I did a HIIT portion).



ALESSIA MARIA

Trauma informed Yoga & Reiki

Bootcamps For Change is a truly remarkable organization. I had the privilege of providing reiki for the youth through Bootcamps For Change and loved every minute of it. They provide a safe space for the youth to participate, are encouraging, experienced, & had tons of amazing goodies for them as well. It's an honour to have been involved and love what they are doing!



JACLYN GOMAN

Boxing Coach, Personal Trainer at BOLO, Puma Trainer

Had an incredible experience at Bootcamps For Change. Getting to be a part of this organization was something I will never forget. They are doing such incredible work for a very worthy cause.

TRAINER TESTIMONIALS



KAREN HERNANDEZ

Personal Trainer

Solange and I had the honour of volunteering for Bootcamp For Change teaching a fitness class to homeless youth at Horizons for Youth. I had been in contact with Katie Heggveit who had been so helpful and so patient with all my questions and inquiries.

I've been following Bootcamp For Change for a year and have always wanted to volunteer so when I was approached, I knew I couldn't let this chance to help the community out go. I ended up reaching out to Solange who I had just met but had been following her story and her experience with homeless youth centers and thought she would be a perfect combination to the fitness class. I brought the fun, movement, confidence, and motivation with fitness and she brought mindfulness, balance, meditation with stretching and yoga.

I found inspiration in Bootcamp For Change through their story on how they provide free weekly fitness program for homeless and at-risk youth, helping them improve their physical health, mental health, and resiliency. I knew this was the perfect fit for Solange and I because fitness changed our lives. We wanted to give them that inspiration that fitness could create new opportunities that make a big impact for them as well (even if its for 5 mins a day). Fitness is just as important as music, the elements we learn are; experiences, knowledge, wellness, emotions, breathing, eating, and overcoming fears and challenges that help support us through the fundamentals of everyday life.

When we arrived, we felt welcomed and were greeted by friendly staff, they showed us where we would be teaching and helped us set up the room. They gave us an introduction of the facility, the youths, and their history in the community. When we started the class, we weren't sure as to how many youths would be participating in the class but soon enough the room was packed up. Solange and I were both very happy that they came and showed up for themselves, participated and stayed engaged the whole way through. We thanked everyone for taking the time out of their day to give us a chance to inspire them and most importantly giving themselves the self-care, they needed that day.

We can't wait to volunteer again in the near future when plans are to launch in Ottawa. Thanks again Bootcamp for Change and Horizon For Youth for allowing us to teach in your space.

TEAM TESTIMONIALS



DAVE TANG

Co-Director of Events

Currently: Trainer at F45, Client Operations at WorkTango

Previously: Lead Associate, Rewards Consulting at Willis Towers Watson

By being involved, I have experienced...

- Numerous opportunities to meet and connect with members of the local fitness community, including gyms/studios, restaurants, health products and fitness enthusiasts
- Autonomy to suggest improvements/changes to the organization and oversight on growing and managing the organization
- Connecting and experiencing the impact made to at-risk youth by providing physical activity programming and having input on shelter programming



SUZANNE VU

Director of Sponsorship

Currently: Officer, Annual & Community Giving at Eva's Initiatives for Homeless Youth

Previously: Coordinator, Community Partnerships at SickKids Foundation

Bootcamps For Change allows members of the fitness community to contribute to something bigger than themselves in their local community. The business model is unique, the connection to the cause is very evident and impactful. As a director, Bootcamps for Change has allowed me to share my skills and talents with others, providing advice, guidance and making business decisions. Katie, the founder is very supportive and open minded to new ideas. Working at Bootcamps for Change has provided me with the experience of leading a team of volunteers, the pleasure of meeting great business owners and fitness professionals who are all excited to spread the awareness and contribute to the organization. It has been very rewarding to empower others on how they can help homeless youth by collaborating with Bootcamps For Change. Whether it be volunteering with the organization, volunteering at an in-shelter fitness class, contributing through sponsorship or simply by exchanging a smile to someone that is on the streets. My outlook on the future of this organization is positive.

YOUTH TESTIMONIALS



HASHIM AL HEBSHI

Youth Scholarship Recipient, Strive Life Athletics Certified, Canfitpro Certified, DTS Level 1 + Kettlebell Certified

I used to live in a homeless youth shelter, and Katie was teaching a program which is called Bootcamps for Change. I introduced myself to Katie, and I told her that I just came back from the gym, so I would not workout, but I would love to watch. She didn't mind, and continued training the youth which she was doing a great job, well-coordinated and they know how to take care of a large group of youth.

She changed my life for the better. She assisted me to become a certified personal trainer - which changed my life from a newcomer immigrant who's unemployed, to a great trainer. She did not just stop there, but she also helped me to get a job in one of the biggest clubs in Canada (Goodlife Fitness), and I am a full-time trainer there!

All of her hard work shows how great of a leader she is, because she helps others in a compassionate way that is not just telling them what to do. I have attended and spoken at multiple events promoting Bootcamps for Change to others.

Considering that this organization was run with the founder as a full-time student, I cannot imagine how great things they will accomplish in 5 years from now!

Words can not express the joy that I felt doing the thing that I love, and also seeing people getting motivated by me.



Melique Deflorimonte (Far right)

MELIQUE DEFLORIMONTE

Bootcamps for Change has been amazing for me! They helped me achieve a long-term goal of mine to get my personal training license.

Multiple job opportunities and interviews started opening up for me due to receiving my certification through the Bootcamps for Change program.

In the end, I decided to work at LA fitness! working at LA fitness has been a goal of mine for years. You helped me achieve that goal in a matter of months and for that, I'll forever be grateful!

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HENRY IDEHEN

I want to emphasize how privileged I was to have met Katie and the Bootcamp for Change team, as well as Ryan Caicco from Strive Life Athletics when I did. They helped me on my path to success - molding my dream job