

Meet Columbus Centre's Athletic Programme Instructors



Maria Galati is a certified 3rd degree black belt in Okinawan Matsubayashi Shorin-Ryu Karate-Do (ranked in Canada, USA and Japan) and a Tai Chi practitioner. Her unique approach to teaching combines traditional martial arts training with relevant philosophical, artistic and cultural components. Promoting the mind, body and spirit connection in karate practice, Sensei Galati emphasizes the art's essential elements such as proper breathing, ki energy flow, effective technique development and understanding of movement applications. She graduated from the Ontario College of Art & Design and received her Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Guelph.



Edward Lakics is a certified 2nd degree black belt in judo with an extensive international competition background. Sensei Lakics holds a 4th degree black belt in Okinawan Matsubayashi Shorin-Ryu Karate-Do with over 20 years' teaching experience. His teaching approach allows students to build and expand on their martial arts pursuits in a competition and self-developmental capacity. Advanced students especially benefit from instructions in weapon training and pressure point applications.



Richard V. Higgins has been in the fitness industry for over 10 years. He is a certified group fitness instructor and personal trainer with Can-Fit-Pro, and instructs classes in high schools and various other fitness clubs in the greater GTA. Higgins is qualified to teach boot camp, box fit, aqua fit, body conditioning and cycle classes. Higgins is currently working on completing 50 marathons by the age of 50. He is 48 years old and has already completed 45 marathons.



Coach Erico Mancini is an aficionado of Olympic-style boxing with 30 years of experience in the sport (including work as a provincial and national team coach) and is currently completing both his NCCP Levels 4 & 5 (the highest formal levels of qualification and recognition in coaching). He is also certified in kick-boxing and kung-fu.



Carol Miller has been sharing her knowledge and skills of traditional yoga to participants of all age levels and backgrounds since 1965. Having travelled to many countries, Miller has trained in different aspects of the ancient health science of yoga and specialized in the traditional Hatha yoga. Miller has conducted seminars and conventions and initiated retreats, both as a student and teacher in the Hatha yoga art. Miller has been with Columbus Centre since 1979 and continues to inspire and accommodate her participants.



George and Nik Lavorato have competed competitively for Canada's national team. As well as teaching fencing they have also choreographed fights for television shows and movies. They have competed in several fencing championships, placing very high. The Lavoratos have been teaching this successful programme at Columbus Centre for over 15 years and feel that the benefits to one's health and overall daily performance will increase dramatically.



Jean Luc Fornasiero has been involved professionally in the fitness industry since 1986 on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1993 he was a silver medalist at the Canadian Aerobic Championship. He is a certified fitness instructor with the Ontario Fitness Council (OFC), Canadian Aerobic Instructor Network (CAIN), Aerobic and Fitness Association of America (AFAA) and the Aerobic Association of Europe (AAE). Fornasiero is qualified to teach in all areas of fitness; he is a true 360° fitness instructor. Fornasiero has found a home at the Columbus Centre, and is teaching various programs from spinning to gentle fitness.



Gabriella Lalli has been in the fitness industry since 1984, and consulting at Columbus Centre since 1988. Gabriella has competed in several Body Building Competitions, placing first in the city of Toronto in 1989 and third in the province of Ontario in 1991. Gabriella has several certifications from Humber College, Can Fit Pro, American Council on Exercise and the Ontario Fitness Council. Gabriella is qualified to teach all levels and in all areas of fitness, spinning, step, aerobic dance, and she is also a personal trainer. Gabriella's philosophy is simple: The human body is not designed to be sedentary. Humans are designed to move. Physical fitness is not an option.



Karen Fisher has years of intensive training in classical ballet, jazz and modern dance. Karen started her professional career at the age of 19. She danced with repertoire companies, in theme parks and dinner theatres, performed in fashion shows, variety shows, touring magic shows as well as onboard a cruise ship. All through her performing career Karen enjoyed teaching every chance she got.

After retiring from the stage in 1993 Karen started teaching full time. As a dance instructor for the City of Toronto, Toronto District School Board, YMCA and numerous private community centres, clubs, legions and church groups Karen has danced “anywhere they’ll let me!”. She now focuses almost exclusively on line dancing which she particularly enjoys for its appeal to all ages, body types and fitness levels.



Ioana Cruceanu has been interested in physical exercise and body movement, as a way of enhancing the quality of life and healing, since she was an adolescent. She started to teach in fitness industry 15 years ago in Romania, where she originates from. Her holistic approach led her to an intensive training that ranges from fitness instructor and personal trainer to pilates and yoga teacher. She is certified with Can-Fit-Pro as a Fitness Instructor, Personal Trainer, Pre&Post Natal Specialist, Older Adults Specialist, Nutrition&Wellness Specialist, and with “East to West Yoga and Pilates” school as a Pilates Instructor and Yoga Teacher. She finished RYT 350 and Therapeutic Yoga Specialist and is pursuing RYT 500.

Ioana believes that good overall fitness enables us to do more, to feel energetic, boosts our confidence, and from that we develop into fully realized independent individuals; through our commitment to health&fitness we can enhance our quality of life and live it to its fullest. Her philosophy is rooted in balancing the body and mind through movement. Some of her training emphasis are development of core strength, balancing the skeleton muscles, functional training.



Konstantinos (Kostas) Balasis
Honours B.A., B.Ed., Kinesiology & Health Science (York University)
High school Physical Health Education Teacher
Specialized Honours B.Ed. Health & Physical Education U.F.T. (OISE)
Certified Personal Fitness Trainer & Fitness Consultant (OSHF/CSEP)

Can Fit-Pro Personal Trainer & Fitness Instructor Specialists
YMCA (Individual Conditioning Advanced Training Instructor)
YMCA/NFLAC Group Fitness Leader in various classes
Ontario Kinesiology Association Certified Kinesiologist & member
Certificate of Qualification: Ontario College of Teachers
Swim Instructor OTAS
Fitness and Sports Coach

Ontario Physical Health Education Association (OPHEA) member
Standard/Emergency First Aid/Basic Rescuer (CPR C), AED Qualified
(Red Cross Society & Royal Lifesaving Society)
Over 10 years experience in the fitness field



Erik Edwards has a Bachelor of Arts for the University of Ottawa and is a Certified Personal Trainer with Can-Fit- Pro. Erik also is a specialty trainer with certifications for Kettlebell Training. He has been in the fitness industry for over 10 years. Erik believes the best kind of training regime is one that incorporates the body as a whole.

Challenge the body on many levels to get the best results.
ENDURANCE + AGILITY + RESISTANCE + INTENSITY = a new relationship with your body!

As a two sport Varsity Athlete, with a varied training background, Erik offers a unique perspective to personal and group fitness. Start with “Pillar Training” to develop a strong core, lower back and legs. With a strong and functional base, there is no limit to the goals that can be achieved through training.



Giovanni Tullo has been teaching Tai Chi at the Columbus Centre since 1991 and has been a practitioner of Taoist Tai Chi since 1983. The fundamentals of the practice are stressed to ensure that all students, through the exercise of this art, derive the multiple physical and meditative benefits associated with it.



Veronica Rambas has been the coordinator of the Aquatics department at Columbus Center since 1998 .She has been teaching swimming lessons, private and in groups, for over 20 years. Some of the classes Veronica teaches are, Aqua-fitness in deep and shallow water, high and low intensity, beginner, intermediate, advanced. She has a

Masters degree in Physical Education, Aqua-Fitness Instructor as well as Swimming Instructor, National Lifeguard Certificate, First Aid, C.P.R. She has a comprehensive knowledge of how the mind and body works, acts and reacts in the water. She can make it easier to understand and achieve any personal goals one may have.



Lawrence Grecchi has been proud to serve at the Columbus Centre for 8 years in a dual capacity. He runs the Tennis Programmes in the summer months and as a personal trainer in the winter months.

He has 30 years experience in the fitness field. In the past he has owned his own personal training studio in Woodbridge. He has been certified since 1991 and has helped over a 1000 people toward their specific fitness goals. He brings a wealth of knowledge to every workout and his easy going manner makes his clients feel very comfortable.

He's always available for consultation and he always offers the first 30 minute workout free. By appointment only.



David Pantano is a RYT certified yoga instructor, who has taught at studios in Toronto and internationally. His Yoga, Meditation and Fitness practice spans over 15 years. The Classical Vinyasa yoga system which David teaches emphasizes proper form, alignment, breathing and awareness to facilitate the flow of vital energy leading to greater flexibility, strength, balance, and clarity of mind. Vinyasa yoga is a flowing sequence of Asanas (poses) linked by the breath that generates a therapeutic heat and is characterized by a rhythmic flow that is likened to poetry in motion.

David's overriding goal as a yoga instructor is to provide students with the tools to fully explore the depth and breadth of their yoga practice and in-turn to improve their health, relaxation, concentration and well being.



Adam Ali
Fitness and Health Promotion (Humber College), Certified Personal Trainer (Can Fit Pro), CPR First Aid, AED Certified, Automatic External Defibrillator.

Adam suggests "the best move one can make for his or her self is making an investment towards your health. An investment that never gets lost. With better health you live a more vibrant life and you are able to manage day to day objectives more efficiently without burning out." Adam can assist you with reaching new fitness goals in an interactive, fun, educational, and safe approach. With a wide range of training techniques he is certain he can give the right fitness guidance to athletes seeking to increase sports performance, to a person seeking a toned body, or to an individual looking to stay or get in shape. "Invest in your health today and forever"



Jennie Atzmueller
Specialized Honours Psychology (York University 2009), Bilingual – French (2009), Certified Personal Trainer, (Certified Professionals Trainers Network), Certified Kettle Bell Trainer (Agatsu certification), First Aid, CPR, and AED.

Do you need someone to motivate you, teach you effective exercises, and steer you towards your goals? As an energetic and dedicated Personal Trainer, together we can help you achieve your health & fitness aspirations. I offer personalized work-outs and long-term plans tailored specifically to your goals, strengths, limitations, and time frame. Whether you are looking to improve your health and longevity, compete in sports, or prevent injury - success is imminent with your dedication to training and overall health.

Currently my skills consist of training methods with a wide variety of tools and resources. This includes dynamic movement, isolated and strengthening exercises, injury prevention, flexibility training, and sports-specific training.

Side effects of training may include a feeling of accomplishment, deeper and more restful sleeps, heightened energy levels, improved endurance, and increased longevity. Please contact Kosta or myself to embark on your health & fitness journey!

RISTORANTE BOCCACCIO THEME NIGHTS 2011

The tour of Italy continues as
Ristorante Boccaccio plans another
series of authentic regional
dinner tours. The fixed price menu
includes regional wines:

ABRUZZO

SEPTEMBER 30, 2011

UMBRIA

OCTOBER 21, 2011

TUSCANY

NOVEMBER 25, 2011

For more information or
to make reservations, please call
(416) 789-5555