

ZUMBA

As the dance-themed workout gains traction among North students – mostly female – it’s fans reap the health and rythmic benefits.



Junior Brielle Ahee has been going to Zumba classes for a year now. “The first time I went I was a little bit lost, but after the first month, I memorized almost all of the songs,” Ahee said.

CAROLINE SCHULTE



Food for thought

By Caroline Schulte
PHOTO EDITOR

Six months ago, my diet was “whatever I feel like.” Today, it’s the same, but “whatever I feel like” has taken on a new meaning.

Everyone who’s been on a exercise machine knows how calories eaten compares to calories burned. One hour running on the treadmill – something you won’t catch me doing – burns a mere 800 calories. “Wait, so that 1,000 calorie lunch I just ate at Taco Bell isn’t even burned off?” No. No, it is not.

If you’re up to spending an hour on the treadmill, be my guest. That’s awesome, but count me out. I used to hear “exercise” and picture myself drowning in my own tears while attempting to sprint full throttle.

I quickly discovered a workout that has the same effect without coming straight from one of my nightmares. For me, that’s Zumba.

I earned the “Zumba Chick” status by January, when my addiction reached its peak. I go at least three times a week, and that’s only because there are only three times a week that I’m able to go.

Before my first class, I figured, “Hey, I dance around my house by myself on a daily basis. How hard can this class be?” Honestly, if my goal in Zumba wasn’t to get the best workout possible, it wouldn’t be. I could prance around a Zumba class for 60 minutes, and sure, I might have fun, but I wouldn’t get anything from it. But when you give Zumba, or any workout for that matter, everything you’ve got, you’ll get everything you want out of it.

Maybe you just haven’t found your workout forte yet. For me, it’s Zumba. For you? Maybe it’s a sport. Heck, maybe it’s jumping rope. The point is that it doesn’t matter what it is as long as you do something.

I used to come home after school, raid my pantry for the nearest bag of Doritos and look at my *Instagram* feed, which is a bad choice when #foodporn always seems to show up somewhere. By working out, even if I’m just prancing around the room, at least I’m not at home, stuffing my face with worthless, calorie-infested foods.

Before I started working out on a regular basis, I heard that exercising made you happier. But then I would think, “Oh really? Because exercising sounds just as tempting as sticking needles into my eyeballs.” But, as I’ve come to realize, the mythical endorphins released during exercise really do exist! Sure, I’m not skipping down the hallways singing show tunes, but I have noticed an internal shift in my spirit.

The first step is the hardest, and that’s getting the motivation to get off your couch, put down the bag of chips and do something. Once you decide you want to change something about your life, the only way to accomplish your goal is to start trying. Once you set some goals for yourself, achieving them will only make you want to push harder. I suggest asking a friend to exercise with you and encourage you. The effort you put into getting results will be worth it. I promise.

Even if you don’t need to lose weight, you will feel stronger and yes, even happier. When you finish what seems like a life-threatening workout, you’re going to be tired, but it’s the best feeling in the world to finish exercising and walk away from it thinking, I crushed it.

It feels good when you accomplish anything, but when you work out it’s different. I know I’m not going to go home and eat 10 Oreos after working out because that would be giving in. I’m not gonna lie. I still go to Taco Bell on occasion, and my stocked pantry still calls to me, but now I have the willpower to say, “No.” In other words, I have danced myself to a healthier lifestyle – with a smile on my face.

By Kim Cusmano
EDITOR

One hundred and eighty four-squats may seem excessive, but for junior Brielle Ahee, and anyone else inside the mirrored walls of the Next Level workout room, it’s just the first song. And they do it with a smile.

Ahee has been partaking in Zumba, a dance-themed workout regimen, since her sophomore year and can’t imagine going back to traditional workouts.

“When you’re done with Zumba it’s the best feeling,” Ahee said. “It’s a great workout and better than just running on the treadmill because you lose 700-1000 calories in an hour.”

Zumba was originally started by Alberto “Beto” Perez who forgot the music for his aerobics class and decided to use his own tracks, which were mostly salsa music. His mistake turned into a craze.

Next Level trainer Arabella Wujek has adapted this traditional salsa and Latino music and has incorporated her own tracks – more hip-hop and fresher music.

“My favorite is Latin, my number two would be hip hop. I love Latin dancing,

I absolutely love Latin dancing. Actually, I just can’t say either one is my favorite. I love to dance, no matter what it is, I love to dance,” Wujek said.

“Arabella is the best teacher,” Ahee said. “She uses more current songs and she develops relationships with her class.”

The girls who dance with Wujek have also formed their own tight-knit group. Along with Ahee, five other North girls regularly attend her workout sessions. Wujek fondly refers to her attendees as “Zumba chicks.”

“A lot of the girls I barely knew before I went there, but after seeing them twice a week I get to know them. Now it’s fun that we all get to work out together,” Ahee said.

Sophomore Emily Aziz has also become a member of these Zumba enthusiasts.

“Doing it with my friends makes it easier because we all just hangout and go to the gym together,” she said. “It’s made us closer because we spend a lot of time after school and on weekends going to the gym together, so we see each other all the time.”

The girls also believe that the workout, which is “basically just dancing” according to Aziz, has inspired them to lead a healthier lifestyle.

“It makes me want to eat better, and it makes me go to the gym everyday,” Ahee said. “I think it’s because when you work out that hard you want to eat healthy because you want to see the results.”

Sophomore Emily Surzyn agrees.

“I really like it because it’s all dancing, so it’s a lot more fun than traditional workouts,” she said. “I feel like it’s inspired me to be healthier and go to the gym more often.”

Although Zumba seems to be a female-dominated regimen, males still choose to participate. Sophomore Peter Lundy tried Zumba once and although he was admittedly a little awkward, he recognized the health advantages that it offers.

“I liked how I was tired after,” he said. “It’s a different kind of workout that could benefit a lot of people, male or female. I think it’s female-dominated because it requires you to do a lot of moves that can make you uncomfortable and embarrassed ... like I was.”

Q&A with Zumba instructor Arrabella Wujek

By Andrea Scapini
ASSISTANT EDITOR

North Pointe: When did you become interested in instructing Zumba?

Arrabella Wujek: Two years ago. It was post-cancer. I always loved running, but I had too much neuropathy and nerve damage to run anymore, and exercise is imperative, physically and mentally. (For) anyone, especially those in recovery or with stress or in any situation, it’s imperative. Because I could no longer run, and I danced as a kid for many years, I knew Zumba was dance-based, and so that’s how I got into it.

North Pointe: Do you use Zumba as a release?

Arrabella Wujek: Absolutely. Every day. When you work out, your body releases endorphins that are great for stress relief, great for mood control, weight control, of course, every aspect of your life. I feel like working out is the most important part of body, mind and soul.

North Pointe: Does it affect your energy level?

Arrabella Wujek: Absolutely. The more I work out, the stronger I feel, the happier I feel, the less stressed I feel. I cannot stress how important I feel like it is for myself and everyone around me. It is just so good for so many reasons, and not for just appearance.

North Pointe: What’s your mantra for class every day?

Arrabella Wujek: Be confident with yourself. I think that’s very important. There’s a lot of messages, not one in particular. To be confident, to be kind, to try new things, to look at yourself in the mirror and be proud of yourself. Not about what you have to accomplish but what you’ve already accomplished. I always say there’s no wrong moves in this class except for stopping, which I think is a message in life: that sometimes things get very, very tiring and difficult and confusing, but you can’t give up. You’ve just gotta keep going.

North Pointe: What does your family think about it?

Arrabella Wujek: Everyone in my family is a serious athlete, so they love the fact that mom is, too. As far as choreography in my kitchen, I think that they cringe. My boys love suggesting songs. Chase always has great suggestions.

Popular Zumba songs

Verizon	12:01 PM	74%
Playlists	ZUMBA	Now Playing
Boom Shake Now Drop		
Cio! - Pitbull		
Dont Stop The Party		
Pitbull feat. TJR		
Hot Wings (I Wanna Party) Feat....		
RIO Soundtrack - Will.I.Am		
Shawty Got Moves		
Step Up 3D Original Motion Picture Soundtra...		
Telephone		
Beyonce Knowles Lady GaGa		
Somebody To Love		
Believe(Deluxe Edition) - Justin Bieber		
Lets Get Loud		
Jennifer Lopez		
Mirrors		
The 20/20 Experience (Deluxe Version) - Justi...		
Playlists	Artists	Songs
Albums	More	