

Area Instructors Exhibit Responsible Tourism

When you imagine a trip to the tropical destination of Cancun, do you picture exercise, fundraisers and TV shoots? Probably not, but that's exactly what happened when owners Doug and Joan Jones from The Studio Fitness (formerly Studio Zumba Fitness) in Vandalia recently traveled to Mexico.

In cooperation with Travelmart and the Foundation of the Mayas, the Jones' and twelve companions held Zumba classes and demonstrations throughout Cancun and were featured guests on two TV Cancun television shows. Money was raised to purchase a new wheelchair for 15-year old Cancun resident, Rodrigo Ramirez Ventura. Rodrigo travels a mile down a dirt hill each day to help his mother sell tamales and was in deperate need of new transportation.

"It does your heart good to know that you are giving back to people," stated Studio Fitness owner Joan Jones. Jones and her husband Doug are Zumba Education Specialists and are part of the founding team of Zumba Fitness. "The Zumba program has affected so many lives through weight loss and improved health, but this was a whole new way to use Zumba to help someone." The Studio Fitness has participated in numerous fundraisers for the Vandalia area, but this was the first international effort for the Jones' group.

Rodrigo was presented his new wheelchair during a Zumbatomic class for children, led by Studio Fitness instructor Lynn Blakeley. "When Rodrigo read the thank you letter he had written us, we all teared up. It was really touching," Blakeley said.

A documentary of the recent TV shows will be shown to over 800 members at the 2010 Civitan Conference in September. Cancun groups IVI, DMC and Friends of the Maya Foundation will present the documentary as an example of responsible tourism. "We would like to thank Doug and Joan Jones, owners of The Studio Fitness, as well as our friends at The Travelmart, Inc.," shared an organizer.



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