



# FITNESS DIARY

Steve Ritz, Exercise Physiologist, founded Fitness First in 1998 in Chaska. His second location in Excelsior opened in 2008. Steve earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Gustavus Adolphus College and a Master of Arts degree majoring in Exercise Physiology from MN State University, Mankato.

Steve has researched and developed a prescription for exercise requiring only one or two intense 30-60 minute appointments a week.

**Read about the success of one of Fitness First's Clients...**



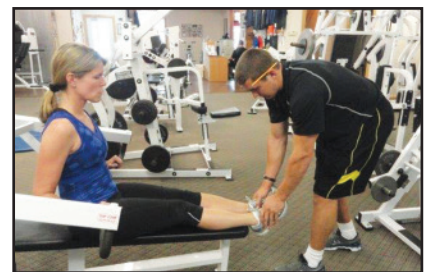
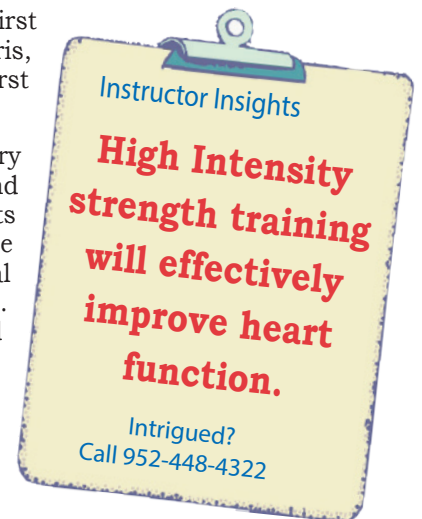
Maren Nelson performing a back activity with supervision from Fitness First Instructor Cameron Cropsey.

Maren Nelson, 45 began strength training at Fitness First during December 2013 after seeing her husband, Chris, attain positive results while rehabilitating at Fitness First from a hamstring injury he suffered waterskiing.

"I had different goals than Chris," Maren said. "I was very interested on improving the strength in my lower back and arms when I began making strength training appointments at Fitness First. I have successfully worked toward these goals while also noticing improvement in my mental health. I recognize and value the mind body connection. Personally I have struggled with sporadic depression and anxiety for years. I am open about my struggles because I feel the condition is something many people battle and few discuss. Everyone is different, but I have found that regular exercise is an essential component in treating my depression. However, when I am feeling down I really do not feel like exercising! In fact, twice I went to my appointment when I did not feel like strength training because of a severe

headache. Fitness Specialist, Nick McCoy, educated me on the benefits of strength training when not feeling 100%. He was right, I experienced positive results and I felt much better after my appointment. Strength training at Fitness First challenges me during difficult times and provides accountability because I have an appointment with an instructor.

"I have been strength training one to two times a week and it has been a wonderful experience. The flexible scheduling offered at Fitness First has been invaluable. Our home can be very hectic with two teenage daughters involved in school, sports, music, conformation and much more. I am always able to schedule appointments around these activities. The staff at Fitness First is very encouraging and challenges me very positively. My favorite part is how I feel after my appointment is complete. The strength improvement and the pain relief in my shoulder from a previous surgery is wonderful. My strength training has focused on specific muscles which has helped tremendously. I also completed my seventh InLine Rollerblade Marathon in Duluth during September 2014, with my best time. This year I felt better throughout the entire race than any other year. I know strength training at Fitness First played a significant role in my performance. During the final hill of the 26.2 mile race, when my energy was low, I actually thought of Nick, a Fitness First instructor, encouraging me to keep pushing to the finish."



Fitness First Instructor Cameron performing a manual resistance activity with Maren to strengthen her legs.

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