



**We created a community around a fitness program that emerges people with IDD into a lifelong practice of wellness, helping improve themselves physically, emotionally and cognitively.**

The program began in 2017 with a partnership with one IDD service provider and 7 stationary bikes with the purpose of offering a simple exercise class that people with IDD would want to participate. That first location is a day-habilitation center where approximately 100 people with IDD come for services during the course of a week. From that population, we asked who wanted to come to a group fitness class. Most of those who came to that center had never exercised in their lives, so we have 14 mostly reluctant people sign up. That was 3 years ago. Today we have over 50 enthusiastic Bloom Fitness Athletes at that location, most of whom have been with us since day one.



Through word of mouth, other organizations heard of our success and this fostered our organic growth that continues today. We now have 7 locations in the Houston area with over 300+ enthusiastic Athletes. We offer indoor cycle, yoga, Pilates, and group fitness weights and dance classes.



Two new projects are helping Bloom Fitness to reach more people. The first is the offering of live virtual classes. Yoga, dance and our strength class are being offered weekly on a rotating basis. This virtual aspect of our program will continue to be developed, with the goal of streaming multiple classes weekly, or maybe even daily. Additionally, we are creating a library of video classes. The initial installment is 16 video classes in Pilates, yoga, dance and our strength class. These video classes will make it easier and less expensive to offer the program to more organizations and people.

We are currently working with The Arc of San Antonio to open in San Antonio and with The Arc of North Carolina and The Arc of Buncombe County to open in Western North Carolina. We are in the process of making enhancements to the program that will make it much easier and more economically feasible to expand the program throughout the country.

## Testimonials

*"Bloom Fitness has positively impacted the entire DSAH program. Not only are our adult participants more active and engaged because of Bloom Fitness, their parents are proactively seeking out opportunities for movement and fitness in life. This is HUGE for the Down syndrome community as adults with Down syndrome are at such a high risk of obesity and its accompanying diagnoses."*  
Kim Torres – Executive Director of The Down Syndrome Association of Houston

*"The Bloom Fitness program has energized us, providing a clear focus on where we are going with fitness within the population we serve."*  
Karen Barnhart – Director of Operations at The HUB Houston

*"The people with IDD we serve and their families, as well as our organization's staff, have all expressed their support, appreciation, and excitement about the Bloom Fitness program."*  
Robert Stakem – VP of the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Services Division at The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD

*"Bloom fitness has brought out so much courage/confidence to all athletes that participate in traditional yoga, bloom cycling, bloom dance, and bloom weights. Some had never been a part of an athletic team until they stepped into Bloom. This created strong character in each athlete. Athletes began to show independence and choice from participating with a fantastic team."*  
Patrina Anthony – Program Coordinator for The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD

*"The Bloom Fitness program's impact goes way beyond the fitness call. Participants in the program are more attentive and thinking more clearly. They carry themselves differently, with more confidence."*

Beryl Bailey – Teacher and Mentor at The HUB High School

## Program Tenets

The program began and still adheres to the following tenants as it goes and develops.

### Reliable

When class is schedule, class happens. We will not let our Athletes down.

### Sustainable

At every location we open, the program is built to go on forever.

### Engaging

We engage the athletes in a way that has them enthusiastically showing up to exercise, becoming a permanent part of their wellness lives.

### Duplicated

The program works and is built to work for any person with IDD, no matter their level of ability.

# Who We Serve

Bloom Fitness offers people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) an inviting and safe environment to exercise, learn about healthy lifestyle choices, and have fun social interaction with friends. Our classes offer cycling, yoga, Pilates, dance, and weights which serve to enhance the overall wellness of each Athlete through education and encouragement. We believe that our program changes lives.

## Locations

### TEXANA

TexanaCenter.com

- ROSENBERG LEARNING CENTER
- MISSOURI CENTER LEARNING CENTER

### THE CENTER FOR PURSUIT

TheCenterForPursuit.org

- CENTRAL CAMPUS
- WILLOW RIVER FARMS

### THE DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION OF HOUSTON

dsah.org

### THE HARRIS CENTER

TheHarrisCenter.org

### THE HUB

TheHubHouston.org

## The Numbers

250 ATHLETES

87 INDOOR CYCLES

36 CLASSES OFFERED PER WEEK

- CYCLING
- YOGA
- PILATES
- DANCE
- WEIGHTS

## Partnerships



An ongoing research project with the University of Houston on the physical and emotional benefits of the program.



The designated Here To Be partner of Lululemon in Sugar Land for 2020.



Approval as an organization with the University of Houston Health and Human Services to offer an intern program.

## How We Serve

<b>We create a community around the fitness.</b>	<b>We partner with IDD-serving organizations.</b>	<b>We utilize volunteer instructors</b>
<p>Athletes are recognized for their accomplishments by the placement of the Bloom Fitness logo on the community "Champions Board" after each class.</p> <p>Athletes earn shirts, sweat bands, water bottles and other items that become a symbol of accomplishment and that they are a part of the Bloom Fitness Team.</p>	<p>Our gyms are located within our partner organization's facilities where our athletes are already going to receive other services. This mitigates the transportation challenges of this population and lowers the cost of the program. Our partner organizations understand their clients well, which helps us shape a more relevant and effective program for our athletes.</p>	<p>We teach volunteers to lead indoor cycle, and group fitness dance and weights classes. The yoga and Pilates teachers are certified in their specialty.</p> <p>The keys to instructors wanting to volunteer is the appreciation and love that the Athletes give them, and their service provides a great sense of pride.</p>



## Bloom Fitness is one of very few fitness programs for people with IDD in existence.

Once a person starts in our program they rarely quit, consistently showing up to class with enthusiasm. The program's effect on the emotional and physical wellbeing of Bloom athletes has been astounding. The program elevates the quality of life of individuals with IDD, their families and guardians, as well as the staff of organizations that serve individuals with IDD. As Bloom Fitness expands, these improvements will reduce the need for other required services for individuals with IDD and help them become more active participants and contributors to the community at large.