

# **Expansion of aerobics from college of health sciences to main campus**

Date and time:

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Location / Venue:

University of Nairobi Sports Grounds

Aerobic dance is a form of physical exercise with rhythmic routine that combines cardiovascular, muscular strength and endurance exercises as well as flexibility segments. The benefits of aerobics are therefore holistic in nature.

Aerobics was started in the College of Health Sciences in 2008, for both students and staff. The sport remained unique to CHS, until May 22nd 2015, when the aerobic dance class was expanded to Main Campus for Staff Members. The classes at CHS and Main Campus have grown in leaps and bounds under the seasoned instruction of David Wagude and coordination by Joy Nyaga.



*Strength training segment during Aerobics class at CHS. The venue is Games Room.*



*A group of students executing walking lunges during Aerobics instruction at CHS. This exercise is very instrumental in strengthening and toning of the muscles of the lower body, with the added advantage of considerable abdominal engagement.*



*Circuit training during aerobics, with various stations each, focusing on different fitness component and/or muscle group. To the left were dumbbells squats, center was a push up station and the right was a station to perform bench dips.*



*After every aerobic dance and strength training, a stretching segment is executed during the cool down session to relieve muscular tension, delay or avoid muscle soreness and to improve flexibility.*





*Conditioning stage: Execution of sit-ups to promote strength and toning of abdominal/core muscles.*



*T-stand/side planks: This exercise helps to strengthen the core muscles of the body and improve balance.*



*On this day, the class decided to engage in yoga, in the spirit of the first ever international yoga day launched in Nairobi. This was a welcome change for the students, breaking from the usual routine of cardio and strength.*

### **Expansion of aerobics from CHS to main campus, coordinated by Joy Nyaga**

The University of Nairobi Staff Aerobics Class was launched on 22nd May 2015, with over one hundred members of staff gracing the session. The class has since grown in leaps and bounds under the seasoned instruction of David Wagude, who is an intern from Kenyatta University, but has also been instructing aerobics at the College of Health Sciences since the year 2013.





The very first day of class was marked with enormous turn out and immense motivation. Everyone who came, however green at aerobics was willing and ready to learn, ready to move. We started with slow paced steps to ensure no one was left behind. The instructor progressively picked up the tempo and at the end of it, the participants were all smiles, sweaty and thirsty. Although not everyone had the proper gear, the class was amazing, and fun. At the end of it, it was quite clear the program was born of robust health and would grow into something bigger than any one of us would have thought.





The next couple of sessions saw the introduction of basic strength exercises for the legs and the core/ abdomen. In the above two photos, the class is performing standing side crunches for the abdominal muscles, and body squats for the legs. This workout was specific and targeted the largest muscle groups of the body.



The class has come a long way from day one. As seen in the above three photos, everyone is in sync, exercising to the same tune, making the same moves, towards the same direction for a healthy body. Although there may not be such a phrase as the "perfect body", the participants are all content chasing their very own version of perfect. Doing it together makes the effort negligible.



After a couple of weeks everyone now feels comfortable, and we are introducing floor exercises. In the picture above, the class is performing the introductory phase of the famous abdominal exercise, the sit up, called the roll back; basically half a sit up. We want to go slowly so no one is left behind.



We have also introduced this super core exercise, the prone plank. It is quite challenging and not everyone can hold above 20 seconds. The objective is to work up to 60 seconds for optimum benefit. This will take time, but time is all we have.





We understand the science of exercise, hence we do not neglect any part of an exercise session, like the commonly skipped bit of stretching. This helps reduce post exercise soreness and also improves the range of motion, hence mobility about joints. The end result is improved integrity of the entire body. In the above photos, we are stretching the legs, and then the arms.



In this session, we introduced the basic push up/press up aimed at improving upper body muscular strength and endurance, which is a very important health related component of fitness. Many people got it right the first time, and the rest caught up pretty quickly. Only 10 repetitions on this day, but as we always do, we aim for more in the future.



Socialization and fun are some of the benefits of engaging in exercise.



Superior routines by the class covering both cardio respiratory endurance and muscular strength, a holistic approach. Everyone has made remarkable improvement, performing the exercise with better technique every day.

### **Conclusion**

Exercise is a very important part of life, promoting good health and longevity in every individual. It is widely accepted, and true, that exercising people are more productive, and economical to an organization compared to non-exercising and sedentary population. It is our recommendation and hope that the university will support the sustenance of this program. In the near future, we are looking forward to the expansion of the aerobics program for staff and students across the university campuses.

