

# Seniors FlexFit Program

The Surgeon Generals' Report (1996) warns that adults in the United States are inactive: 25% are totally sedentary and nearly 60% fail to obtain sufficient amounts of regular activity needed to reduce their risk of premature morbidity and mortality. Further, inactivity increases with age: by age 75, about one in three men and one in two women engage in NO physical activity. As more individuals live longer, it is imperative to determine the extent and mechanism by which exercise and physical activity, especially during adulthood, can improve health, functional capacity, quality of life, and the ability to live independently for those over 70 years of age.

*Hawai'i Academy* has numerous adult programs and activities available, including the Adult FlexFit and Gymnastics (for both recreation and competition interest of members age 16-59). The Seniors FlexFit Program focuses on challenges and opportunities of seniors — those over 60, especially those in their 70s, 80s, and 90s. This program is based on a weekly class that involves group and individual exercises for flexibility, strength, balance, safe falling, and aerobic conditioning. These exercises are designed to: (1) help maintain the ability to live independently and reduce the risk of falling and fracturing bones; (2) reduce the risk of dying from coronary heart disease and of developing high blood pressure, colon cancer, and diabetes; (3) help maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints; (4) reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression and foster improvements in mood and feelings of well being; (5) help improve stamina and muscle strength; (6) help control joint swelling and pain associated with arthritis; and (7) improve overall joint range of motion (flexibility) and the ability to perform activities of daily living. (Training priorities are based on strategic health initiatives on aging in exercise science and sports medicine, and the position standing on exercise and physical activities for older adults, according to the American College of Sports Medicine.)

Senior FlexFit classes are 90 minutes in length and involve exercises for improving flexibility and joint range of motion; cardiovascular fitness, safe falling, balance and dynamic stability; and muscular strength, and essential practical skill of daily living. The classes are designed to promote daily exercise and serve as a weekly demonstration of continual progress toward functional independence, health, and happiness. It is not the weekly FlexFit classes that makes dramatic changes in each participant's life . . . it is the lifestyle change in one's approach to daily living.

## Training at Hawai'i Academy

*Hawai'i Academy* has training facilities designed for research, education, and activities. We have a full range of state-of-the-art competitive and recreational equipment for artistic gymnastics, power tumbling and trampoline, martial arts, dance, and fitness training, including a power tumbling rod floors, eight overhead bungee systems, and two overhead traveling spotting systems. Basic research focuses on changes in central nervous systems functioning and physical fitness across the life span. Applied research involves topics in such multidisciplinary fields as developmental ergonomics, transgenerational design, and gerontechnology.



Seniors doing the 'sit-stand' exercise on progressively lower platforms.

## Typical Class Schedule

Time (min)	Typical Activities
10	Start-up, Jogging and individual preparation
10	Stretching on mats (Flexibility training)
10	Strength Exercise on mats
10	Sit-stand Exercises (150-200 reps)
10	Therapy Ball Exercise on Mats (Medicine Ball Throwing) or Conditioning
5	Rolling for Balance & Neural Stimulation
5	Falling Drills (onto soft mats)
15	Apparatus Strength & Skills Training
10	Burn-out (ending jog) balance & ankle rehab
3	Cool-down Stretching (walking)
2	Final Announcements and Bow-outs
90 min	
10 min	Snack / Talk Story / Recovery before going home
	Usually Out by noon



## Hawai'i Academy

A Private School for the Advancement of Lifetime Fitness, Gymnastics, and Human Sciences, with Research, Education and Activities for ALL Ages and Physical Abilities

## Meeting Times

Mondays 10:15-11:45 am  
 Tuesdays 12:15-1:45 pm  
 Wednesday 12:15-1:45 pm

*Phone to schedule a free trial lesson*

## Prices & Information

This is a special class for seniors (50+ years) and those challenged by aging or dysfunction (e.g., decreases in sensory functions like blindness and deafness; memory loss; mobility impairments; reduced flexibility and strength; and especially loss of balance). For those 50 and over the tuition is \$20 per month. All participants pay an annual membership fee of \$60 (for insurance, Free shirt, and registration; prorated at \$5/month for the remaining months of the year from the month starting classes) to become a member of the Academy. All participants must have approval from their physician before starting these exercise classes or undergo screening by Dr Max. Tuition is \$20/month with the opportunity to make up missed lessons. **Donations are greatly appreciated.**

## Multigenerational Discounts:

**Three Generation Families:** 1/2 tuition for all classes

**Four Generation Families:** All classes for all family members FREE

**Five Generation Families:** We pay you to come to the Academy

**(Encourage your children, parents, grandparents and great-grandparents to participate)**

# Instructors

## Mr Michael Nakashima BA *Senior Flex Fit & Recreational Instructor*

Teacher Mike is a well-qualified instructor having earned a Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education and certificate in Early Childhood Development from Long Beach State University in California. His 25 years of past gymnastics experience includes being a USA Gymnastics National Safety Instructor, an NCAA University gymnastics coach at Long Beach State University, a Compulsory Team Coach, a USAG Skill Evaluator, a Trampoline -Tumbling judge (levels 1-5), the past Gymnastics Director at Hickam Gymnastics, and of course a very fun-loving Parent/Toddler and Preschool Instructor here at HA. And when he's not busy engaging kids in his classes, he enjoys spending time with his wife and dog, gardening, and pretending that he knows how to play guitar well.

## Ms (Tutu) Joan Kufferath *Seniors Trampoline Team Assistant Coach*

Head of a three-generation family (all competing in HA meets). Tutu Joan is Hawaii's first grandmother state champion on trampoline, and the first athlete in Hawaii to score a '10' in competition. She has motivated many seniors to compete in meets, and do more than just take classes. Speak with her about opportunities available on Oahu.

## Max Vercruyssen PhD MPH *Academy Director & Senior FlexFit Program Coordinator*

Dr Max has Post-Doctoral training in Ergonomics and Applied Physiology; advanced credentials in Gerontology; a PhD in Neuromuscular Control and Human Performance; masters degrees in Exercise Science, Physiological Psychology, and Public Health; and a Bachelors degree in Experimental Psychology. At the Penn State University, he conducted research in the ergonomics unit of the Noll Laboratory for Human Performance Research. At the University of Southern California, he was the head of ergonomics and first director of the Human Factors Laboratory, and a co-director of the Laboratory of Attention and Motor Performance (Andrus Gerontology Center). At the Eindhoven University of Technology (The Netherlands), he was the second International Fellow of the Institute for Gerontechnology and helped create the emergent academic field of gerontechnology. Presently, he is Director of Hawaii Academy; and a father of four girls (all competing on HA Trampoline Teams). His primary fundamental research interests have been on changes in the central nervous system and functional abilities across the life span. His applied research has been concerned with the effective use of technology to extend the years of functional ability. For ten years he has spent his Monday mornings with seniors helping them cope with the challenges of aging and disease through exercise and humor. His students have recovered balance and maintained functional abilities. Recently he started a campaign to teach techniques for safe falling.



**Hawaii Academy**  
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Seniors doing modified pull-ups for arm strength.

Hawaii Academy — a private school for the advancement of lifetime fitness, gymnastics, and human sciences for ALL ages and abilities.

## Kupuna (Elders) Flexibility and Fitness Program (60-100+yrs)



Seniors doing 'step reps' on progressively higher mats.

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