



October 2023 Update

# a note from our founder...

Dear Empowered Through Fitness Community,

I want to start this letter by expressing my gratitude for your continued support of Empowered Through Fitness and our mission of sharing the joys of fitness with the women and girls of our shared Miami community. I founded Empowered Through Fitness in 2018 after seeing a need for providing middle school-aged girls with sports bras. Luck was on my side and I was able to connect to some incredible people within the Miami-Dade County Public Schools system and, together, we brought the first ever **Girls Empowerment Health Fair** to West Homestead K-8 on October 19, 2018. This event was more than just the handing out of sports bras (at no cost) to the girls; we moved our bodies together during a warm-up and walk **and** we were joined by guest speakers who talked about mental wellness and female physical health. The success of this event led to two empowerment fairs in 2019.

The plan for growth in 2020 was to expand the reach of the empowerment fair, but then the pandemic hit and, like most businesses, things shut down. There were no empowerment fairs in 2020 or 2021 because of pandemic-related restrictions and the action plan became one of pivoting to the online space. The definition of "fitness" was expanded to include mental fitness and, from this expansion, the virtual workshop series, **Empowered Through Mindfulness**, was born. These workshops explore the intersections of mindfulness with brain science, multitasking, respiratory/nervous systems, and leadership. In 2021, I partnered with three organizations to offer these workshops for free to their community of students.

While I liked sharing mindfulness teachings virtually, I missed the in-person element of meeting new people and bringing different communities of people together. After some reflection, I made the difficult decision to place Empowered Through Fitness on hiatus in the summer of 2021 so that I could strategize how to best share Empowered Through Fitness's mission through in-person events.

The short period of recalibration I thought I needed turned into two years, bringing us to this letter. I did what needed to be done to maintain Empowered Through Fitness during that time, but I struggled to figure out how to restart programming and how to do so in a way that values the time and effort I personally put into each of the offerings. While the way forward isn't perfectly clear, I know that the way forward involves taking the first step forward. So, here I am taking the first steps of thanking you for your support throughout the years, updating you on the behind-the-scenes happenings over the past two years, and letting you know that hibernation is over and 2024 will be a fresh start.

With immense gratitude,



Stephanie Diaz  
Founder and President