



THE FIT Nonprofit lets uninsured folks maintain fitness

BY KRISTA JAHNKE • FREE PRESS SPORTS WRITER • MAY 3, 2009

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A first-of-its-kind program will debut this month to bring free fitness and physical therapy services to uninsured Michiganders.

With the state's unemployment rate hitting 12.7%, the highest it's been since 1982, friends and fitness buffs Charlie Sanders Jr. and Rossano Rea wanted to help people without benefits maintain their fitness or get needed physical therapy.

Sanders, the owner of a personal training company, is the son of Football Hall of Famer Charlie Sanders, a former Detroit Lion.

He and Rea, a gym owner and trainer, created a nonprofit called You're Up and, after five months of fund-raising, they're ready to offer one year of free services for those who qualify in southeast Michigan.

"We've been moving at an extremely fast pace," Sanders said. "People want to help Michigan like you have no idea."

The program's mission is to "benefit those without benefits," about 11% of Michigan residents in 2008, according to the United Health Foundation. You're Up will serve uninsured people who have household incomes below \$22,000.

Rea donated his Bodymorph gym in Ferndale to be used for You're Up services, and Oakland MRI will provide diagnostic care. Lucia Zamorano, a Wayne State University clinical professor of neurological surgery, and Fred Leff, a podiatrist at the Detroit Medical Center, will be the organization's medical advisers.

Sanders and Rea will handle the fitness and wellness operations.

People who think they might qualify can go to the Web site www.youreupbodymorph.org to be screened. If they meet the criteria, Sanders said a personalized plan will be created to fit that person's needs.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

• To qualify for You're Up services, you must be uninsured and have a household income below \$22,000. To find out if you fit the criteria, go to www.youreupbodymorph.org. Click on "inquire" and insert your contact information. Someone will get in touch with you.

• You can donate to the nonprofit through PayPal by clicking on the "donate" button at the bottom of the You're Up homepage.

• Find out more about the facilities and trainers at:

Bodymorph: 561 Livernois, Ferndale, www.bodymorph.net or 248-544-4646.

Charlie Sanders Jr.: www.csptinc.com or 248-904-4059.

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