

# Business

Just when you think you can't, Karla makes sure you can

Sudor Taino motivates

by Alicia B. Smith

Decked out in a bandana, sleeveless shirt and yoga pants, Karla Rodriguez looked as if she had just finished working out.

It is likely she had, as fitness is one of the things she is most passionate about, whether its her own fitness goals she is working on, or helping others develop theirs.

Whatever motivates this woman, and she'll tell you it's music and books, she has energy to spare.

Ms. Rodriguez is a single mother, a detective with the Hartford Police Department, president of the Connecticut Association of Women Police, an instructor at Big Sky, a teacher at The Dance Center in West Hartford, student in a master's program at Trinity College. Oh yes, she also, holds several fitness certifications and still has the time to operate her own business, Sudor Taino.

The concept for the business is something she considered for about a decade. Fitness has long been an important aspect of her life, especially after a few injuries and weight gain from her pregnancy. Now she wants to share not only her energy and passion for fitness, but also serve as a motivator as well. After she became a certified fitness instructor, Ms. Rodriguez often noticed that many people taking her classes or those working out on their own seemed to be walking through the motions but not enjoying the experience. She wanted to change all of that.

"People view it as more trouble to get to the gym, even more, they are upset they have to be there," Ms. Rodriguez said. "If I had a mission, I would try to change that mentality."

Her business is doing just that. While she continues to instruct at other places as well, Sudor Taino was developed to help motivate those interested in getting fit and, more importantly, help people find a fitness regimen they enjoy.

She has hosted conferences, dance workshops, developed exercise regimens for places of employment and worked with children at youth camps.

"I want to be able to touch as many people as I can," she said. "I feel like my work is never done, I'm always looking to motivate. It gives me more energy to do that for people."

Nicole Cassarino, owner of The Dance Center in West Hartford, said, “If you haven’t tried one of her classes it’s on your must haves for things to do this summer.”

Before she even met Ms. Rodriguez, just by looking at her resume, “I knew she was the kind of person you wanted involved, the kind of person you want on your team.

“She’s just really a great teacher, her energy is infectious.”

When the two women met, Ms. Cassarino asked Ms. Rodriguez if she’d be willing to instruct a trial class or two. Ms. Rodriguez agreed.

“Everyone just loved them,” Ms. Cassarino said. “By the end of that trial class, everyone signed up for it.”

Now Ms. Rodriguez is a regular instructor, teaching a Latin cardio class.

“She brings all the Latin elements of dance into the class and puts her own twist on it,” Ms. Cassarino said. “There are so many aerobics classes, but she just really gets to your inner core and makes you work, and makes you want to work.”

Ms. Rodriguez considers her talent for motivating others as a blessing.

“I feel blessed in my life that I have this gift,” she said, adding that it is something she also shares with her daughter.

Ms. Rodriguez developed the name Sudor Taino, which means, “sweat” in Spanish and Taino refers to the Taino Indians who once inhabited Puerto Rico.

Although her daughter once said she does everything, Ms. Rodriguez assured that she is human too. Hershey chocolates with almonds are hidden around her home for those not so good days, but Ms. Rodriguez said, she knows how to bounce back and can help others do the same.

On July 13, Sudor Taino will hold a three-session workshop. “Fusing Your Inner Core” from 10 to 2 p.m. at the Polish Home on 60 Chadwick Road in Hartford. The sessions will include an intense cardio kickboxing workout, an entire body workout and a free dance workout. NL

For more information on Sudor Taino and the conference visit [www.sudortaino.com](http://www.sudortaino.com). For more information on Ms. Rodriguez’s Latin class, visit [www.thedancecenterct.com](http://www.thedancecenterct.com).