2016 WVU Lifetime Activities Report Final.02.26.16

University Relations
WVU LIFETIME ACTIVITIES STUDY

February 2016
Background & Objectives

Background
WVU Lifetime Activities, a community-based, service-oriented program operated by the WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences (CPASS), offers physical activities for all age groups. The program had been self-sustaining and profitable; however, during the past few years, enrollment has been flat. The number of classes offered has declined as well, and this is attributed to a lack of experienced staff, competition or disinterest.

Research Objectives
The organization wanted to conduct market research in order to understand how past attendees perceive the program. Specifically, the research objectives are:
• To identify WVU Lifetime Activities’ perceived strengths and opportunities for improvement
• To determine the importance of the program’s affiliation with CPASS
• To understand the competitive landscape and determine unmet needs
• To determine the most effective vehicles for marketing the program

Methodology
The Lifetime Activities program coordinator emailed a 10-minute survey to 1,120 individuals who personally took or had their child take a Lifetime Activities class in 2015. Approximately 300 past attendees completed the survey – a 27% response rate.

Note: “Past attendees” will be referred to as “attendees” in this report.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Executive Summary

AWARENESS & KNOWLEDGE
Participants learn about WVU Lifetime Activities through a variety of sources. Those most relied on are the CPASS website, word of mouth and direct mail. The website is, by far, the most important. Advertising in the local/student newspapers provides virtually no bang for the buck.

Most attendees are aware that Lifetime Activities is operated by CPASS, but the relationship holds little to no significance for them. Attendees who find the connection relevant believe the affiliation implies that Lifetime Activities offers professionally developed activities, has college supported programs and offers a wide variety of student-taught classes.

Those attributes most closely associated with Lifetime Activities are “wide variety of activities,” “family friendly” and “knowledgeable instructors.” “New and fresh classes” and “well-researched class techniques” are attributes least associated with Lifetime Activities. Thus, the program is disconnected from CPASS’s reputation for excellence in sports training and management.

RECOMMENDATIONS
• WVU Lifetime Activities must develop a strong value proposition to differentiate itself and create a strong brand.
  o Explain how Lifetime Activity participants uniquely benefit from its affiliation with CPASS (e.g. Experience fitness classes led by highly-trained student experts)
  o Incorporate quotes from satisfied attendees in messaging to reinforce the brand promise
  o Communicate Lifetime Activities price point relative to value
RECOMMENDATIONS (continued)

- Develop a comprehensive marketing program to increase awareness and broaden reach
  - Strengthen communication channels outside of the CPASS website. Mountaineer ENews, social media and direct mail can all be utilized more effectively.

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES
Overall, Lifetime Activities garners high satisfaction ratings among those who/whose child took a class within the past twelve months. The organization is most notably praised for its knowledgeable and friendly instructors, enjoyable and varied classes, value for the money and convenience. It also provides a family-friendly atmosphere, is community focused and provides individualized attention.

However, the program is riddled with problems that strike at the heart of the organization – unprofessional instructors, inconsistent classes and poor communication. When asked what surprised or delighted them about their own class experience, nearly twice as many attendees voiced disappointment rather than delight. Many recounted issues with their instructor. In fact, improving instructor training is attendees’ top suggestion for improving Lifetime Activities. Some instructors are late, no-shows and/or indifferent (i.e. pre-occupied with their cell phones, fellow instructors or homework). Also, many lack communication skills. Participants receive little or no information prior to the start of class, may not be informed of class cancellations and may not be issued a refund when instructors fail to reschedule missed classes. Lastly, quality of class instruction is inconsistent.
Executive Summary

RECOMMENDATIONS
• Develop stringent criteria when recruiting instructors
  o Monitor performance and hold instructors accountable
  o Implement performance based reviews based on feedback from attendees
  o Establish best practices for communication so attendees feel informed and valued
  o Disallow the use of instructors’ cellphones, etc. during classes

THE COMPETITION
BOPARC, WVU Student Recreation Center and Health Works are Lifetime Activities’ greatest competitors at the moment. Most participants agree that the classes Lifetime Activities offers are comparable to, rather than an improvement over classes they have taken elsewhere.

Those whose children took Lifetime Activities were both most and least likely to have their child take another Lifetime Activities class depending on the quality of their instructors. The former were impressed with instructors; the latter claim their instructor was unprofessional.

Most attendees are likely to recommend Lifetime Activities to friends or family members; nevertheless, they are inclined to consider programs outside of WVU Lifetime Activities in the near future. Competitors who are conveniently located, offer comparably priced classes and have knowledgeable, reliable instructors are the greatest threat to WVU Lifetime Activities.

RECOMMENDATION
• The ability to differentiate itself and provide participants with a consistent, quality experience at a reasonable price, as well as the ability to continue offering new classes in convenient venues are key for Lifetime Activities to improve its customer lifetime value.
DETAILED FINDINGS
Slightly more than half (52%) of the respondents are 35-54 years of age. Fewer (23%) are ages 26-34 years old. Those 18-25 and 55-64 years of age comprise 9% and 14%, respectively.

About eight in ten (83%) respondents are female.
Just over one-third of survey respondents are employed at WVU (35%) or outside of WVU (34%). Students and retirees represent 12% and 5%, respectively. Another 14% are comprised of stay-at-home moms, spouses of WVU employees and alumni.
Seven in ten rated WVU Lifetime Activities excellent (23%) or very good (47%). Another 29% believe the program is good or fair. Three attendees gave the program a poor rating.
Half of the attendees learn about Lifetime Activities from the CPASS website (50%). Word of mouth ranks second (33%) and direct mail is third (23%).

Q. How do you learn about the types of Lifetime Activities/programs WVU Lifetime Activities offers? (Please check all that apply.)

5+ mentions: Past participant (8) Web search (8)
Eight in ten reported taking one or two Lifetime Activities classes in the past 12 months. Fourteen percent have taken 3 or more. Six percent acknowledged not having taken a Lifetime Activities class within the past 12 months.
Class-specific feedback includes…

a. **Swimming**
   - Cold water at the Natatorium
   - Environment at Natatorium not as family friendly
   - Quality of instructors/instructor varies greatly
   - Swim class is described as “free swim” rather than instructional
   - Not enough instruction for babies/toddlers
   - Sunday time slots good for families
   - Infant swim class instructors had few interactions with attendees and did not always show up
   - Improved swimming ability

b. **Yoga**
   - Instructor praised

c. **Fencing**
   - Instructor praised
   - Duration of classes (6 weeks) too short
   - No follow up Lifetime Activities available

d. **Pilates**
   - Instructor praised

e. **Dance Class**
   - Instructor praised
   - Lack of mirrors

f. **Gymnastics**
   - Reasonably priced
   - Instructors are not engaged/unreliable
   - Inconsistent quality of instruction/too much variation
   - Encouraging instructor
   - Beginning classes failed to focus on improving ability
   - No structure
   - Instructors not trained to work with children
   - Quality of summer class below par
   - Tumbling Toddler instructor missed multiple Lifetime Activities

g. **Ballroom Dance**
   - Instructor praised

h. **Healthy Kids Summer Camp**
   - Praised overall

Q. During the past 12 months, how many Lifetime Activities/programs have you and/or your child(ren) taken from WVU Lifetime Activities?
Most attendees believe that Lifetime Activities offers a wide variety of activities (67%) and has a “family friendly atmosphere” (64%). Nearly half (45%) feel the instructors are knowledgeable and nearly as many (42%) believe Lifetime Activities is community focused. Just over a third (35%) associate it with providing individualized attention.

Q. Which of the following attributes do you feel best describe WVU Lifetime Activities? (Please check all that apply)

- Offers a wide variety of activities
- Family-friendly atmosphere
- Knowledgeable instructors
- Community focused
- Provides individualized attention
- New and "fresh" classes
- Well-researched class techniques
- None of the above
Every segment associates Lifetime Activities most with offering a wide variety of activities and being family-friendly. Far fewer attendees employed outside the University believe it has knowledgeable instructors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Employed Outside WVU</th>
<th>WVU Student</th>
<th>WVU Employee</th>
<th>Retired</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family-friendly</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>64%</td>
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<td>Offers a wide variety</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>57%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Community focused</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Knowledgeable class</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>43%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Well-researched class</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New and &quot;fresh&quot; classes</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None of the above</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. Which of the following attributes do you feel best describe WVU Lifetime Activities? (Please check all that apply)
Of 10 aspects of WVU Lifetime Activities program attendees were asked to evaluate, the top five rated as “very good” or “excellent” are registration (69%) cost of the Lifetime Activities (67%), value for the money (63%), quality of the Lifetime Activities (63%) and location of the Lifetime Activities (63%). Ability to provide real-world results ranked last (49%).
Nearly nine in 10 attendees (87%) are aware that WVU Lifetime Activities is operated by WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences. Nonetheless, the association means little to nothing for the vast majority.

Q. Are you aware that Lifetime Activities is operated by WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences? Q. What, if anything, does Lifetime Activities affiliation with WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences mean to you? (Note: If you are unable to answer this question, please type "NA" in the text box.)
The overwhelming majority in each segment is aware that Lifetime Activities is operated by WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences. Less than half of the attendees in each segment are able to articulate what the association means.

Q. Are you aware that Lifetime Activities is operated by WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences? Q. What, if anything, does Lifetime Activities affiliation with WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences mean to you? (Note: If you are unable to answer this question, please type "NA" in the text box.)
Those who can articulate the connection believe it implies the following:

- Knowledge/professional staff develop the activities (17)
- Students gain experience/interact with the community by teaching these classes (15)
- Children can get physical activity (12)
- Community access (10)
- A variety of classes are available (3)

“**The affiliation would seem to imply that programming is offered by individuals who are well-trained and knowledgeable in their field or discipline. I would expect instructors are certified and the programs would be marketed and highly visible to the community through the WVU communication system. I would expect the new CPASS building would be a premier site for classes.**”

Q. What, if anything, does Lifetime Activities affiliation with WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences mean to you? (Note: If you are unable to answer this question, please type “NA” in the text box.)
Nearly twice as many past attendees reported being disappointed rather than pleasantly surprised with Lifetime Activities classes.

Pleased (54 mentions)
• Stansbury is a “hidden treasure”
• Accommodating
• Friendly staff
• Some instructors work well with children
• Many classes are less expensive than those offered by competitors
• Lifetime Activities are enjoyable
• Some Lifetime Activities are well taught
• Stansbury offers one-on-one training/fitness assessments and is well operated and professionally staffed with knowledgeable student trainers

Displeased (90 mentions)
• Do not engage with parents
• Little interaction with attendees
• Instructors late/fail to show up
• Lack of interest/commitment
• No communication about cancellations/schedule changes
• Cancelled Lifetime Activities are not made up
• Inconsistent quality of instruction
• Unprofessional behavior (chatting, on phone, studying, etc.)
• Some equipment needs to be updated at Stansbury
• Scuba Lifetime Activities do not provide “real certification”
• Instruction not structured; varies by instructor
• Some instructors do not vary children’s activities
• Instructors for some programs are not trained youth teachers
• Expensive for some students/faculty
• Lack of practical application
• Not informed of cancellations
• Lifetime Activities do not start promptly
• No fans/air conditioning at Stansbury
• No information provided ahead of time (class location, parking, etc.)
• Hard to find parking
• No wait listing allowed
• Limited class sizes
• Limited hours
• Too few instructors for number of children
• Stansbury closed between semesters/summer
Outside of WVU Lifetime Activities, BOPARC (50%), WVU Rec Center (30%) or “other facilities” (24%) were named as the top three places that someone has personally taken or has had their child take a class. 16% have not taken a class from any of these organizations.

Note: Other = A total of approximately 40 different organizations were named
Over half of attendees (55%) who/whose child has taken classes outside of WVU Lifetime Activities believe Lifetime Activities classes are about the same as others. Nearly four in 10 (37%) believe they are better; another 7% feel they are worse.
Far more students than those employed at or outside of WVU believe Lifetime Activities classes exceed classes that they've taken elsewhere.
Over half (62%) of attendees feel the programs Lifetime Activities offers are enough; 38% want more Lifetime Activities.

Suggestions for additional Lifetime Activities include:
- Lifetime Activities for older children (12+)
- More yoga options
- Pilates
- More swimming options
  - High levels
- More dance options
  - For children (Hip hop, etc.)
  - For adults (ballet, modern, etc.)
- More children’s Lifetime Activities
- Different martial arts Lifetime Activities
  - Self-defense, Tai Chi

“The Lifetime Activities available in our community drop off dramatically once kids reach middle and high school. There aren’t many choices for noncompetitive kids to participate in recreational activities.”

“…I’d like to see an ‘advanced’ gymnastics class or a gymnastics class designed for the older kids – 12+. I think my daughter is going out of the ‘intermediate’ Lifetime Activities, and yet I loathe the idea of going back to Lifetime Activities at the other places in this town. Too much money, too much competitive nonsense, too much emphasis on travel teams, etc. (these Lifetime Activities her been ‘just enough,’) so I hate to see her lose them. I also wish they didn’t start so late in the evening. It’s tough to get her to bed before 10 p.m. when we’re in class until 9:00 p.m. on the other side of town.”
Nearly four in 10 (38%) are extremely likely or (28%) very likely to take another (or their child to take another) Lifetime Activities class in the next 12 months. One quarter (25%) are somewhat likely take another class and 9% would not.
The majority (57%) acknowledged that Lifetime Activities affiliation with WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences does not mean anything to them. Those who were able to articulate what the relationship means indicated the following:

**Well-trained instructors**

“Student trainers have had appropriate coursework to work at Stansbury. I like interacting with the students and have found most of them to be helpful and knowledgeable.”

“With it being associated with CPASS, I expect quality instruction.”

“Activities developed by very knowledgeable and professional staff.”

“Students will be involved in the teaching. Curriculum will be reviewed and approved for best outcomes.”

“Access to knowledgeable instructors.”

**Community involvement**

“Community involvement to better aid in an overall health improvement within the greater Morgantown area.”

“It means that the University supports the fitness of the community. It is important that the University have a connection to the community and that we support each other....”

“Because they are affiliated with WVU, the community can benefit from living so close to the University.”

“Access for the community to great equipment and facilities and experienced teachers.”

**Lifelong fitness**

“Physical activities continue across a lifetime.”

“It demonstrates the broad range of lively and lifelong activities and infer that, though the process may be focused in college, that the activities are for a healthy lifetime.”

“I know there are a lot of students as instructors and it’s a learning time for them, too.”

“A healthy option for my children to be engaged in physical activity and make healthy choices throughout their lives.”

Q. What, if anything, does Lifetime Activities affiliation with WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences mean to you? (Note: If you are unable to answer this question, please type "NA" in the text box.)
Some past attendees who are aware of the connection between Lifetime Activities and WVU College of Physical Activity and Sport Sciences feel somewhat disappointed.

“Should be more connected but doesn’t seem to be – no real innovation in the programming that I would expect from a program that is supposed to be at the forefront.”

“Student instructors with likely minimal experience with children.”

“Wish our instructor was a little more knowledgeable. We did a lot of just hanging around, but when she taught/led it was great.”

“Not much really. It does provide a group of young instructors…but sometimes missing really experienced instructors.”
More than half of past attendees are extremely likely (37%) or very likely (28%) to participate in another WVU Lifetime Activities class in the next 12 months. Another quarter (25%) are somewhat likely to do so; one in 10 are not likely to take another Lifetime Activities class.
Those who indicated they/their child(ren) are likely to take another WVU Lifetime Activities class were asked what they feel the program does particularly well.

- Good for children (33)
- Well-liked, trained instructors (32)
- Good value (18)
- Classes well received (14)
- Convenient (13)
- Varied class offerings (12)
- Individualized attention (11)
- Access to swimming/activities in the winter (5)
- Family friendly (4)

“Offers a wide variety of Lifetime Activities developed for a variety of skill levels, keeps costs reasonable and has great instructors:”

“Provides extracurricular activities to keep kids busy and lets them try sports at a reasonable cost.”

“My son has been taking Tae Kwon Do for about four years through your program. It is reasonably priced and flexible with no long-term contract required.”

“It’s accessible, usually reasonable priced (baby swim sessions are stupid expensive) and I miss the Baby Gym lessons. Those were particularly nice.”

“My daughter loves the gymnastics class. She enjoys the instructors and the personalized attention.”

“The gymnastics class is reasonably priced and much closer to our home than the other gymnastics centers. My daughter has fun at the class. For the most part, the instructors are nice.”

Q. You indicated you and/or your child(ren) are likely to take another WVU Lifetime Activities class/program. What does the program do particularly well?
Most of those who indicated they/their child(ren) are not likely to take another WVU Lifetime Activities classes said so because their instructors failed to behave professionally.

“Our teacher did not show up three times for Tumbling Toddlers, so we stopped going. Because it was hard to explain to a 3 year old why they cannot have class because the teachers were no shows (a few times).”

“Teachers were always late for every class, and half of the time one of them would miss class. Very disappointed.”

“The infant swim class teachers were disappointing. They didn't interact much with the participants and didn't even show up to one of the lessons. During the lesson in which the instructor didn't show up the lifeguard allowed us to still use the pool but we were never contacted for a make up or refund.”

“Age divisions; lack of quality instructors that show energy, enthusiasm and know/care what they are talking about (and I don't mean just standing talking to each other).”

“We don't know if our kid could learn anything.”

“The lack of interest/commitment of the instructors/ trainers.”

“We took the swim lessons for age 4 and it was fun, but I thought there would be more instruction. It was mostly playing in the pool.”
Less than half (44%) of past attendees are very or extremely likely to explore fitness activities outside of Lifetime Activities in the next 12 months. Nearly four in ten are somewhat likely to explore other options. About two in 10 (19%) do not anticipate looking for alternatives.

Thinking about the next 12 months, how likely are you to explore fitness classes/programs outside of WVU Lifetime Activities?
Most are “extremely” (34%) or “very likely” (37%) to recommend WVU Lifetime Fitness to a friend or family member. About a quarter (23%) are “somewhat likely” to promote the program. Just 6% will not recommend the program.
Past participants were asked what they would do to improve Lifetime Activities. Major areas for improvement include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructors (39 mentions)</th>
<th>Communication (22 mentions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Improve instruction</td>
<td>• Provide information regarding cancellations, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve engagement with participants</td>
<td>• Consider automated email/phone notification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quality control of instructors</td>
<td>• Increase email communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Add structure to Lifetime Activities</td>
<td>• Offer a time free pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ensure clear communication with parents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional hours/classes (16 mentions)</th>
<th>Advertising (12 mentions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Add more class times</td>
<td>• Advertise more widely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Add evening/weekend Lifetime Activities</td>
<td>• Inform people about Lifetime Activities earlier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Offer more teen/adult Lifetime Activities</td>
<td>• Promote new/different Lifetime Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Add higher level Lifetime Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Longer hours/summer hours for fitness center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More convenient locations</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Verbatims follow on page 34.
Q. If you were in charge of WVU Lifetime Activities for a day, what one thing would you do differently to improve its Lifetime Activities/programs?

“Improve communication of those in charge of the website and those in charge of the activities.” (Student)

“Don’t take the same long breaks as the University” (Retired)

“Make instructors more knowledgeable and accountable. Increase their enthusiasm for working with these students!” (WVU employee)

“Spend more time and resources marketing the programs.” (WVU Employee)

“Give this review at the end of the class. I was hoping for a survey at the end so I could tell whoever about the teachers and life guards causing classes to start late. We could not make up the time because there was a class after ours.” (WVU employee)

“Communication with the public is not very good. Despite knowing about there being programs there, it is hard to find what programs are available.” (Student)

“Hire responsible college students that understand the importance of showing up for these kiddos - offer more courses.” (Employed outside WVU)

“Add more classes of varying skill levels. (Other)

“Spend more time and resources marketing the programs.”

“I would improve the instruction in the gymnastics classes. The instructors need to be more engaged and need to offer more instruction to the kids.” (Employed outside WVU)

“A free day to try a class before you buy. Many of us are low income.” (Other)

“Improve the instruction in the gymnastic classes. The instructors need to be more engaged and need to offer more instruction to the kids.” (Employed outside WVU)

“Make sure the teachers are equipped to deal with the particular students they’ll be teaching, i.e., someone teaching a beginning swimming classes for adults should be prepared for people who are irrationally afraid and not teach the class the same way they’d teach a kids’ class.” (Employed outside WVU)

“Kansas the quality of instructors. It would make a 100% difference.” (Other)

“A free day to try a class before you buy. Many of us are low income.” (Student)

“Hire responsible college students that understand the importance of showing up for these kiddos - offer more courses.” (Employed outside WVU)

“Communication with the public is not very good. Despite knowing about there being programs there, it is hard to find what programs are available.” (Student)

“Spend more time and resources marketing the programs.” (WVU Employee)

“Give this review at the end of the class. I was hoping for a survey at the end so I could tell whoever about the teachers and life guards causing classes to start late. We could not make up the time because there was a class after ours.” (WVU employee)

“Make instructors more knowledgeable and accountable. Increase their enthusiasm for working with these students!” (WVU employee)

“I would improve the instruction in the gymnastics classes. The instructors need to be more engaged and need to offer more instruction to the kids.” (Employed outside WVU)

“Improve communication of those in charge of the website and those in charge of the activities.” (Student)