Wellness Student of the Week

John Garner

John’s Wellness Story:
At age 48, I find myself being more health conscious than I was in my younger years. I have had to overcome many obstacles in my life as early as six years old, when a growth was discovered on my right hand (my dominate hand) that turned out to be calcium deposits that had to be surgically removed; The last of three attempts at age nine left my index finger of my right hand to be permanently immobile. I learned to do many things a different way using modifications to account for my limited use of my hand and finger. Learning to write, grip a baseball bat, or even pushups took some creativity on my part.

However, as I approached 40 the calcification became arthritic. My range of motion was becoming more and more limited, making it quite painful to do the simplest tasks like sweeping the floor, brushing my teeth, or simply putting my feet on the floor to get out of bed in the morning. Having had two rotator cuff surgeries (L/R shoulders 1 ea.), a knee surgery, and diagnosed with chronic Gout (uric acid buildup that causes inflammation of the joints) I felt as though I was losing my independence.

When I enrolled at GRCC in 2010 I took a weightlifting class to try and strengthen my joints. This worked for a while, but during the semester breaks I would have periods of being inactive resulting in the return of the pains and limited mobility, so this semester I decided to give Yoga a try. I enrolled in the class not really knowing what to expect, yet based on the things I heard about it in the past like the therapeutic value it has. I came in with an open mind, and I now have a new respect for Yoga. It is helping me to build strength from the inside out, and to renew my thought process not allowing outside interference to limit my progress during those fifty minutes on my mat. My mat is like a magic carpet, and when I am on it becomes my new place of serenity where nothing else matters. As a result I am rebuilding myself from within, and I am becoming more focused and in tune with every part of me, Physical, mental, and emotional.