

# K-Fit Founder Bounces Back



*Kashawn Fraser photo credit: Rooster*

**C**ertain actions, inactions and behaviors can change the course of your entire life. You can give up or you can grow. Complacency is easy, swallowing your pride and choosing to persevere? That takes true integrity.

Kashawn Fraser's family all hail from Queens, New York, where Kashawn was born in 1990. His mother, worried what would lay in store for Kashawn's future, made the bold decision to move to South Florida, believing Kashawn would have a better life filled with more opportunities. When Kashawn was 12 years old, they made the move to Coconut Creek, Florida

and Kashawn began attending Monarch High School. He took his love of basketball with him and began as starting point guard for the school's team. It wasn't until his senior year when Kashawn started playing for the football team as a defensive end. But make an impression, he did. He led the league for the most sacks by any player, garnering him attention from many Division I colleges. Kashawn decided to attend Central Michigan receiving a full ride and proving to his mother that she had made a truly prescient decision.

Kashawn excelled on the football field and off. While studying Promotion of Health & Wellness, he received the Brightest Future Award in the program and went all conference his junior year. Then life happened. After his junior year of college, Kashawn made some poor decisions that landed him in hot water with the law, and the school. Kashawn did not return to Central Michigan.

Losing his football scholarship, Kashawn brushed himself off, put his head down

and enrolled in Henderson State University. He continued to play football, completed his senior year of college and finally hoped to get what every NFL hopeful dreams about: 'the call'. That day, the draft picks came and went, and the phone didn't ring. After four years of college, Kashawn came home to West Palm Beach without a degree, and without team.

Kashawn's credits from Central Michigan weren't all transferable to Henderson and by the time he moved back home, he was feeling frustrated and disheartened. Once again living with his mother, Kashawn worked as a personal trainer at a dodgy gym, a pragmatic job to which he resorted to taking the bus after his old car finally broke down.

Kashawn took a hard look at his life and knew he needed a change. He realized where he was was not in line with the potential he possessed, and only through hard work could he correct his path. Kashawn finished his degree at Walden University and began training again. He continued to work as a personal trainer, doing house

calls and working at more reputable gyms. He did his research and learned about the Canadian Football League: his chance to get back on track. Open tryouts began across the US and Kashawn set his sites on the impending date at Oxbridge Academy in West Palm Beach. Hundreds were there to work out, but Kashawn shined and was selected to go to their mini camp at IMG. This time he got a call.

Kashawn received offers from two teams, Edmonton and Winnipeg, choosing the latter and was selected to the practice team. Knowing he was good enough to start, Kashawn continued to work hard, keep his head down and persevere. Emotions can get the best of people when they know they're not being used to their full potential, but Kashawn wasn't going to be one of those people. He continued to keep quiet, show up and do his job. Sure enough, by the 3<sup>rd</sup> game, Kashawn was starting and he continued to play through the season, receiving 9 starts of the 16 regular season games.

Injuries are always a problem in the game and Kashawn was no stranger to them. His first

year with Winnipeg, he suffered a broken hand and torn MCL but continued to play throughout the season. However, his second year, Kashawn sprained his acromioclavicular joint, or AC joint, at the top of the shoulder and the injury plagued him throughout the season. Unfortunately, the pain became worse instead of better, and Kashawn discovered the sprain had actually escalated into a rotator cuff tear. Before the end of his second professional season, Winnipeg released him from the team.

Still an NFL hopeful, Kashawn spends the offseasons using his knowledge of fitness and training to benefit others. Although his 6'3" 280lb appearance can sometimes be a detractor to those just hoping to get in shape, Kashawn has actually worked with people of all ages, shapes and sizes. He has tremendous experience with the elderly, having helped clients in their 80s stay healthy and active. He works with children, mothers, soon-to-be mothers and yes, athletic hopefuls as well. He has worked daily for the past 2 years with a disabled man, Matthew, who after suffering a brain injury during a routine surgery at

four years old, lost control of his functional movement and motor skills on the left side of his body. Throughout multiple surgeries, Kashawn has been there to help Matthew with mobility, recovery, stretching and strengthening exercises and much more, going above and beyond to care for this brilliant man.

Recently, Kashawn has been inspired by his cousin Kevon, who is 9 years old and on the autism spectrum. Although still nonverbal, Kevon is happy and excitable, being very aware of his surroundings. Seeing that external stimulation had a positive impact on Kevon, Kashawn was inspired to help other autistic kids to get out and be active. While still in the early stages, Kashawn is in the process of founding Jumping for Autism, a program that focuses on exercise to help improve motor skills, balance, and coordination for autistic children. Functional lives through movement visual learners in groups social skills.