

Academy Staff

Director & Instructor

Lon Kilgore graduated from Lincoln University with a B.Sc. in biology and M.Sc. in kinesiology from Kansas State University, and he earned a Ph.D. from the Department of Anatomy and Physiology at Kansas State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. He has competed in weightlifting to the national level since 1972 and coached his first athletes from a garage gym to national-championship event medals in 1974. He has also competed in powerlifting, the first CrossFit Total event, wrestling and rowing. He has worked in the trenches, as a coach or scientific consultant, with athletes from rank novices to professionals and the Olympic elite, and as a collegiate strength coach. He was co-developer of the Basic Barbell Training and Exercise Science specialty seminars for CrossFit (mid-2000s). He was a certifying instructor for USA Weightlifting for more than a decade and a frequent lecturer at events at the U.S. Olympic Training Center. He is a decorated military veteran (sergeant, U.S. Army). His illustration, authorship and co-authorship efforts include the best-selling books "Starting Strength" (first and second editions) and "Practical Programming for Strength Training" (first and second editions), "Anatomy without a Scalpel", "FIT," and recent release "Deconstructing Yoga", magazine columns, textbook chapters, and numerous research-journal publications. His professional goal is to provide the best quality, most practical, most accessible and highly affordable educational experiences to fitness professionals through his work with the academy, with higher education as a curriculum developer, and with the fitness industry. His students have gone on to become highly notable figures in weightlifting, powerlifting, cycling, fitness and academia.

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Instructors

Iain Barbour, BSc (University of Glasgow) has developed a firm anatomical foundation through his study of Sports Science. He uses his understanding of anatomy and fitness in his career efforts as Co-Owner as CrossFit Glasgow, a Level 1 CrossFit Trainer, a CrossFit Mobility Trainer, a CrossFit Football Trainer, CrossFit Strongman Trainer, a CrossFit Kids Trainer, a CrossFit Powerlifting Trainer, a CrossFit Endurance Trainer, a CrossFit Strongman Seminar Staff Member, an IWF Divisional Referee, and a BAWLA Level 1 Assistant Club Coach. He is the course leader for Musculoskeletal Anatomy.

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Ashton Burchfield, BA (Vanderbilt) is a specialist in language and communication. He is the developer of the Business Communications for the Gym course. He is a former competitive cyclist and basketball point guard and was a founding officer of the Vanderbilt Parkour Group. He has taught functional writing and spoken language skills to students in the USA and Italy. He currently works as an instructor, book editor, and commercial communications consultant in China.

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Julie Hanson, co-creator of the Gym Yoga Instruction course, has worked in the fitness industry for more than 30 years, has taught yoga for more than 15 years, has an extensive set of yoga teaching credentials, and has worked with or studied under many of the most influential yoga teachers globally such as Shiva Rea, Tony Lycolat, David Keil and John Scott. She is an advanced Yoganatomy practitioner, a long time yoga studio owner and is a founding partner in yoga teacher training schools in Scotland, England, Spain, and Finland. One of the first people to bring aerobics to Scotland in the early 80's, Julie has a reputation as Scotland's celebrity trainer as she has collaborated on video based fitness projects with Carol Smilie, and amongst her clients are actor Robert Carlyle, Jim Kerr of Simple Minds, David O'Hara (Braveheart) & Kay Adams. Over the years she has had many TV and press appearances, and has presented road shows for Nike and Reebok. She is an active campaigner for improving the quality of instructors in the health and fitness industry, particularly in creating a more formal structure in training yoga teachers to work in mainstream fitness businesses. She has written two books, including "Deconstructing Yoga: A

Secular Guide to Learning & Teaching" with Professor Kilgore and has written for numerous yoga trade journals. Julie provides oversight of the academy's yoga instructors.
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Gavin Heselton, BSc, MA (Glasgow Caledonian University, University of Glasgow) is the developer of the Nutrition for the Fitness Professional course, based on his strong training in Human Nutrition & Dietetics. He is also well trained in anatomy and actively applies his knowledge in his professional career as Co-Owner of CrossFit Glasgow, a Level 1 Crossfit Trainer, a CrossFit Football Trainer, a CrossFit Strongman Trainer, a CrossFit Kids Trainer, a CrossFit Powerlifting Trainer, a CrossFit Movement and Mobility Trainer, a CrossFit Endurance Trainer, a CrossFit Games European Regionals Judge (2013, 2014), an IWF Divisional Referee, and a BAWLA Level 1 Assistant Club Coach. He is also the course leader in Anthropometry & Anatomy course.
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Cassidy Kennedy (Brookhaven College) is working towards a decade of practice in Iyengar Yoga and is a certified yoga instructor. She is a former Texas state ranked powerlifter, training and competing from the age of fourteen, and brings the perspective of a high caliber strength athlete to the practice of yoga. Her training philosophy is to create a marriage of yoga and the fitness system or sport in which the trainee participates in order to create a balanced program that achieves desired fitness goals. She also works to help others incorporate yoga teaching into their gym teaching tool set.
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Justin Kulik, BSc, MSc, MEd (Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Midwestern State University) is the course leader in Fitness Physiology and the developer of the Powerlifting Exercises for the Gym course. Justin has excellent preparation in physiology through his undergraduate and post-graduate studies in applied physiology and his work in Professor Kilgore's teaching laboratory. He has over 16 years of work experience in human performance enhancement. This combination of education and experience provide Justin a thorough understanding of functional anatomy applied to fitness gain. He is a former Kansas and Texas State Olympic Weightlifting Champion as well as a member, and coach (with Glenn Pendlay), for the Midwestern State University collegiate national championship team in Olympic Weightlifting. He also has competitive experience in strongman events and powerlifting. Justin works as a Physical Education teacher and he owns and operates a sports performance training center.
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Justin Lasek, BSc (Georgia Southern University) has a decade of experience working in the gym environment and currently is in the medical field and regularly works with Special Operations Forces. He is co-developer of the Gym First Aid course and contributed materials for both the Teaching Strength Training & Running and Teaching Endurance & Multi-Element Training courses. He is also an accomplished author and co-author with "Fit", "The Texas Method", "The Texas Method - Advanced", and "Paleo for Lifters" to his credit. He is a credentialed CrossFit trainer, a USA Weightlifting coach, and has coached numerous high level athletes in variety of sports.
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Valarie Perry, SHEP (Texas A&M, University of Texas) is the co-developer and course leader of the Safety for the Gym course. An OSHA certified Safety, Health, & Environment Professional instructor and credentialed paralegal working for the US Navy as a contractor. She has drawn on her professional training and her life of being a fitness customer to create an essential and one of a kind safety course.
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Mark Russell, PGc (University of Glasgow) is an Ironman distance triathlete, having competed in more than sixty triathlons, duathlons, and road races since 2007. He is a certified yoga instructor and specializes in using yoga for performance enhancement in amateur and professional athletes and teams. Among his clients are professional boxer Michael Roberts, former Scotland captain

Stephen McManus, Motherwell Football Club (premiere league), and numerous athletes and teams from running and triathlon teams. He also consults with Chi Running instructors, providing support instruction in their courses. He has further been sought out by NHS podiatrists to assist in solving movement problems. In 2013, Mark travelled to India to study Yoga from an eastern perspective in order to compliment his practice.

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Ann Skinner, AA, BSc, MBA (University of Houston, Texas Women's University) has an exceptional educational background in Business Administration, Mathematics, and Computer Science. Her professional work spans time as a fitness instructor, programming, curriculum designer for schools and museums, and as a state credentialed secondary and higher education instructor. An enthusiastic and energetic educator with the ability to present essential information in a variety of contexts, especially using real-life problem-solving modalities. Ann is the courses leader for the academy's business based courses.

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Business Office

Derek Burchfield is a Texas Math Scholar and spent nearly a decade on the road managing the merchandising and finances of a Texas Red Dirt band. A former state ranked high school powerlifter and a USA Cycling Junior National time trial competitor. As the Kilgore Academy office manager, he puts logic, numeracy and a work ethic into play in order to help instructors and students get their respective jobs done.

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Academy Review Board

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