

To Whom it May Concern,

It is an honor, and I am humbled, to be writing a letter of recommendation for Jim Donak. I have been an athlete and/or actively exercising my entire life. I have experienced a myriad of coaches, trainers, teachers in my lifetime, and I can genuinely tell you that Jim is the best. The Best. Full stop.

I am a bit unusual, I think, for my interest in Jim's classes because I am a triathlete who happens to love handstands. I discovered a few years ago that adults can take handstand classes (who knew!), and through Circus Center I found Jim. I have experienced many handstand instructors at Circus Center and every instructor there has been fabulous. What puts Jim hands and shoulders (pun intended!) above the rest is his unique approach. Every other handstand instructor follows a relatively consistent program. Similar warm up, similar stretching, similar stations. And they are all excellent. What sets Jim apart is, well, everything. Other than the warmup in Jim's class, every class is unique. Jim tailors every class to the overall makeup of the group along with a personalized bit based on how well he knows the various students. It is uncanny how he can do this. Every class with Jim feels different and a bit the same.

Jim knows exactly how far to push each student (I would never have guessed how emotional handstand training can be!). He is simultaneously tough, gentle and humorous, and he makes sure to get the most out of every student.

In addition, not only does Jim make every student in class feel safe, he takes the time to educate all of us on spotting and safety, every class.

Jim knows more about the human body and how it works than anyone else I have ever met. His knowledge of anatomy - and cadavers - is impressive ;) Every student, from first timer to regular, learns something about their body and how it relates to a handstand. Every single class.

I genuinely cannot recommend an athletic/exercise instructor more strongly than Jim Donak. Any organization would be lucky to have him. I am so grateful that I found Jim, and I look forward to many more years of training with him. And my handstands are the most grateful of all :)

Sincerely,  
Erin Cooney  
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