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## The Power In Positive Thinking and Perseverance

Torn between her passion for medicine and her desire to run a successful business, Debra Powell, owner of Totally Fit 4 Life Weight Loss and Wellness Center, found a way to have both.

Debra has formal training as a certified physician's assistant and served in the army reserve for six years while in college. She also spent time working for the National Health Service Corporation, which helps bring medical staffing to rural and under-served areas of the state. Additionally, Debra has a background in family practice, rural health, and emergency medicine.

"I enjoyed emergency medicine, but after ten years of tending to people's acute and chronic medical problems, I wanted to find a way to help people prevent the problems before they developed," Debra says. "There always seemed to be a common link in most of my patients—they were all overweight. So after more than two years of research, I started the first Totally Fit 4 Life Weight Loss and Wellness Center and now have two locations...one in Shelby and one in Denver." In her efforts as a business leader and medical professional, Debra's primary goal has been to provide quality healthcare to her patients and help them to lead longer, healthier, happier lives. "My program focuses not only on the nutritional needs of the patient," she explains, "but also on their

current medical problems, hormonal issues, psychological influences, and exercise."

### Tips for the New Year and New You

- Set weight loss and life goals that are reasonable and attainable
  - Never skip meals
- Use diet and life logs especially in times of stress
  - Engage in a fun active lifestyle
- Limit alcohol and tobacco products
  - Always use sunscreen

Within the last year, Debra has developed an exciting partnership with Dr. Stanley Hoffman and opened Waterside Dermatology and Laser Center. This practice specializes in all areas of medical and cosmetic dermatology—anything from acne to skin cancer. "I really feel that both of these businesses complement each other because they help the clients become healthier and feel better about themselves inside and out," Debra says.

Behind every successful person is someone who inspired them, and for Debra, it is her immediate family. "My mother showed me strength and perseverance," she reflects. "She

always told me I could be or do anything I set my mind to. My father instilled in me a strong work ethic and a wonderful sense of family and pride. My grandparents gave me unconditional love, and their absolute generosity to their family and community was something I always admired about them."

Another invaluable life lesson that Debra has embraced came from an unlikely source. A few years ago, Debra met a gentleman, and although he never finished high school, he had a dream and built a business that grew to be one of the largest in the Southeast. "I was very drawn to him," Debra recalls, "and I tried to learn everything I could from him. But the one thing he taught me the most was that you don't have to be the best or the smartest person...you just need to surround yourself with great people. I have been so fortunate in my life to have found such people, and I would not be where I am today without them." Debra has been inspired and taught by many and is always happy to share her wisdom. "Stand strong today and take control of you...for you. Also, strength is not always doing it yourself but knowing when to ask for help."

Most importantly, Debra has found that in her personal and professional life "all things are possible through positive thinking and perseverance." 🌸