

ELEV8 REACHES NEW HEIGHTS FOR BODY AND MIND

TRAVERSE CITY, MICHIGAN – “Proprioception”

“Your body’s ability to sense movement, action and location. Present in every muscle movement you have. It allows you to walk without consciously thinking about where to place your foot next.”

When Kevin Vlach introduced us to his Traverse City based business, [ELEV8 Climbing & Fitness](#), he also kindly shared this word – new to us – that has a lot to do with his life, his business and his future plans.

A Traverse City native, Kevin was introduced to rock climbing during a stint teaching English in Spain. He also became proficient at surfing and skate boarding, but it was through some climbing shoes purchased on a whim – and learning to use them – that he discovered peace and joy while glued to a rock.

For two years he climbed everything he could in Europe, followed by Colorado, a place ‘riddled with spots to climb.’ Time spent exploring mountains, boulder fields and even more urban areas cemented his love of the physical and mental benefits of climbing in different venues and attaining the “flow state” while confronting and overcoming the seemingly impossible. While in Colorado, he also served on a volunteer Search and Rescue team where he would often have to navigate steep, vertical terrain to rescue those who, as Kevin puts it, “got in over their heads.”

You can understand where the “proprioception” thing enters the picture. And, through his business and life, Kevin has a passion for sharing the meaning of that word through teaching and action of climbing with others – young and old.

Kevin says that climbing helped him become aware of his body’s response to challenges and how it interacted with the world around him. Over time he became comfortable with his body and the gear in very exposed conditions and came to build trust with climbing partners.

Now in his third year of business, Kevin and his team of 15 employees have welcomed over 75,000 climbing patrons of all abilities and interests. ELEV8 offers tiers of memberships but caters to every drop-in as well, often including first time climbers such as parents and kids who unite on a climbing wall.



*Your Choice for Indoor
Rock Climbing!*

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Traverse City, MI 49686

231-600-7260

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www.elev8climbing.com

Hours

M-F 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.

Sat. 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Sun. 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.



“What a wonderful community asset,” said Venture North President Laura Galbraith. “We are so proud to have helped the company move to increased energy efficiency by financing their new rooftop solar equipment with the support that [Traverse City Light and Power](#) provided to Venture North. In the process, we found a new way for the entire Venture North team to climb to even greater heights!”

Kevin says he’s proud to have ELEV8 support everyone – from peewees to pros – and that anyone can drop by at any time. The ELEV8 team makes sure that everyone has the proper gear, including safety equipment and as much or as little help needed.

Their youth and family programs are remarkable, including a child watch service when needed. There is a youth climbing club, competitive team, a summer program, camps, homeschool climbing days and family climb nights.

“My kids cannot get enough of it,” says ELVAT8 customer Brennan Sang. “It is safe, supporting and accepting. It’s a gym plus an amazing community where everyone supports one another.”



For the community, ELEV8 offers climbing meetups, parties, “bouldering” leagues and competitions, community yoga and climbing movement classes. Current “theme nights” include: *Women’s Night* on the 1st Friday of the month; *Queer Night* on 2nd Fridays; *Gettin’ Up There* on 3rd Fridays and *Zero Proof!* on 4th Fridays of the month.

In addition to yoga led by yoga professionals, they have bikes, treadmills, weights of all varieties, weightlifting cages, a cable machine and resistance bands. ELEV8 can accommodate nearly 200 people at a time.



As you’ll learn from Kevin and his team, it’s about “proprioception” and so much more!

A group of women climbers receive instruction (top); owner Kevin Vlach offers enthusiastic encouragement (bottom.)

Venture North Funding and Development is a tax-exempt nonprofit that helps small businesses grow in northwest Michigan. Since it was founded 15 years ago, it has made 170 affordable loans creating 525 jobs and retaining 560 jobs. It has loaned a total of \$10.3 million, leveraging an additional \$38 million; awarded 450 small grants amounting to over \$1.2 million and provided over 8,000 hours of no-cost business consulting. Visit us online at venturenorthfunding.org. Complete a brief intake form or call at 231-995-7115.