



Professional MMA Featherweight Champion, Chase Gibson, 34, is giving back to Los Angeles with his 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, A Fighting Chance Foundation. His nonprofit offers free MMA workshops for at-risk youth and people in drug and alcohol recovery.

Chase hopes to rescue countless Angelinos from the grip of substance abuse that claimed the life of his twin brother, Cooper, in 2020, and nearly destroyed him.

Now, beyond dominating the MMA cage, Chase has become a local hero to thousands of people who have benefited from his MMA workshops.

Los Angeles twin brothers, Chase and Cooper Gibson, were bonded from day one. Early on, the brothers shared everything from their first steps and a love of sports, to their sense of adventure and penchant for breaking rules. As they reached their tween years, things took a darker turn, and both fell into the grasp of addiction.

The Gibson twins' parents divorced when they were two, and they often bounced from one parent to another as substance abuse and scrapes with the law led both boys to a revolving door of court appearances, juvenile detention centers, and rehabilitation facilities.

As Chase Gibson, now 34, remembers it, "By thirteen we were actively getting high. It was weed, alcohol, prescription pills, over-the-counter stuff; anything we could get our hands on." That led to harder drugs and criminal activity to support their habit. "Our lives got flipped upside down when we both got 3 felony charges in 3 weeks, and then we both overdosed, and we were only in the seventh grade."

By high school, both boys would get clean for a bit, and then start using again. "The sad part," shares Chase, "is that we were never clean and



sober at the same time. Cooper would get sober, return to high school and start playing sports, and I would watch him and be inspired to get clean. Then I'd get clean for a while, but Cooper would start using again."

Eventually, Chase's substance abuse and criminality led to him becoming involved with Los Angeles gang activity, while Cooper attended Fairfax High School, got in shape, and joined the school's football team. But just as Cooper's success began to inspire Chase, Chase's gang activity began rubbing off on Cooper. Before long, both boys became involved with a notorious L.A. gang.

The Turning Point

"At age 17, Cooper and I committed an armed robbery on a drug dealer, and it went south. We were both charged as adults," Chase confesses. "We pled out, and took a deal to go into a very intense sober living facility in West LA, called Liberty House." Facing the possibility of seven years behind bars, the brothers opted for rehab. According to Chase, Liberty House was no nonsense, and the boys faced real accountability for their behavior. "We both knew that if we left, we were going straight to prison."

Liberty House's structured program put, both, Cooper and Chase on a new trajectory and gave them a way out of the criminal justice system.



That's when Cooper (*pictured, far right*) discovered MMA (Mixed Martial Arts) and began intensively training. He won 10/0 as an amateur fighter, which led to him going pro and winning seven straight MMA fights in his first year as a professional fighter.

"When you're a twin," says Chase, "there is that indefinable connection, and Cooper's newfound success with the sport was a mirror to show me what I could accomplish." A now resolutely clean and sober 21 year old Chase followed in his twin brother Cooper's footsteps, and began training in MMA. Chase also went pro in 2014, earning 14 wins in the popular sport.

Chase looks back fondly on the years from 2010 through 2013, when he and Cooper were both MMA fighters, training and gaining popularity side-by-side.

In 2017, the brothers founded A Fighting Chance Recovery. Their business brought MMA training and conditioning into drug and alcohol rehabilitation facilities around the Los Angeles-

metro area, to patients entering into recovery. During this time, Cooper was moved to give back, offering MMA training at Venice Beach to anyone who wanted to learn.

The final piece to the twin brothers' dreams was to launch a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization to help LA's at-risk youth through providing free MMA workshops.

Cooper's Final Relapse and Chase's Mission

Tragedy struck in 2020 when quarantine led Cooper to his final relapse, culminating in a fatal overdose. After the brothers' long and arduous journey to get sober and their parallel MMA careers, Chase (*pictured, right*) was left to carry on their mission alone.

"Cooper passed away right after the biggest fight of my life. During 2020, I was invited to fight in Dana White's Contender Series, while I was healing from a leg break. I took that fight and went up a weight class. And all things considered," recalls Chase, "I gave a good performance." Broadcast on

ESPN, the intro reel highlighted Chase and

Cooper's shared struggles and triumphs, and their MMA careers. "It was bitter sweet," recalls Chase.



From there, Chase went on to fight for the Legacy Fighting Alliance (LFA), taking on his first LFA fight shortly after Cooper passed away, in honor of the legacy Cooper left behind.

"I got my California 501(c)3 nonprofit status the week my brother Cooper passed away. The plan was to do this together, but now it's in honor of him. In 2021 I started A Fighting Chance Foundation."



MMA Fighter Chase Gibson Teaching Students at A Fighting Chance's Former Los Angeles Gym

“Me and my brother always wanted to open a facility to help kids who are struggling the way we did. A Fighting Chance is a program that is helping people change their lives through MMA. I set this up to be that example that my brother was for me.”

Now, 34, and a married father of three daughters, Chase is living his and Cooper's long-held dream of helping LA's at-risk youth and people in recovery, through Mixed Martial Arts.

A Fighting Chance Foundation offers free MMA workshops to kids in the foster care system, young adults who have aged out of foster care, young people coming out of gang life, and people of all ages in recovery from substance abuse. The foundation offers ongoing MMA workshops free of charge at their newly opened gym in Long Beach, CA, which will have its official ribbon cutting ceremony in early 2025.



A Fighting Chance Foundation's MMA Students at the Foundation's Former Los Angeles Gym

The Funding That's Made A Fighting Chance Foundation's MMA Program Possible

The nonprofit's free therapeutic MMA workshops were first made possible by the financial partnership of fellow nonprofit, CanDo.org. Chase's compelling story and mission, and the transformational work he is doing for at-risk youth and the recovery community has also earned A Fighting Chance Foundation \$80,000 in grants. They continue to raise additional funds through donation-based MMA classes and merchandise sales. "It's been very organic and grass roots," says Chase.

"This program is for anyone who is struggling with addiction, confidence, and fear. This program is designed to fight the battles in the mind; to help people to not experience some of the things we experienced, would be a great blessing."

A Fighting Chance holds their free community-based MMA workshops M-F at their new gym facility in Long Beach. The program has helped more than 1,000 foster youth and recovering addicts, to date.



Cooper Gibson (l) and Chase Gibson (r) sparring in the ring c. 2012

[WATCH THE TRAILER FOR THE DOCUMENTARY ABOUT MMA FIGHTERS CHASE AND COOPER GIBSON](#)

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MMA Champion Fighter [Chase Gibson](#) is available for interviews on his and his late twin brother, Chase's, remarkable story, how discovering faith and MMA helped Chase achieve lasting sobriety and success, and how he is giving back with [A Fighting Chance Foundation](#).

Warmly,
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