



JUDGES' COMMENTS

"Great multifunctional use of a single pool."

BEST PUBLIC/NONPROFIT INDOOR FAMILY AQUATICS CENTER

Class 8 (100,000 to 200,000 annual attendance)

City of Mountlake Terrace Recreation Pavilion, Mountlake Terrace, Wash.



The "Fish Philosophy" is not a tribute to the swimming creatures emulated by humans in the pool. At the city of Mountlake Terrace Recreation Pavilion in Mountlake Terrace, Wash., it is the staff's standard operating procedure. The philosophy was developed by observing workers in Seattle's famous Pike's Place Fish Market. The four concepts — Play, Make Their Day, Be There and Choose Your Attitude — are painted on the ceiling of the staff room for employees to see and bear in mind before they start their shift.

This philosophy translates into the swimming pool area, where people from surrounding communities might drive as far as 40 minutes to participate in aquatics programs. Much of this is credited to the renovations completed in April 2004, which included a leisure-pool style facility with a lazy river. The programs were given a renovation of their own. The city doubled its learn-to-swim enrollment and increased its lifesaving and water aerobics classes significantly.

With the new growth, the facility's computer programming needed an upgrade as well to accommodate rentals, registration, accounting and inventory control. The next challenge was to train all staff members on the new system and gather the information from patrons to implement into the system. Armed with the Fish Philosophy, the staff worked late hours to input data, and training groups were created to help those still struggling with the new system. That's a philosophy that makes sense. ■

FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS Features the "Water Walk," a long floating mat that extends the length of the pool. Kids and adults enjoy the challenge of running, sliding and trying to stay upright on it. • Emphasizes being a multiuse facility. At any one time, different needs and populations are being met in the same space. • To stabilize the workforce, benefits are offered to part-time and full-time staff members alike.

AMENITIES Lazy river • Water playground equipment • Water toys

PROGRAMMING Learn-to-swim • Lifesaving • Water aerobics • Water therapy • Competitive swimming