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PICTURED ON COVER: BAVARIAN BLAST WATERPARK IN FRANKENMUTH, MICH. PHOTO COURTESY BAVARIAN INN LODGE

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Always the Next Right Thing



"Do the next right thing: Consider it a pared-down version of Reinhold Niebuhr's Serenity Prayer (which isn't just for 12-step programs anymore)."

The simplest principles often hold the most potential to impact our lives. Unfortunately, they also can be the hardest to live by.

A few years ago, I was visiting an acquaintance at her trade show booth. As always, I asked how her year had been. She told me it was one of the most difficult years in her personal life and with her family, but one of the best for her business and career. As she went through a painful and foundational change personally, she was taking over and purchasing her family business and ushering in a new generation of ownership.

Women are supposed to be natural multitaskers. Somehow, my X chromosome is missing that particular thread. So I asked, "How could you manage both these huge life changes at the same time and come out of it better than before?"

She went on to tell me about a gift her father gave her as he handed over the business—a bit of wisdom. He could see her struggling, as anyone would, and she asked for his advice, especially on the many unknowns businesses faced as we moved past the COVID era. "He told me, 'We can't control everything. All we can do is look at what we can control, and do the next right thing,'" she said.

We can't always control outcomes or people's responses, but we can follow our conviction and move in the right direction. Do the next right thing: Consider it a pared-down version of Reinhold Niebuhr's Serenity Prayer (which isn't just for 12-step programs anymore).

For so much of the aquatics industry, this maxim is baked into the job description, the culture, and the hearts and souls of individuals who consciously made it their lives' work to help, whether it be developing the next program to safeguard children from tragedy, finding new ways to keep seniors fit and active, introducing swimming to populations that usually don't have access, or protecting certain patrons and staffers from bullying and exclusion for the crime of being different.

Like so many of you, this year's seven AQI Best of Aquatics honorees personify that maxim every day. Here's a quick look at each:

- **Rock'N River Water Park, Round Rock, Texas**
CATEGORY: Lifeguard management
ACCOMPLISHMENT: Developing a culture that organically and perpetually results in staff growth
- **MCCS Okinawa Semper Fit, Okinawa Prefecture, Japan**
CATEGORY: Targeted programming
ACCOMPLISHMENT: Building a facility and schedule that serve military families' everyday needs while preparing active-duty Marines for service
- **Bavarian Blast Waterpark, Frankenmuth, Mich.**
CATEGORY: Community outreach
ACCOMPLISHMENT: Developing creative programs to give neighboring communities affordable access and build lasting connections
- **Superstition Shadows Aquatic Center, Apache Junction, Ariz.**
CATEGORY: Community outreach
ACCOMPLISHMENT: Taking safety, aquatic literacy, and enjoyment beyond city limits to underserved neighbors
- **Crystal Springs Family Waterpark, East Brunswick, N.J.**
CATEGORY: Lifeguard management
ACCOMPLISHMENT: Turning year-round recruitment and training of lifeguards into a science
- **The Woodlands Township, The Woodlands, Texas**
CATEGORY: Consumer relations synergies
ACCOMPLISHMENT: Taking a multidisciplinary approach to connecting with the community
- **Chelsea Piers, New York**
CATEGORY: Programming
ACCOMPLISHMENT: Helping children of every age, ability, and need thrive in the pool

As you look at this issue, may you find inspiration to make 2027 the best year ever for you and your team. Enjoy the read! | AQI

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LIFEGUARD MANAGEMENT

Rock'N River Water Park

Round Rock, Texas

This team established a self-perpetuating culture among its lifeguards

By Rebecca Robledo

PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF ROUND ROCK

The swim season may have specific beginning and end dates, but managing a facility's lifeguard team is best approached as a continuous endeavor. With the shortages of available help experienced in many localities, recruitment now takes place year-round. The same holds true for lifeguard training. As first responders, lifeguards do not graduate or stop at certification. The learning, practicing, and fine-tuning never stop, as each guard builds muscle memory to prepare for an occurrence they may experience once or twice, but hopefully not at all.

Every year, more and more aquatics teams adopt this new mindset. Some, such as Rock'N River Water Park, are helping set the bar.

"Our training philosophy is simple: Training is life," says Nicole Bean, aquatics division manager for Round Rock Parks & Recreation at the waterpark in Round Rock, Texas. "We do not view training as a requirement to maintain certification; we view it as the foundation of our culture, confidence, decision-making, and safety performance."

Robust use of social media and employee referrals attracts the needed 240 lifeguards to the waterpark, while creative incentives and culture-building keep them there until it is time for promotion or college graduation and the start of a new career.

ASSEMBLING THE TEAM

When it comes to building the lifeguard staff, management makes it a priority to project an image of the job as fun, meaningful, and a good springboard for any future profession.

Social media plays a key role in this, Bean explains, providing a place to celebrate employee accomplishments, show the team in action, and highlight the athleticism involved in the job. The entire staff helps develop content, rather than limiting it to certain managerial or administrative staff. This helps project a more authentic picture of what it is like to work at the waterpark, Bean says.

"Our social channels highlight the perks and fun parts of the job by showing teamwork and friendships, while also instilling that there is a valuable skill set involved," she says. "They promote what being a lifeguard is about at its core and help others see that it is a coveted position where you can be a part of something bigger than yourself."

With trained lifeguards in place, the team mentors them, again emphasizing the importance of serving the community and how lifeguarding can build skills that translate to any future career path.

ALWAYS SHARPENING SKILLS

During training, the team adopts an approach of "act as if." This means that they do not simply demonstrate the technical aspects of a skill, but behave as if an emergency is truly taking place. This holds not only for their certification and preseason training, but also for the weekly two-hour in-service sessions that each guard undergoes during summer.

"Guards must recognize the problem, communicate, make decisions, work as a team, and execute under pressure, while taking it seriously—'acting as if' it were real," Bean says. "Our goal is to develop lifeguards who are not only technically capable, but confident, adaptable, and prepared to lead."

As they say, the proof is in the pudding: Not only has the team won the last four consecutive Texas State Lifeguard Championship titles, but 98 percent of leadership and management posts are filled by individuals who came up through the ranks.

"We are not simply training lifeguards to work a season; we are developing the next generation of leaders for our organization," Bean says. | AQI



The City of Round Rock, Texas, which operates Rock'N River Water Park, takes an 'act as if' approach to training. Lifeguards are expected to behave as if an incident is actually occurring rather than simply demonstrating technique. Teamwork and communication are also assessed during drills.

PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF ROUND ROCK



PHOTO COURTESY MCCS OKINAWA

TARGETED PROGRAMMING

MCCS Okinawa Semper Fit

Okinawa Prefecture, Japan

For Marines and their families, this center fosters shame-free growth and improvement

By Rebecca Robledo

While it could be argued that Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) Aquatics facilities serve a specific community, they must fulfill a diverse set of needs.

Not only do they host training and exercises for active-duty service members, but they also provide a setting where military families, children, retirees, and other authorized civilians can reap the benefits of water. In answer, programming spans competitive, fitness, and recreational swimming; youth and family programming; and mission-focused aquatic training. For the military members themselves, the pools play

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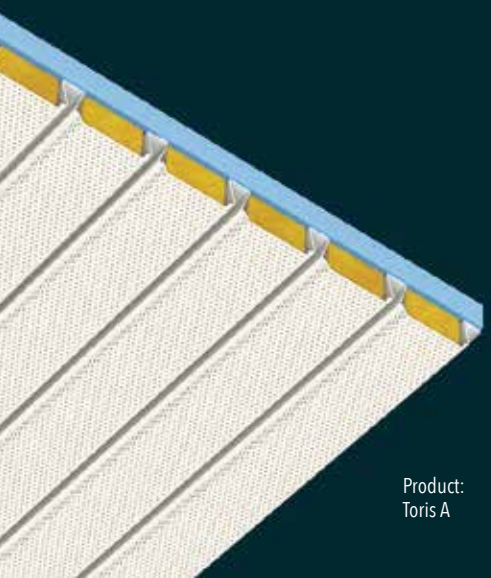

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While MCCS Okinawa is designed and programmed for a combination of active military, their families, and certain civilians, the team remembers the core mission of preparing the troops for service.

PHOTO COURTESY MCCS OKINAWA

host to scuba certification courses and military-focused water training such as Swim Survival Skills Training and other programs to fulfill the Corps' aquatic training requirements each year.

"What makes the programming distinctive is the ability to serve these populations simultaneously," says Jennifer Ayers-Millar, aquatics program manager for MCCS Okinawa. "A facility may support Marine Corps training in one part of the day, provide individualized instruction to an active-duty member struggling with swimming, host youth lessons or swim team practice, and welcome families for recreational swimming later that same day."

A RARE CLIENTELE

Despite this diverse population, the facility is, at its core, meant to train and prepare active-duty military for their service.

"Ultimately, our goal is to increase the survivability of our Marines," Ayers-Millar says.

The programming and facilities had to be designed to take on this unique audience.

Dedicated spaces for water survival and readiness training include deep-water environments, training towers, and specialized underwater-egress capabilities. These zones facilitate standard courses and training, as well as opportunities for individual skill development, often on a drop-in basis to suit military schedules. Not every individual joins the military with the same aquatic abilities, so some members require additional attention.

It can be difficult for some adults to admit they need help in this area, especially in a setting where it's important to project strength. For this reason, the facility staff actively seeks to identify those who need additional help. Instructors, in particular, can do this while providing training, and follow up by advising struggling swimmers of available resources and training to help them improve.

Not only will such training help military personnel in their service, but, given that Okinawa embraces aquatic activities such as swimming, snorkeling, and diving, the skills will come in handy in day-to-day life.

"A Marine who becomes more comfortable and competent in the water does not leave those skills at the pool," Ayers-Millar says. "Better understanding of personal ability, aquatic risk, and survival skills can influence decisions during both training and off-duty recreation."

The exposure is making another significant difference in the community's culture, she adds.

"Participants return for additional instruction, bring fellow Marines, and share what they have learned with others," she says. "Confidence is becoming contagious, helping normalize continued swim development rather than treating swimming ability as something an adult should already possess." | AQI

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COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Bavarian Blast Waterpark

Frankenmuth, Mich.



Despite this park's statewide reach, its team creatively connected with nearby neighbors

By Rebecca Robledo

PHOTO COURTESY BAVARIAN INN LODGE

Though the Bavarian Blast Waterpark draws visitors from throughout Michigan, it wanted to connect with neighboring communities. To do that, it holds special events and initiatives to attract those in the area.

For instance, Community Nights provide a way to reach out to local families, allowing them to attend at a discounted rate. Through the program, an entire week is dedicated to admitting members of a neighboring community for the discounted day-pass rate.

"The program was designed as a genuine way to say, 'Thank you' to our local communities and provide their families with an affordable opportunity to enjoy a new attraction in their own backyard," says Kelly Martin, sales and marketing manager for the Frankenmuth, Mich., attraction.

In addition to paying tribute to residents, the timing of the program also benefits the park. Taking place as children begin their school year, the campaign helps revive midweek attendance, which often flags at that time of





To build connections with nearby residents, Bavarian Blast Waterpark hosts special events. Community Nights draw families midweek in the fall, helping offset the drop in ticket sales when school starts while giving local families the chance to visit the large waterpark at a discounted rate. Blast After Dark, an adults-only event, offers a different experience for those who might not otherwise visit.

PHOTO COURTESY BAVARIAN INN LODGE

year. "Community Nights allowed us to address this seasonal challenge while creating meaningful engagement with surrounding communities," Martin says. "Rather than simply focusing on bringing guests through our doors, we wanted to create a program that made our residents feel recognized and appreciated for the support they provide throughout the year."

Within a few months of the program's launch, in fall of 2025, it generated more than $30,000 in revenue. Needless to say, the team elected to bring it back in fall 2026, this time adding weeks dedicated to first responders, medical professionals, and teachers to show their appreciation.

"The program has become an important part of our efforts to build relationships beyond our facility and demonstrate that Bavarian Blast is not only a destination for visitors from across Michigan and beyond, but also a place that is committed to the local communities we call home," Martin says.

TIME FOR THE GROWN-UPS

As a waterpark set in a tourism town, Bavarian Blast is mostly visited by families. But management wanted to reach out to another group, so earlier this year it launched Blast After Dark, a program targeted exclusively for those 21 and older.

From 10 p.m. to 1 a.m., grown-ups can enjoy a host of experiences in addition to the waterpark attractions themselves, such as renting a private cabana, hanging out at the swim-up bar, and dancing to a live DJ. To make sure the experience does not get stale for those in attendance, the team fashions each night after a specific theme, such as '90s Party and Glowtopia.

On its first night last May, Blast After Dark drew 350 guests to its '90s Party theme, with ticket sales alone well into five figures. In August, Blast After Dark: Glowtopia drew nearly 500 guests, with its own vibrant, glow-themed party atmosphere. | AQI



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Superstition Shadows Aquatic Center

Apache Junction, Ariz.

PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF APACHE JUNCTION

This group shares water's joys and safety beyond its community

By Rebecca Robledo

In operating its Superstition Shadows Aquatic Center (SSAC), the City of Apache Junction, Ariz., seeks not only to improve safety, aquatic literacy, and enjoyment for its own community, but also to make its services available to those in outlying areas who may not otherwise have access to such facilities and services.

"Anyone is welcome to use the facility and participate in our programs and events, allowing SSAC to serve a broader community and provide access to affordable aquatic recreation regardless of where someone lives," says Julia Feraldi, recreation coordinator in aquatics with the City of Apache Junction.

OPEN ACCESS

To make swimming accessible to as many children as possible, every Wednesday this year was dubbed Free Youth Day. This provided children and their families with weekly access to pools, regardless of whether they could pay. Another four days in 2026, open swim was provided free of charge to people of all ages.


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Through fun events, serious water-safety lessons, and routine free-admission days, the aquatics team at Superstition Shadows Aquatic Center (SSAC) hopes to introduce people within and beyond its community to pools and swimming.

PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF APACHE JUNCTION

The center was able to provide these opportunities with financial assistance and sponsorship from local businesses and community partners.

Another such alliance, with a local nonprofit utility, enabled SSAC to offer weekend swim lessons free of charge, in the hopes of chipping away at the incidents of drowning or near-drowning among lower-income communities.

"These initiatives helped remove financial barriers and provided more opportunities for families to access affordable recreation and enjoy the facility together," Feraldi says. "Together, these efforts demonstrate SSAC's commitment to making aquatic recreation and water-safety education accessible to as many members of the community as possible."

Another event helps the aquatics center cast an equally wide net in broadcasting safety education. Each April Pool's Day, the City of Apache Junction Parks and Recreation Department joins with local police and fire departments, as well as the sheriff's office, to provide hands-on water safety education, such as CPR demonstrations, life jacket education, swim lessons, sensory-friendly activities, and different opportunities to interact with the area's first responders.

Year-round, SSAC hosts a life jacket loaner station where community members from infants to adults can borrow properly fitting personal protective equipment (PPE). With the help of a grant from the Association of Aquatic Professionals, the center lent life jackets to more than 100 children during public swim.

A junior lifeguard program helps safeguard children from water-related incidents while preparing them for a potential career in lifeguarding and broader aquatics, if they so choose.

The SSAC team balanced the serious work of increasing accessibility with such fun activities as Teen Nights, Pirates vs. Mermaids, Holiday Heat Wave, and Last Splash.

Besides the payoffs in terms of children safeguarded, the facility itself benefited, with attendance rising 18 percent in 2026 compared with 2025, to 21,676 visits from 18,389 the year before. Meanwhile, swim lessons went up 38 percent, from 842 participants in 2025 to 1,162 this year.

"This growth allowed us to serve more children and families while providing them with essential swimming and water-safety skills," Feraldi says. | AQI

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LIFEGUARD MANAGEMENT

Crystal Springs Family Waterpark

East Brunswick, N.J.

For this team, the idea of year-round lifeguard recruitment surpasses mere concept

By Rebecca Robledo

The industry is slowly but surely shifting to a mindset that places lifeguard recruitment on the list of year-round duties that must be addressed by aquatics professionals. Crystal Springs takes a spot at the forefront in this regard, beginning the next season's recruitment regime within weeks after the previous season's end.

Recruitment for this team begins in October, when the team sends rehire emails and an application link to all employees who are recommended for rehire. Shortly after, managers circulate that application link through the facility's social media accounts. The team then handwrites letters on holiday postcards to all rehire candidates, sending them out around Thanksgiving. At about this time, the team also reaches out to the 20 area high schools to discuss participation at the next job fair.

By the time spring comes, the staff is making the final push through a social media campaign





To build a solid culture, the lifeguard managers at Crystal Springs Family Waterpark hold plenty of off-hours activities for the team. They suspect such efforts have resulted in one pleasant surprise—a reduction in guards calling in toward the close of the season.

PHOTO COURTESY TOWNSHIP OF EAST BRUNSWICK

to promote the work. Recruiting continues through summer, when the team hosts a junior lifeguard camp, which usually results in the hiring of about 10 lifeguards.

SHARPENING THE KNIVES

Crystal Springs has taken training to the limit as well.

Management wanted to surpass the *Model Aquatic Health Code* (*MAHC*) recommendation that lifeguards receive four hours of in-service training per month.

That is why Crystal Springs lifeguards undergo an in-service session each workday. "This continued dedication to ongoing lifeguard training ensures that our lifeguards are kept at test-ready levels for the duration of the season," says John Roche, assistant director/aquatics director with Crystal Springs Family Waterpark in East Brunswick, N.J. "We have found that engaging our staff with their lifeguard skills daily ensures they are set up for success."

To provide the benefits of employing different training modes, lifeguards also take part in three drowning-recognition training drills each season—one with a live active guest, one with a mannequin drop, and the final involving a silhouette shadow. Full-team scenarios are practiced throughout the summer to test how supervisors respond to a critical incident. Through these different modalities, lifeguards also engage with a full range of rescue equipment, including backboards, oxygen, bag-valve masks, automated external defibrillators (AEDs), and feedback mannequins.

"This diversity of training opportunities provides us with real-time insight into the ability of our staff to respond and interrupt the drowning process," Roche says.

CONSTANT CONVERSATION

And throughout the year—swim season or no—the Crystal Springs team engages social media to promote not only the experience of lifeguarding, but also the importance and even nobility of the profession.

During the summer, the crew observes Training Tuesdays, during which the lifeguards are shown as first responders. The posts demonstrate the skills they must practice, such as scanning, in-water rescues, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), back boarding, and first aid.

"Our industry has talked about the need to educate the public on the role that lifeguards play as first responders, and we took that call this summer to highlight our team's ongoing training opportunities," Roche says. "We hoped that these posts would not only showcase what our guards do daily but also help educate the public on the important role lifeguards across the globe play." | **AQI**



PHOTO COURTESY THE WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP

CONSUMER RELATIONS SYNERGIES

The Woodlands Township

The Woodlands, Texas

At every turn, this team shifts disciplines to strengthen community connections

By Rebecca Robledo

Whether in aquatics or any other endeavor, the best operations outperform the sum of their parts. Each department, each discipline, each staffer improves everything and everyone around them.

A custodial worker who helps reunite a lost child with their family; a swim instructor providing an ear to a student who needs it; a special event that cements a resident's loyalty. Each gear helps move the others forward.

Through its combination of marketing strategy, social media, programming, and special events, The Woodlands Township, Texas, fosters bonds with the community it serves. An event is not just an event, but a demonstration

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The Morning with a Mermaid events allow children to mingle with a siren in person. The center holds two sessions, one in shallower water, the other a little deeper, to accommodate the child's comfort level.

PHOTO COURTESY THE WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP

of the value of aquatics to the populace, and the worth of all 14 pools in its system. Everything works together.

BY THE NUMBERS

In addition to using social media to reinforce its mission to visitors, both actual and potential, The Woodlands uses its social media platforms to depict the life of a township recreation employee.

The aquatics department partners with the recreation division to develop campaigns to help in recruitment. The most popular campaign, "Discover Your Summer Gig," incorporates short-form videos, employee spotlights, creative posts, and targeted advertising to feature the benefits and quality-of-life enhancements that such work offers. The campaign appeared on the township's Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube accounts. The strongest-performing recruitment video, "We're Looking for Lifeguards and Swim Instructors," reached 51,300 followers on Instagram alone, generating 38,600 views.

"We did not use influencers; the campaign centered on our own employees and authentic experiences," says Cynthia Holman, aquatics superintendent with The Woodlands Township.

Many of the posts generated engagement rates above 4 percent; on LinkedIn, one promotion reached 10.6 percent and another 7.6 percent. And the content deployed in 2026 can be banked and reused. "This allows us to continually refine our approach while building on content that has already demonstrated its ability to reach and engage our community," Holman says.

FORMING TIMELESS BONDS

But the best connections are made face-to-face, which is what makes the events component of The Woodlands' outreach so effective. It includes a host of special, one-off events and lengthier campaigns, several of which have been recognized on these pages.

A more recent addition takes place during Water Safety Month, when the township's aquatics division delivers free water-safety education into the neighborhoods it serves through Splashpad Story Time. Held at the township's six spray grounds, it features an engaging story embedded with an important water-safety message. Partnerships are crucial to this program: The local library provides books and often supplies the readers.

"This partnership allowed us to combine two important community resources—aquatics and literacy—into a single family-friendly program," Holman says.

Some local businesses provided snacks or beverages. "This helped turn a water-safety lesson into a welcoming community event, while allowing local businesses to engage with families directly," Holman says.

Though The Woodlands boasts higher-than-average incomes among its residents, the general locale has been identified by the American Red Cross as having higher-than-normal drowning rates. By holding Splashpad Story Time in a non-threatening aquatic environment, the township hopes to help those numbers drop.

"The resources available within our community do not make us immune to the broader water-safety challenges facing our region," Holman says. "For that reason, we believe water-safety education must be proactive, accessible, and available to every family—not just those who seek out formal aquatic programs." | AQI

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PROGRAMMING

Chelsea Piers

New York

Big facilities, little-kid focus: attentive care across three East Coast locations

By Rebecca Robledo

New York-based swim school Chelsea Piers Swim serves a well-defined clientele—children. But within that demographic, the teachers and staff seek to serve every combination of talents, strengths, and needs that can be contained in a young body and mind.

With locations in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Stamford, Conn., the team has worked to develop standardized approaches and methods of swim education and training for children from toddler- to teen-aged, from competitive swimmers to those with special needs just hoping to get past the severe discomfort suffered by some from the tactile experience of moving in water.

Preparing each instructor to serve such a diverse range of young humans required intense standardization of the staff's methodology, covering everything from how to teach strokes and safety to the surest way to make an individual child laugh.

WIDE SPECTRUM

This last idea—learning what will make an individual child laugh fastest—serves a very serious purpose: forming an immediate bond with the child and making them feel comfortable and safe.

"For younger swimmers and newcomers, coaches pre-screen before the first lesson to learn what makes that specific child laugh," explains Sarah Walmsley, vice president of sports marketing at Chelsea Piers, headquartered in New York. "The instructor-swimmer bond is treated as the primary instructional tool: coaches build a real connection—coach and friend at once—because that camaraderie and felt safety is what gets a nervous child willing to put their face in the water."

Instructors also must begin and end each session with a smile. It's policy. "Our coaching philosophy is built on relationship and joy," Walmsley says. "...a child reads an adult's emotional presence instantly, and that reaction shapes how they experience the water from the first minute."

What the team calls "the badge system" outlines the path from beginning to end, with no gaps. This further provides a steady foundation, building confidence and reducing the chance that a child is held back at a level they've already mastered.

Each swimmer receives a badge that explains the skills the child must learn to progress to the next step. At week five, the coach checks off what the child has mastered and gives them a physical badge to decorate and take home. At week 12, the child is reviewed again to finalize which skills have been mastered so they can move to the next tier.

"Complete all five skills, and they move up; need more time, and they stay. No pressure either way," Walmsley says. "Progress stops being a verdict delivered at the end of a session and becomes something a coach, a swimmer, and a parent track together. Progression runs across 10 levels with no gaps, so a swimmer never outgrows one level without a clear next step and never advances before they're ready."

Older first-time swimmers are not placed alongside small children of the same skill level but rather with others their age.

Student-to-teacher ratios are capped at 3:1, ensuring each student receives the attention and customized instruction most appropriate to their needs and abilities.

"Water independence isn't built in a single lesson; it's built by staying with a program long enough for skill actually to set in," Walmsley says. "Our local footprint in each market, our 12-week trimester structure, and a consistent coaching philosophy all exist to keep families coming back until that happens, because inconsistent instruction means inconsistent water safety." | AQI



Standardized instruction methods play a significant role in helping the Chelsea Piers staff meet the individual needs of each child. Just as important, intensive training on interpersonal skills helps instructors put the children at ease and understand their needs.

PHOTO COURTESY CHELSEA PIERS



Aquaworx

Product: Commercial Equipment Pack

Features: Aquaworx's 14-ft x 7-ft commercial equipment pack is designed for aquatic facilities using large sand filters and pumps. Its standard design consolidates filtration equipment into a single pack, reducing the overall footprint while protecting it from outdoor elements. Dual fiberglass lids provide access from either side, and a solid 1-in. floor and stainless steel hardware support durability. The pack is UL 1081-approved, EPA-validated, and NSF-approved.

Contact: aquaworxusa.com



CCEI USA Inc.

Product: 24V Light Safety Transformer

Features: CCEI's 24V DC transformer powers pool and spa lights through a direct connection. Separate compartments keep the primary and secondary light connections independent. An ON/OFF switch and resettable circuit breaker help protect the transformer and lights from overloads. Quick connectors simplify installation, and the transformer is available in 46W and 92W models. It accepts 120 VAC, 60 Hz input, provides 24V DC output, and is UL Listed.

Contact: ccei-pool.com/us



BECS Technology

Product: BECSys Controllers

Features: Easy-to-use water chemistry controls, equipment room controls, and CO2 feed systems; includes advanced features such as integral Gigabit Ethernet with EZConnect, total alkalinity monitoring and control, VFD interface, and BECSys Live online access; NSF-certified.

Contact: becsys.com



ChlorKing

Product: NEXGEN On-site Chlorine Generator

Features: Leasing a ChlorKing commercial on-site chlorine generator helps protect facilities against the ever-changing costs of chemicals, replacement parts, and labor for repairs; helps prevent recreational water illnesses (RWIs) and improve swimmer comfort; produces 10–120 lb of bleach per 24 hours and uses pool water; one unit can sanitize up to six bodies of water.

Contact: chlorking.com



Fountain People

Product: FXPRO™ Flush-Mount Underwater LED Lighting
Features: FXPRO™ is a flush-mount LED light designed for fountains and splash pads with pedestrian traffic. Its niche housing sits flush with the fountain floor or wall, making it suitable for renovation projects. Constructed from 316L stainless steel, the light is designed for underwater, wet, or dry applications. It features 18 RGBW color-changing diodes and an onboard DMX driver, allowing individual addressing with a DMX controller. The lighting is UL/cUL listed, CSA certified, IP68-rated, and RoHS-compliant.
Contact: fountainpeople.com



Hayward Commercial Aquatics

Product: CAT 5500
Features: Water chemistry controllers with TDS, temperature, and salt monitoring; equipped with state-of-the-art sensing and control capabilities tailored specifically for salt chlorine applications; offers pH, ORP, conductivity/NaCl, backup sanitization, and internet-based monitoring.
Contact: hayward.com





Jandy

Product: Jandy JCP Commercial Polymer Pumps
Features: Designed for commercial pools, Jandy JCP Commercial Polymer Pumps are available in standard, high-horsepower, and specialized waterfall models. Fast self-priming speeds and tool-free maintenance help support efficient operation and reduce downtime. Aegis® Ring motor protection and VFD compatibility add versatility for pool professionals. The pumps are designed as drop-in replacements for Pentair® EQ Series® and C Series® pumps.
Contact: jandy.com



Magic Plastics

Product: CR2 Corrosion-Resistant Check Valve
Features: Protects against corrosion in high-value systems like heat exchangers; reliably prevents backflow; with a Hastelloy C-276 spring, withstands harsh chemicals and corrosive water conditions; clear, serviceable lid makes inspection fast and easy; silicone gasket ensures a long-lasting, dependable seal across a wide temperature range.
Contact: magicplastics.com



Landmark Aquatic

Product: Neptune Benson Defender® Filtration System
Features: Landmark Aquatic integrates Xylem's Neptune Benson Defender® Filtration systems into high-performance aquatic facilities. The regenerative filtration technology is designed to deliver water clarity while reducing energy use, water consumption, and maintenance demands. Landmark combines its expertise in design, construction, renovation, and service with Defender® filtration for demanding, high-use environments. The solution is intended to support operational efficiency and long-term reliability.
Contact: landmarkaquatic.com



Paddock Pool Equipment Company

Product: Paddock Regenerator
Features: The Paddock Regenerator is an advanced regenerative media filtration system designed to deliver clear water while reducing water and energy consumption. Unlike traditional sand filters, it eliminates the need for routine backwashing. This helps facilities conserve thousands of gallons of water. The system features an improved hydraulic bump mechanism and an updated, user-friendly controller. Its compact, efficient design is tested and approved for filtration rates up to 3.0 gpm per square foot.
Contact: paddockpoolequipment.com



Raypak

Product: E3T Single Phase Electric Pool & Spa Heater, 0005-0027
Features: The E3T Electric 3-Series Titanium heater is designed for commercial pool and spa heating. Titanium heating elements and 316L marine-grade stainless steel help it withstand demanding water conditions, including saltwater pools, while its solid-state design and flow-sensor technology support smooth operation. Digital controls provide diagnostics, inlet and outlet temperatures, flow rate, and code alerts. Its compact size is designed to simplify installation in both new builds and replacement projects.
Contact: raypak.com



Recreonics

Product: Aurora 3800 Series Single Stage End Suction Pumps
Features: Quiet, smooth-running pumps with an easy-back pullout design and sealed stainless steel shaft sleeve and 316 stainless steel impellers; coupled TEFC premium-efficiency motors can reduce energy losses by 10–50 percent; available in four power frame sizes; epoxy-coated, NSF-listed, and exceeding NEMA MG 1-2009 requirements.
Contact: recreonics.com





Anchor Industries, Inc.

Product: Palm Funbrella

Features: The Palm Funbrella shade structure brings a tropical palm tree design to pools, waterparks, splash pads, and outdoor recreation areas. Built with a steel frame and durable mesh fabric, it provides dependable shade, helping guests stay cooler and more comfortable while creating a resort-style setting.

Contact: anchorinc.com/products/shade/funbrella/funbrella-palm



Landscape Structures

Product: SkyWays Shade Products

Features: From small shade to big shade, decorative shade to themed shade; offers flexible and stylish options for wherever people like to gather; provides cool, reliable shade for play, rest, and any activity.

Contact: playlsi.com





OpenAire

Product: Retractable Roof

Features: OpenAire's retractable roof opens beyond the typical 50 percent in a top-down, double-slope configuration. Tracks extend off the sides of the structure, allowing the roof to open more than 60 percent of the space, reducing the client's operating costs.

Contact: openaire.com



Recreonics

Product: Texacraft Pool Furniture

Features: Heavy-walled, tubular aluminum extrusion; powder-coated frames in 26 color options. The Splash Vinyl Straps Series and Oasis Crossweave Series have virgin, double-wrapped vinyl straps with ultraviolet stabilizers and weatherproof rivets. The Scandia Sling Series offers several sling fabrics and colors to choose from; lounges and chairs are available in several styles.

Contact: recreonics.com



Sprung Structures

Product: Aquatic Building Centers & Pool Enclosures

Features: From simple pool enclosures to full-service aquatic centers, these patented, tensioned-membrane structures are cost-efficient and install in as little as six to eight months. Bright, clear-span interiors maximize flexibility; structures are energy-efficient, corrosion-resistant, and built to perform in any climate.

Contact: sprung.com

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Vortex Aquatic Structures

Product: Abrio

Features: A sustainable oasis that helps refresh the community both day and night, while keeping water conservation at the forefront; ideal for urban environments; enhances spaces with cooling, seating, and shade, making it an ideal ally against heat waves and the urban heat island effect.

Contact: vortex-intl.com



Wrmth Corp.

Product: WAV Lounge Chair

Features: Comfortable, heated casual chair controlled through a smart device; dial the temperature up or down with ease; uses minimal electricity and connects to standard power outlets; several chairs can share a single circuit; can be connected to form bench combinations.

Contact: wrmth.com

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EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- 200 exhibitors featuring pool, spa, hot tub, retail, service, and outdoor-living solutions
- 85 industry topics and 65 speakers
- 12 certification classes
- Advanced education, industry seminars, and hands-on workshops
- Free industry sessions
- New & Featured Products Pavilion
- Networking opportunities, including complimentary lunches
- Industry Welcome Reception in the Exhibit Hall
- Southwest Pool & Spa Show Awards Gala



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Tuesday–Thursday:
Paid Sessions & Certifications Available

Thursday - Saturday:
Free Sessions Available

Thursday, Jan. 14 | 5–7 PM:
Industry Welcome Reception & Exhibit Hall Open

Friday, Jan. 15 | 11 AM–5 PM:
Exhibit Hall Open

Friday, Jan. 15 | 6–8 PM:
Awards Gala @ Marriott Rivercenter

Saturday, Jan. 16 | 11 AM–2 PM:
Exhibit Hall Open

SCAN ME

Register at swpsshow.com Free registration for PHTA, IPSSA, Watershape University & APP, all others: $45.

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PHOTOS BY CHARLES DAVIS PHOTOGRAPHY

Bubbling to the Top

Modern updates merge with nostalgic colors in Fort Worth pool renovation

As the city renovated the Forest Park Pool, the community placed a high priority on keeping the century-old site's Olympic-sized competition pool—Fort Worth's only 50-m pool—and other aspects of the original space, while seeking to balance them with modern features to broaden the facility's appeal.

First, the designers created three distinct zones—the full-sized competition pool, measuring 50 m in length; a 4,550-sq.-ft. leisure pool with a zero-depth entrance; and a waterslide.

On the deck, ornamentation serves a functional purpose. Visitors can follow a trail of stylized bubbles in white and shades of blue from the new bathhouse, through the competition and leisure zones, and, finally, to the waterslide at the far end of the space. The circular motif is carried through in the deck's overall shape, in circular patches of lawn, and in the shade over the slide tower. The tower itself was finished in a nostalgic soft aqua.

And, of course, the equipment was updated for efficiency and optimal performance, including advanced chemical controls, UV sanitation units, new filters, pumps, and upgraded plumbing. | **AQI**

—Rebecca Robledo



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