





MAKING A SPLASH

AT PENSACOLA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

by Sheila Wagner

Everyone has heard the old adage that says, “All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy,” and that goes for Jill too. Pensacola Christian College in Pensacola, Florida, makes sure that its students have access to play in a spectacular way.



Several studies have shown that students at traditional universities have twice as much leisure time as they have in classes and studying. Amy Glenn, Chief Communication Officer at PCC, believes that does not represent students at Pensacola Christian College. They have a lot more extra-curricular opportunities for leadership and service and spiritual development, and of course there are guidelines to how much homework and project time is required per academic credit earned. "In our environment, students are already so busy with classes, study and homework, jobs, student activities/organizations, and community service/outreach that taking a break from those responsibilities to relax and enjoy recreational facilities is healthy and needed," she stressed.

Swimming Relieves Stress

Swimming is an acknowledged method of stress relief. Almost everyone finds just the simple sight of a pool calming. And of course, the sounds produced by a pool—especially from elements like a waterfall or fountain—can put one in a tranquil state of mind that is much needed in the world of academia.

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One of the best aspects of swimming is the socializing a student gets while splashing around in the water with classmates and friends. It can lighten the mood and improve one's state of mind. Pools are perfect for fun, relaxation, and stress relief when coping with the pressure of being successful at college.

Pensacola Christian College has a myriad of options for making sure its students find pleasurable leisure activities. One of the most impressive ones is the Waterpark. This facility has water elements that provide an aesthetically pleasing environment in a tropical theme. The water slides range in length from 185 feet to 250 feet. The big bucket holds 300 gallons per splash that dumps every two minutes. There are 65,000 gallons of water in the tank for the slides and aqua park and another 50,000 gallon tank for the three waterfalls.

More Aquatic Activities

Other aquatic features at this campus include an outdoor screened pool and an indoor surfing and bodyboarding pool. The outdoor pool has six regulation-size swim lanes and a 3-board

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diving area. Classes are offered in swimming and lifeguarding, and collegiate teams compete in fast-paced water polo. The surfing and bodyboarding pool, the Double Flowrider, has 65,000 gallons of water underneath stored in the tank and circulated every three minutes and 40,000 gallons of water cooled to 82 degrees coming through each minute.

Since this college is in sunny Florida, they have waterfront property on Perdido Bay less than 30 minutes from the main campus. The offerings there include Hobie catamarans, kayaks, and stand up paddle boards. Classes

are offered in sailing and kayaking, and it's not unusual to see dolphins and a variety of birds.

Glenn further explained, "The aquatic facilities are included as part of the overall goal of student health and wellness and represent just a few of the amenities available to students."

Arlin R. Horton Sports Center

Arlin R. Horton Sports Center, named after PCC's founder who wanted to provide a first-class facility for students right on the campus, is over 216,000 square feet in size. It is used for classes, collegiate sports, and recreation.

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In addition to the aquatic features, there is an amazing array of sports and leisure features that include the following: rock climbing walls of 40 feet and 60 feet, 22-foot and 32-foot rappelling ledges, a 12-foot climbing boulder, 12-lane bowling alley, ice skating rink, racquetball courts, weight and fitness rooms, Escape Room, inline skating track, 9-hole miniature golf, indoor volleyball, table tennis, 4-lane jogging track, and an arena that seats over 3,100. So there is positively something for every student looking for exercise, stress relief, social interaction, and just plain fun.

The average number of students using the Sports Center is over 3,000 per week, but special events raise that to over 4,000 at a time. Glenn stated that the most popular aspect of the facility is its location. A high percentage of PCC students live on campus, so the convenience of having a diverse number of recreational opportunities nearby is even more appreciated. Chuck Craig, Sports Center Assistant Manager, speaking about the Sports Center said, “The Flowrider and rock wall are the most popular, and indoor volleyball too. The Swim Center is popular especially in the evenings.”



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“It has been a priority of our institution for many years to provide a safe and engaging environment on campus for our students to enjoy. The Arlin R. Sports Center is a place where our students can relax and unwind after a full day of academics.” — Jon Tutton, Director of Student Activities

Major Maintenance Requirements

Peter Harrington is the Maintenance Director at PCC, and he has a huge responsibility to keep all the parts in good working order. “One full-time staff member with a Pool Service license and two part-time student employees oversee the cleaning and upkeep of our aquatic facilities,” he stated. He explained that the pool is vacuumed and cleaned six days a week, year round. The filter pump moves 800 gallons a minute. It takes a 500,000 BTU boiler to maintain 78 degree constant temperature.

Harrington also said that there are three 90-horse power pumps operating the Flowrider. It takes 3-5 workers around two weeks to completely empty the tank, remove Flowrider surface, raise motors, service motors, clean tank, touch up paint on the tank and motors and then put it all back together. Annually they remove all three motors to inspect and service them. Every 6-8 years they send out the motors to be reconditioned. Additionally, they keep a spare motor in their inventory to swap out during servicing or in case of an emergency.

Priority For Safety And Fun

Director of Student Activities, Jon Tutton, commented, “It has been a priority of our institution for many years to provide a safe and engaging environment on campus for our students to enjoy. The Arlin R. Sports Center is a place where our students can relax and unwind after a full day of academics.”

Evangeline Benson, a student at PCC, said, “I love having the Flowrider because it gives the experience of surfing while not having to go to the beach. It’s a great way to work off stress and relax.”

Glenn summed up, “Having a wide variety of recreational opportunities for students provides fun for a variety of interest and fitness levels. Taking a break from study to enjoy physical activity and interact with others can help develop a well-rounded individual.”



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Sheila Wagner has spent the last several years working as a professional editor and recently became the staff writer for *Private University Products and News*. Wagner can be reached at sheila@pupnmag.com.

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