



## PRIVATE UNIVERSITY PRODUCTS AND NEWS

AQUATICS SPECIAL EDITION 2025

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DESIGNING FOR DIGNITY  
THE INTERSECTION  
OF AESTHETICS AND  
ACCESSIBILITY

BUILT TO LAST  
HOW STAINLESS STEEL  
IS RESHAPING CAMPUS  
AQUATICS

MEETING CAMPUS-BASED  
LOCKER AND  
CABINET NEEDS  
WITH LIST INDUSTRIES

IMMERSED IN CAMPUS LIFE  
INTEGRATING AQUATIC  
FACILITIES INTO COLLEGE  
RECREATION PROGRAMS

BEYOND THE  
LAP LANE  
REIMAGINING UNIVERSITY  
POOL SPACE



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# Editor's Letter

SUMMER SPECIAL EDITION 2025

Dear Readers,

When we hear from you—whether it's through emails, conference conversations, or campus visits—we listen. And what we've been hearing loud and clear over the past year is just how important aquatic facilities are becoming on private college campuses. Not only are they increasingly central to your recreation programs and athletic departments, they're also fast becoming symbols of student well-being, recruitment, and campus pride.

In response to your feedback, suggestions, and outright requests, we're proud to bring you this special edition dedicated exclusively to aquatic facilities in private higher education.

Inside these pages, you'll find expert insights and real campus examples that cover every angle: design and construction trends, air and water treatment systems, integration with campus rec and wellness initiatives, and how to maintain these facilities efficiently and sustainably. Whether your campus is in the early planning stages of a new natatorium or seeking ways to upgrade an existing facility, this issue was crafted with your needs in mind.

This edition is more than just a collection of articles—it's a direct response to you, our engaged and forward-thinking readers. Your requests are what brought this issue to life, and we are honored to be your partner in making these projects a reality on your campus.

Thank you for letting *Private University Products and News* be a part of your incredible institutions. We never take that trust for granted, and we look forward to continuing to serve you with content that is timely, relevant, and tailored to your ever-evolving facilities.

We hope you enjoy the issue—and as always, keep letting us know what you need next. We're listening.

Ed Bauer

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6

## BEYOND THE LAP LANE: REIMAGINING UNIVERSITY POOL SPACE

BY DAVID VINSON, PhD

The most inspiring and cutting-edge aquatic facilities all share one common trait: they're inclusive, both in design and function. Find out what college and university campuses are doing to broaden their appeal—sometimes in spectacular ways—and attract prospective students in the process.

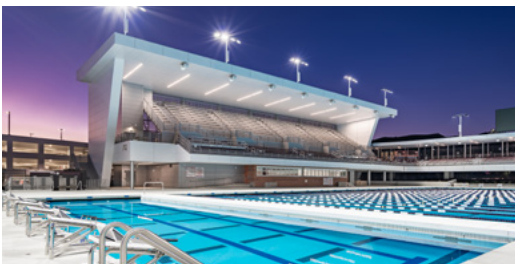


12

## DESIGNING FOR DIGNITY: THE INTERSECTION OF AESTHETICS AND ACCESSIBILITY

BY MARLEY CUNNINGHAM

The next evolution in accessibility lies not just in functional design but dignified design. Find out how accessible features on campus are moving from requirements to an integral part of design philosophy—and why it matters.



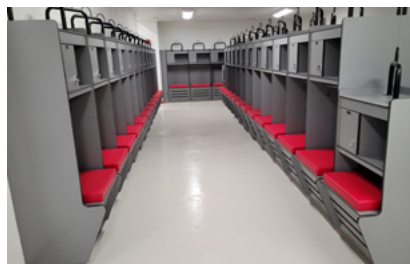
20

## BUILT TO LAST: HOW STAINLESS STEEL IS RESHAPING CAMPUS AQUATICS

BY ROSALIND FOURNIER

Nature Pool Corporation's stainless-steel pools, equipment, and systems are found in some of the most luxurious sites in the world—and also on U.S. college and university campuses. Find out how stainless-steel pools deliver long-term value and sustainability benefits to campus

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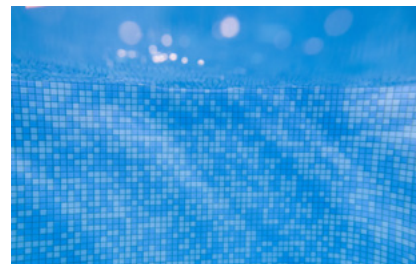


28

## MEETING CAMPUS-BASED LOCKER AND CABINET NEEDS WITH LIST INDUSTRIES

BY DAVID VINSON, PhD

Writer David Vison sat down with List Industries' Steve Troyano to find out how far a company will go to meet the functional, aesthetic, and operational needs of campus projects involving lockers, shelves, and much more.



34

## IMMERSED IN CAMPUS LIFE: INTEGRATING AQUATIC FACILITIES INTO COLLEGE RECREATION PROGRAMS

ED BAUER

Is your aquatics center still limited to swim teams and lap swimmers? Discover how to broaden access for all students.









# Beyond the Lap Lane

## Reimagining University Pool Space

BY DAVID VINSON, PHD

The most inspiring and cutting-edge aquatic facilities all share one common trait—they're inclusive, both in design and function. Their lasting effects on college campuses are multifaceted. Studies have found aquatic facilities to be powerful tools for improving student engagement and retention.





PHOTO COURTESY OF NATARE POOLS

For instance, a 2021 study in *Recreation Sports Journal* found that recreational facility usage correlated positively with GPA and retention. Moreover, National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) reports that students who participate in campus recreation feel more connected to campus and are more likely to stay enrolled.

The findings are encouraging but still don't reflect the full, transformative impact of aquatic facilities felt by students who are discovering healthy avenues for combating stress and the sedentary nature of rigorous study. Such spaces are also a great way to engage with new social groups and form lasting bonds of friendship and comradery.

Behind us are the days of swimming pools

being reserved primarily for the swimming and diving teams, leaving casual users by the wayside. Even competition pools can be adapted to include the broader student body. A clever repurposing of a competition pool took place this past fall at Brown University's Nelson Fitness Center, where students lounged on floaties for a cheeky screening of *JAWS*—made possible by adding audio and video capabilities to the scoreboard system. Beyond simple movie nights, pools with LED color-changing lights could offer nighttime "glow-swims" and dramatically lit aquatics obstacle courses during non-athletic hours.

With stainless-steel gutters, a competition pool can also be transformed into a space for kayaking, canoeing, and paddleboarding,

all without risk of breaking perimeter pool tiles. Movable floors or shallow zones can accommodate the familiar activities of pool volleyball or basketball. None of these additions interfere with the student-athlete training schedules; with a little imagination, competition pools become everyone can enjoy.

### Current Trends in Aquatic Facilities

Current trends in aquatic facilities tell a story about how we can maximize values of inclusivity and sustainability, issues that prospective and current students champion. Modern recreational pool designs are most notable for their versatility. The goal is to create multiple environments within a larger ecosystem. For instance, shallow sun-shelves with loungers create a resort-like atmosphere. Beach entries offer both aesthetic and accessibility benefits, and spas provide ideal spaces for decompressing. Large shallow zones encourage students to socialize and can serve as spaces for fitness classes. Signature features like lazy rivers, waterslides, climbing walls or ziplines draw students in and make the pool a standout campus amenity. Custom tiling and color-coordinated deck equipment likewise reinforce school branding and spirit. Because recreation pool areas can be extended beyond the water, there is opportunity to create informal gathering and study spaces with pool decks that feature seating, umbrellas and Wi-Fi.

Located in Davie, Florida, Nova Southeastern University (NSU) is nationally recognized for its innovative approach to aquatic facilities design. Its aquatic center contains all the amenities students could possibly want: the largest competition pool and diving well in the state of Florida, heated pools, waterfalls, and indeed, a resort-style atmosphere. Its competition pool is convertible between Olympic (50m) and NCAA (25y) standards, dividable by a floating bulkhead. Its diving well includes a separate well with space for seven short-course yard lanes, featuring two 1-meter and one 3-meter diving boards. NSU's main leisure pool is a half-Olympic sized pool (up to 5 feet deep) that offers

year-round swimming inside the NSU RecPlex. Ideal for relaxation, the space around the pool features lounge chairs, shaded areas, and tables. The main leisure pool doubles as NSU's learn-to-swim program and is a popular spot for campus events. The university's rolling hills pool is particularly appealing—a resort-style pool equipped with beautiful landscaping, a rock waterfall, and a zero-entry point. Students can study in its indoor lounge or outdoor pavilion. What is especially remarkable about NSU's aquatic center is its sustainability, a commitment that reflects university-wide values. In 2012, NSU launched a project at John U. Lloyd Beach State Park, utilizing electric and solar hot water systems to provide 100 percent of the park's energy needs. It also utilizes a large energy storage system at its Central Energy Plant, which generates ice during off-peak hours to cool campus buildings, which results in energy and cost savings.

Princeton University's Dillon Gymnasium offers state-of-the-art design and technology that make it one of the fastest pools in the nation. The competition pool, known otherwise as the DeNunzio Pool, is an ideal setting for competitive swimming. It measures 50 meters by 25 yards with a minimum depth of nine feet and maximum depth of 17 feet, and it's framed by bleachers that accommodate up to 1,700 spectators. The pool has two movable bulkheads which allow for various course configurations for both swimming and water polo. Also installed is a brand-new sound system that complements the new 9' by 17' Colorado full-color LED video and scoreboard.

Central to current trends in aquatic facilities, it's notable that Princeton has embraced university-wide its mission of creating inclusive environments. This extends to the building and pool of Dillon Gymnasium, which are both ADA accessible. The spectator seating area contains designated spaces for wheelchair users, and the pool provides a hydraulic hoist for pool access. The gym also offers six private, gender-inclusive shower and

Signature features like lazy rivers, waterslides, climbing walls or ziplines draw students in and make the pool a standout campus amenity.





changing areas. Community outreach is also a key component of Princeton's approach to inclusivity. The university offers swimming lessons with a positive and supportive learning environment, and its Campus Recreation hosts a Family Swim every Sunday afternoon in the warm water indoor pools. The Princeton Area Masters Swim program is another option for adults aged 18+ and is offered by the Princeton Recreation Department.

The University of Miami (UM) is home to the Whitten University Center (UC) Swimming Pool, an Olympic-sized outdoor pool located beside UM's Lakeside Patio. It serves as an example of how cutting-edge spaces engender sports excellence and foster community building. The temperature is kept at 83 degrees with +/- 2 degrees of variance, chilled during the summer and heated in the winter. The UC Pool offers short-course lap lanes, a low-board diving area, and of course a great deck for sunning, studying, or listening to music while enjoying the beautiful South Florida weather. The pool has been home to unparalleled talent as it has seen 27 Olympians, 41 National Champions, and 118 All-Americans. As the

home of the Miami Hurricanes Swimming and Diving program, the Norman Whitten pool is equipped with two 25-yard, eight-lane competition pools. The competition area also features adjustable components that provide an eight-lane, 50-meter-long course pool. Further, it offers amenities such as a diving tower, complete with a 5-meter, 7-meter, and 10-meter platform as well as two 3-meter springboards and three 1-meter springboards.

The Avery Aquatic Center at Stanford University is another example of how excellence in aquatic facilities facilitates not only sporting success but functions as an inclusive community that strengthens emotional, physical, and mental well-being. One of the largest outdoor swimming, diving, and water polo facilities in the country, the Avery Aquatic Center is home of Stanford's aquatic teams. The complex now includes four separate pools, one each for competition, diving, training, and recreation. The Maas Diving Tower takes its cues from the glass-and-steel elevator tower at Stanford Stadium and the glass elevator at Maples Pavilion. These three visually prominent structures form a trio of landmarks denoting Stanford's athletic precinct. Structural glass

windscreens allow spectators to see the divers as they ascend the tower. The competition pool was renovated to accommodate water polo, and thanks to the addition of nighttime lighting and a new shade canopy, the pool can host events in all four aquatic sports day or night. The center has hosted Olympic training games and served as a championship venue for Pac-12 and NCAA events.

### **Marketing Campus-Based Aquatic Facilities**

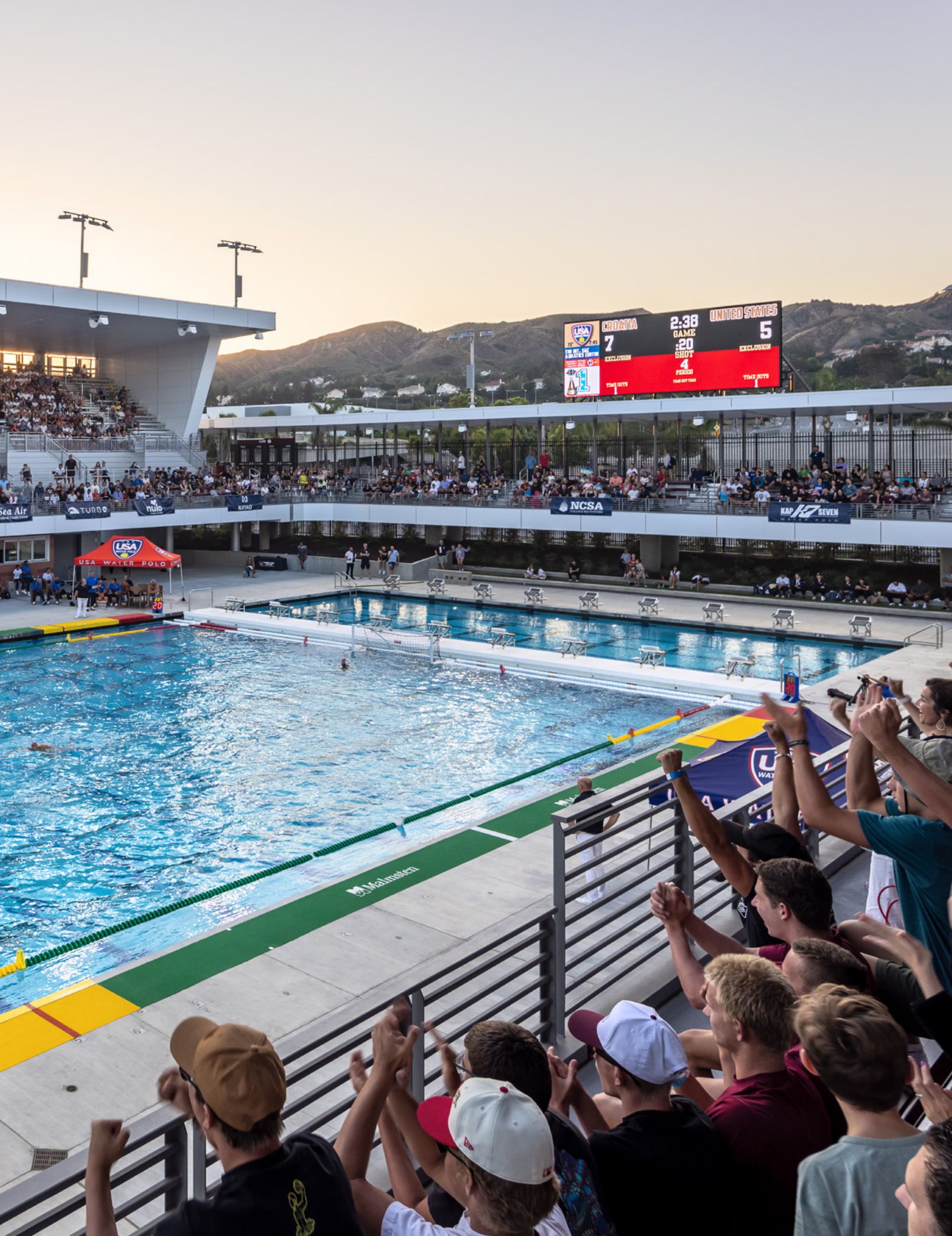
The best aquatic facilities in the country cater to a wide range of preferences and needs, ensuring that everyone can enjoy aquatic recreation to the fullest. But even the most well-designed aquatic spaces need a little boost in terms of maximizing usage and return on investment. Marketing is essential. Aquatics should be included in orientation tours and promoted at the start of the semester, when students are actively seeking ways to engage. Social media, campus signage, and student-driven events can generate buzz and create lasting interest. Through careful consideration during the design process, universities can transform their pools from underused athletic facilities into essential community spaces. With thoughtful planning and inclusive programming, aquatic facilities can become key contributors to student engagement, retention, and overall well-being.



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Dr. David Vinson

has a PhD in English with specializations in transatlantic literature and cultural studies. He is a committed scholar, teacher, and dad. If you ever meet David, avoid the subject of soccer. His fandom borders on the truly obnoxious.





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# Designing for Dignity

## The Intersection of Aesthetics and Accessibility

BY MARLEY CUNNINGHAM

What makes a campus feel welcoming? Is it the architecture?  
The student body? The messaging in your marketing materials?

For students with disabilities, especially those navigating physical limitations, their answer is often simpler: a campus feels welcoming when they can independently and comfortably access it—without having to ask for help, hunt for alternatives, or feel like an afterthought.





PHOTO COURTESY OF AQUA CREEK

In the realm of aquatic facilities, accessibility has traditionally been viewed through a binary lens: compliant or not. But as universities across the nation push for inclusive excellence, this narrow interpretation is no longer enough. The next evolution in accessibility lies not just in functional design but dignified design. That means access solutions that are not only compliant and safe, but also aesthetically aligned with the overall brand and spirit of the campus itself.

#### **Moving Past the “Medical Look”**

For decades, accessibility features—especially in pools—have visually signaled that they were a clear afterthought in the design process. Stark white, medical-looking cranes with cold, clunky components, often accompanied by unwelcoming signage, were commonplace. They worked, but they also sent a visual message: this wasn’t really made for you.

Today, that message is being rewritten. The tools of access no longer have to conflict with a facility’s aesthetic. Instead, they can, and should, complement it.

As part of their new aquatic center, Tarleton State University installed a custom purple pool lift to reflect their school colors and overall brand identity. Small detail? Perhaps. But for the students who rely on that lift, it transforms the experience from one of accommodation to one of true inclusion.

This is about more than paint—it’s about perception. When accessibility tools blend seamlessly into the environment, they shed the clinical stigma and instead become integral parts of the space, used with confidence and school pride.

#### **First Impressions Start Online**



Prospective students today are choosing their schools through screens before ever stepping foot on campus. Virtual tours, social media, and marketing materials are often the first indicators of whether a campus is the right fit. And for students with disabilities, that evaluation includes a critical, if unspoken, question: Will I feel like I belong here?

Universities go to great lengths to showcase state-of-the-art athletic centers, modern lounges, or eco-conscious architecture in their recruiting materials. But what about showcasing accessible spaces—especially in recreational or wellness facilities?

A strategically placed photo of a branded lift, an inclusive fitness space, or an adaptive aquatics program speaks volumes. It says: We see you. We thought of you. And you're already a part of our story.

#### Accessible Design Is Brand Strategy

At private universities, branding isn't just an exercise, it's a competitive necessity. Everything from mascot colors to locker finishes is chosen with brand identity in mind. So why should accessibility be any different?



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Your pool lift, for example, is just as visible as your bleachers. Your railing is touched by just as many hands as your entry gate. If these elements reflect the same thoughtful design as the rest of your facility, you're reinforcing your brand values of excellence, inclusion, and integrity.

Better yet, accessible features that match your branding create photo-worthy moments. When students feel empowered using your equipment, they're more likely to share those experiences—spreading a message of inclusion organically across social platforms and peer networks.

### **The Wellness Connection**

Campus recreation centers play a key role in student wellness. For students with disabilities, pools can offer therapeutic benefits that extend far beyond physical exercise—alleviating chronic pain, building confidence, and offering emotional release.

Yet, despite this value, many accessible aquatics features remain underutilized, simply because students don't know they exist, don't feel confident using them, or worse, don't feel invited to use them.

Designing for dignity helps close that gap. Accessible elements that are clearly integrated, easy to use, and visually appealing encourage usage. It makes accessibility feel like a natural part of campus life—not a concession.

### **Reframing the Investment**

It's easy to think of accessible enhancements as “extra”—a cost center rather than a differentiator. But as demographics shift and the number of students identifying with disabilities grows, accessibility is becoming an increasingly influential factor in school selection.

According to recent studies, students with disabilities make up more than 19 percent of undergraduate enrollment nationwide. That number is even higher when you consider temporary disabilities, chronic conditions, or neurodivergent needs.

Investments in accessible, aesthetically aligned infrastructure are no longer niche; they're strategic. They support recruitment.

They strengthen your DEI efforts. And they communicate your values in ways that resonate with all students.

### **Designing with Empathy**

Ultimately, the most successful accessibility features are those that feel invisible—not because they're hidden, but because they feel intuitive. They don't remind users of their limitations. They elevate their experience.

To design with empathy means invoking stakeholders with lived experience. It means consulting with disability services, student groups, and manufacturers who understand the nuances of adaptive use. It means rethinking compliance as the floor—not the ceiling—of what's possible.

At Aqua Creek, we've had the opportunity to collaborate with designers and universities that understand this shift. We've seen firsthand how a small aesthetic change can make a major impact on the student experience. From a student perspective, it's not about the equipment. It's about how it makes someone feel.

### **What Story Does Your Campus Tell?**

If your accessible features feel like an afterthought, students will notice.

If they feel like intentional, empowering parts of your campus environment, students will remember.

Dignified access isn't just a checkbox, it's a conversation. It's a design philosophy. And for the next generation of students, it's a difference that could define their college choice and their college experience.



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Marley Cunningham is a marketing professional and avid outdoors woman. She is the Director of Marketing for Aqua Creek Products, a Montana-based manufacturer specializing in aquatic access equipment.





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# UNIVERSITY CAMPUS EXPANSION

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

At a major university residential expansion project in the Southeast, collaboration and cooperation among the construction management firm, window and door manufacturer, and installation contractor resulted in a several stunning projects recreating the look of the surrounding century-old buildings. All totaled, Hope's Windows, Inc., supplied over 1,200 unique windows made from custom hot-rolled steel profiles and nearly 100 high traffic and fire-rated door assemblies made from 10 and 12 gauge cold-rolled steel.

According to Sean Farrell, senior project manager at Layton Construction, establishing collaborative relationships is key to successful construction projects. One of the best examples of this maxim is a multi-phase university project for which Layton Construction is serving as construction manager. Layton, part of the STO Building Group, is a nationally-ranked commercial contractor with ten offices around the United States. The firm specializes in healthcare, industrial, warehousing, and higher education projects. As construction manager, Layton hires the sub-contractors and manages and oversees the project as part of a team.



“Since we were building windows and doors to make a brand new college, we needed a company with the methodology to produce the product like it was done 100 years ago.”

— Sean Farrell, Sr Project Manager  
Layton Construction

Hope's Brian Whalen, Vice President of Sales, acknowledges that the project was a real test of Hope's capabilities. He is especially proud that they Hope's was able to expedite the schedule even in the face of design changes and in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. The shop drawing approval process – including preparation of blueprints of windows and doors with all setting conditions, sizes, customized designs, and required testing – took longer than normal. Changes were made along the way that might have pushed back the delivery schedules for some, but Hope's made adjustments during the production process to deliver all materials on time. Whalen gave a nod to Joey Riggan and the team at Alexander Metals, the frame and glass installer team, saying the overall project went extremely smoothly once the frames were on site.

Says Whalen, “It was a fantastic collaboration among all the parties. Hope's worked closely as the manufacturer to fulfill the architect's design vision, and then the installer worked closely with us to make sure everything was installed executed properly.”

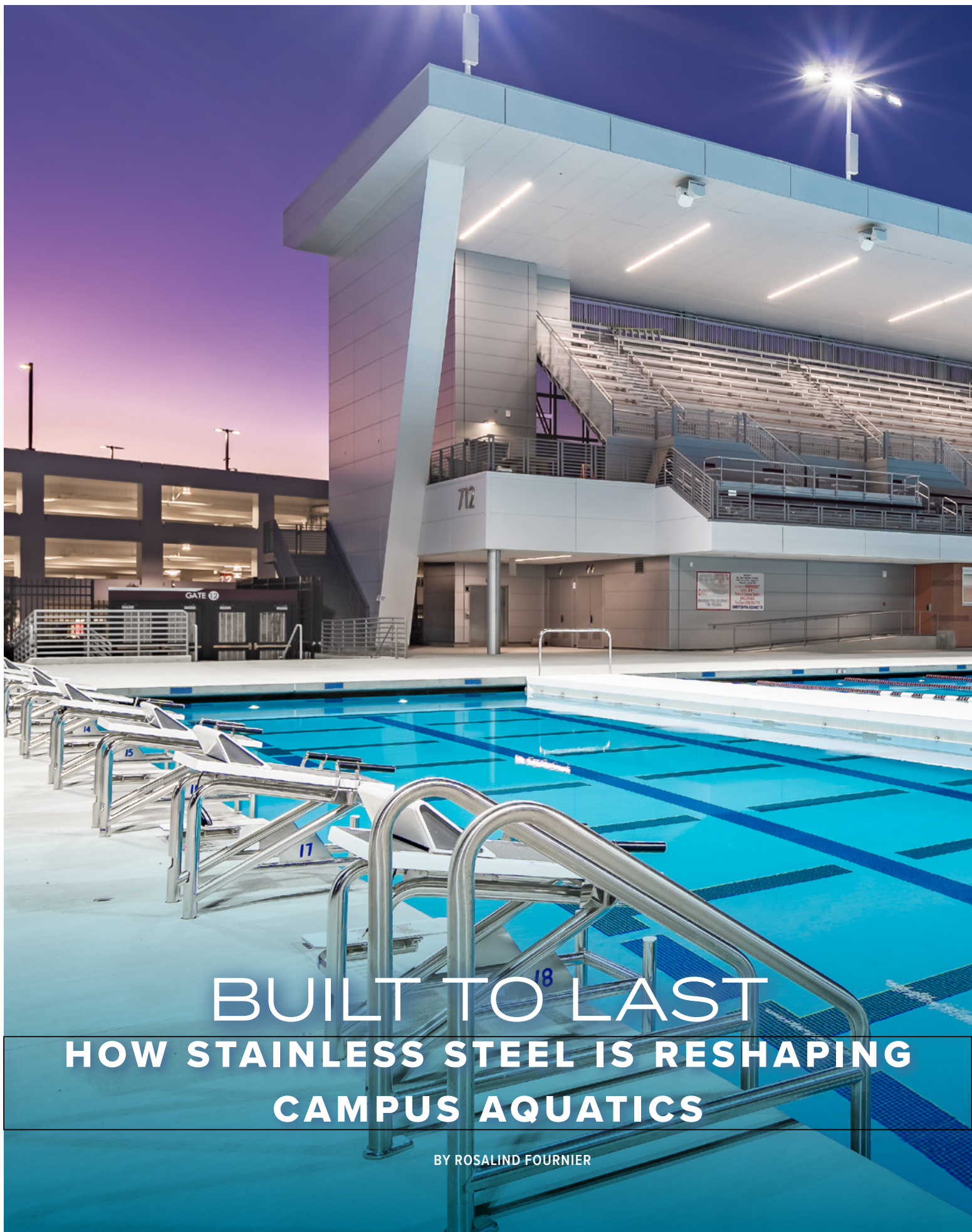


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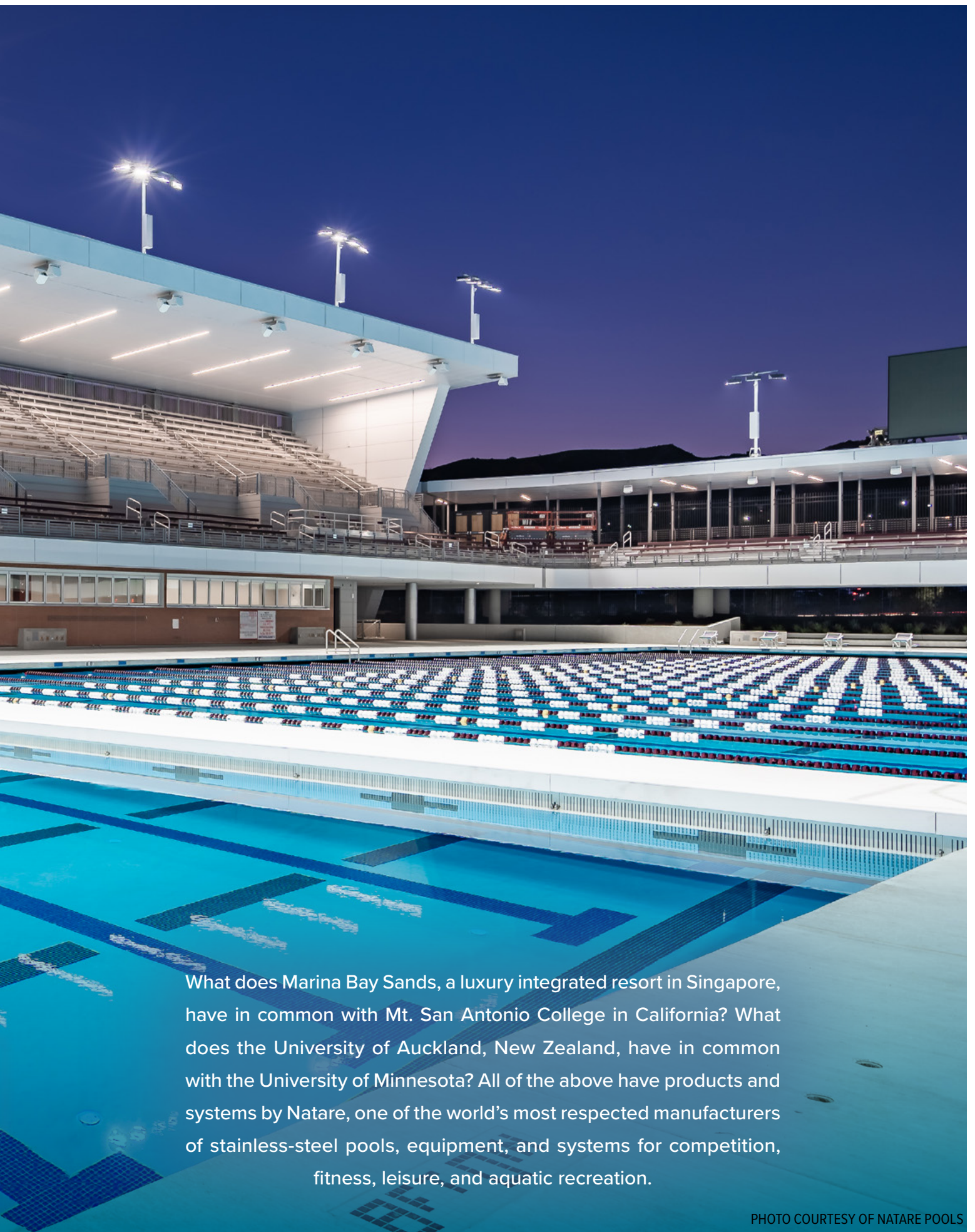


# BUILT TO LAST<sup>18</sup>

## HOW STAINLESS STEEL IS RESHAPING CAMPUS AQUATICS

BY ROSALIND FOURNIER





What does Marina Bay Sands, a luxury integrated resort in Singapore, have in common with Mt. San Antonio College in California? What does the University of Auckland, New Zealand, have in common with the University of Minnesota? All of the above have products and systems by Natare, one of the world's most respected manufacturers of stainless-steel pools, equipment, and systems for competition, fitness, leisure, and aquatic recreation.

PHOTO COURTESY OF NATARE POOLS





PHOTO COURTESY OF NATARE POOLS

While Marina Bay Sands boasts the world's largest rooftop infinity pool, Mt. San Antonio College features three Natare Hybrid bulkheads. The University of Auckland has Natare stainless steel pools, filters and bulkheads, and the University of Minnesota has a Natare Hybrid bulkhead. The choice by these four very different entities to partner with Natare reflects a growing understanding of stainless steel's advantages over traditional pool materials. We talked with Joshua Albertson, sales manager for Natare Pools, about colleges and universities choosing stainless to build new pools or renovating an existing one.

**PUPN:** Before we got on the phone, I was looking at some pictures of your projects online. Why do some look like stainless steel while others don't?

**Albertson:** With some you'd have no idea they're stainless because of how they are finished. They can be finished with ceramic tile, others with PVC membrane, so you wouldn't necessarily know it was a

stainless-steel pool versus a pool built from traditional materials. There are number of pools we have out there that do have the stainless-steel finish, but it can be all sorts of different things.

**PUPN:** Is the demand for stainless-steel pools growing on college and university campuses?

**Albertson:** I would say that stainless-steel pools are gaining more and more traction, especially in the competition, municipal, and collegiate environment. That's really been a shift over the last three to five years. There are several reasons why a stainless-steel pool would make sense in the collegiate environment. One, they're so low maintenance. Once they are installed, you don't have to worry about tile that fails over the years, plaster needing to be redone, or the dreaded "L" word—leaks—because it's a fully welded stainless-steel vessel.

So from a product standpoint it makes a lot of sense, and from a construction standpoint it makes even more sense, because once it's designed and approved, the on-site work is fast. That matters, because the most expensive part of a big project is when you are actually building it, and every day is costing you money.

**PUPN:** What makes your process faster?

**Albertson:** We can build the wall systems in sections in our shop and then ship them to the site. When possible we weld them together in our shop as well. We have an army of men and women who are fabricators and welders, so we are very capable of doing incredible work efficiently.

However, there are projects when it makes sense to do the majority of the work on site, but in those cases, the sections are in place and welded together in a matter of weeks. The traditional methods of using concrete, gunite, or other cementitious materials can take several months to get the actual pool construction done. There's an incredible amount of savings on site when it comes to stainless.



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**PUPN:** Are there any unexpected factors that can slow down your work?

**Albertson:** The biggest challenge we face sometimes is the amount of time it takes once we have delivered the design package or the submittal package. At that point, the architect, pool consultant, general contractor, and the owner all need to review it. The approval process can be the biggest hurdle, and that's where we sometimes see a challenge.

**PUPN:** How can university or college clients help make the process go as smoothly as possible?

**Albertson:** Know who's working on your behalf, whether it's the general contractor or the pool contractor, the architect or the pool consultant. Has the architect been involved in a project before with a significant pool project included? Has the pool contractor proven they can build a facility capable of hosting collegiate events and programs? If

you have organizations that have never been a part of that before, it's going to take more time to get through everything.

**PUPN:** We've talked previously about the value of bulkheads—essentially floating movable partitions. How do you help campuses decide whether bulkheads are worth the investment?

**Albertson:** We look at their needs. The bulkheads allow for so much more programming, capabilities, and flexibility. If you build a rectangular pool without a bulkhead, you're limited to only a few different uses. But if you can physically separate the pool, it allows you to have, for example, free swim on one side and swim lessons on the other. You can have kayaking and canoe class at two o'clock while the other students are having open swim. The combinations are endless.

That is a big thing, because it's expensive to

build a pool, and you want the most bang for the buck.

**PUPN:** Are more colleges and universities investing in bulkheads?

**Albertson:** It seems like more often than not they choose to include at least one bulkhead. For example, one in Walnut, California—Mt. San Antonio College—has three of our bulkheads in their pools. The biggest reason is they host swim championships every year, and they can use the bulkheads in their competition pool to dial in the course length specifically for the event. They can move the bulkhead slightly to make sure their course is exactly 50 meters or exactly 25 meters.

**PUPN:** Is it hard to do that?

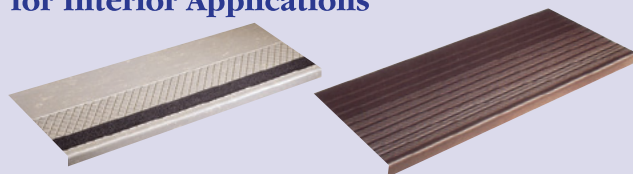
**Albertson:** It's very user friendly. You really just open a valve, turn on an air compressor, and allow the buoyancy chamber to fill with air, and you make a 15,000-pound bulkhead

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much, much lighter. So adjusting the bulkhead is a reasonably easy process. You can train two lifeguards to do that.

**PUPN:** Sustainability is increasingly a priority in every aspect of a campus life. Is that true of pools?

**Albertson:** Absolutely. For one, our stainless-steel pools have the advantage of longevity. We warranty the pool structure for 25 years, and chances are it's going to last much longer than that. So that saves on resources having to go into a new structure due to wear-and-tear.

**PUPN:** What makes your pools last that long compared to traditional materials?

**Albertson:** Our stainless-steel pool wall system is by far the best in the United States. One, it's all welded. We do offer a bolt-together system, but our preference is our all-welded system. You don't have to worry about the welds ever coming apart, because they don't. Two, we use heavy gauge material, and three, it's all domestically sourced within 300 miles of Indianapolis. And for the most part we use grade 316L material, which is an upgraded material compared to the more common 304-grade stainless steel.

Then if something needs to change 50 years from now, it's a recyclable material. You can't recycle concrete, but you can recycle stainless. On top of that, our filtration system operates a lot more efficiently than traditional filtration systems from an efficiency standpoint of saving water, chemical, heating, and labor costs.

**PUPN:** What are some other trends you're seeing?

**Albertson:** Campuses are increasingly gravitating to attracting students with more bells and whistles, pools with more of a resort feel—lazy rivers and slides, almost of college-kid water park.

**PUPN:** How much do clients know coming in about stainless-steel pools?

**Albertson:** It is all over the board. There are people who surprise me when we have our first conversation, because they know so much. And others don't. For the most part it does take a little bit of an education, and that's something we are always striving to do better, whether it's how our website is informing people or the types of brochures and literature we have. But having been in business almost 60 years, I think we're doing something right.

**PUPN:** Any final thoughts?

**Albertson:** We are capable of working in all 50 states, and I think our product is even more valuable because we're willing to go anywhere. Not every part of the country has a pool contractor capable of building a major commercial pool like this in what I would call traditional materials. Or they might not have a contractor willing to do it in their part of the country. Because we can bring our fabricated products with us, we can really go anywhere.

And we're USA fabricated. All our stainless steel is domestically produced, and that appeals to our customers.



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Rosalind

Fournier is a freelance writer/editor in Homewood, Alabama where she lives with her husband and kids. She loves to read and looks forward to March Madness every year, though her bracket is usually a disaster.



# EXPLORE SOLUTIONS

## MEET THE DEMAND OF COST-SAVINGS

A Brown University student analyzed the fitness center's electricity data, climate mitigation impact, and ran a cost-benefit analysis—determining that if they replaced half of their cardio machines with ECO-POWR™, they would offset 2% of the building's electricity, more than the solar panels already in place.



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# TO MEET REC CENTER DEMANDS

## MEET THE DEMAND OF SUSTAINABILITY EXPECTATIONS

When faced with a rec center remodel, Penn State Altoona called on their Sustainability Counsel. Their guidance was to turn traditional, energy-intensive workouts into student-engaging, net positive activities that lower the carbon footprint of the building with ECO-POWR™.



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## MEET THE DEMAND OF STUDENT PREFERENCES

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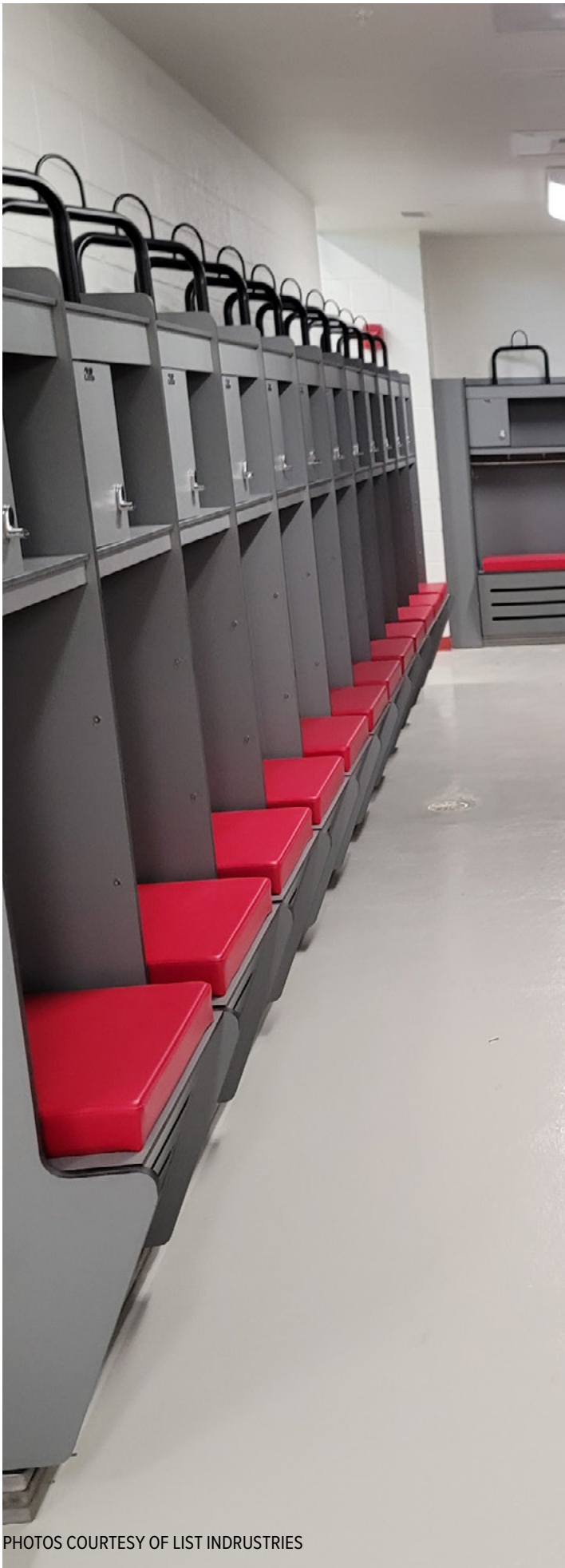
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## MEETING CAMPUS-BASED LOCKER AND CABINET NEEDS WITH LIST INDUSTRIES

BY DAVID VINSON, PHD

Family-owned and proudly American since 1936, List Industries Inc. is known nationwide as an industry leader of customized lockers and cabinets. Today, the company is led by J.R. List and his two sons, Braden and Colin, and together they champion a “family first” philosophy extending well beyond their own. The close-knit culture at List resonates throughout its infrastructure, with some employees having remained with List for over two decades, as dedicated as ever to the perfection of their craft.





List’s corporate headquarters are in Deerfield Beach, Florida—also the home of its largest manufacturing plant, where the majority of its metal locker and cabinet products are fabricated. Customers benefit from five distribution centers, each strategically located around the country to ensure the most efficient delivery possible. With a deep bench of experts in lockers and shelving, List offers not only stellar products but also generations of knowledge, reliability, and partnership to its dealers and their customers.

Recently, I spoke with Steve Troyano, national product manager for wood and phenolic Lockers at List Industries. We started with the impressive breadth of products manufactured by List: welded and KD industrial and commercial cabinets; industrial steel

boltless, clip, and bulk shelving; workbenches; portable security gates; and industrial guardrail lockers. To those, add List’s Superior Lockers—America’s most comprehensive locker line. Superior Lockers range from economy KD lockers to industry-best, fully framed, all-welded lockers. List offers an incredible array of locker styles, materials, sizes, colors, and functionality. The company also manufactures furniture-quality wood, plastic laminate and phenolic lockers for professional, collegiate, and high school teams sports—not to mention those for country clubs, fitness centers, hospital lounges, and employee locker rooms.

Troyano stressed that when clients make an investment in their products, List’s team of designers, engineers, and sales professionals are available every step of the way. “We



assist from initial budget planning to project completion, and our staff collaborates directly with customers in the design of an attractive, functional, and budget-friendly locker room.”

During my conversation with Troyano, I was particularly interested in List’s collaborative efforts with colleges and universities in locker room design. “Collaboration is at the core of what we do,” he said, “especially when it comes to collegiate athletics. We regularly partner with architects, general contractors, and school officials to bring locker room visions to life, whether it’s retrofitting an existing space or starting fresh with new construction.”

Troyano explains what this collaborative process looks like in action. “Often conversations begin at national trade shows or through our extensive dealer network. From there, we dive into the specific needs of each program—whether it’s maximizing space, boosting functionality, or creating a more inspiring environment for athletes. Each project is tailored because no two teams—or locker rooms—are the same.”

I asked Troyano about List’s recent collaborations with higher ed institutions. He cited three standout examples: the company’s work with Western Illinois University, Tulane University, and Furman University. “We were honored to help revamp their locker rooms, and we did so across multiple sports programs,” he said. “Each team had its own set of requirements, from sport-specific storage solutions to personal touches that make the players feel at home, which itself is no small thing.”

I was intrigued by this last detail. Troyano explained: “A student-athlete often spends four years with the same locker. For many, it becomes more than a space. It becomes a second home. At List, we take great pride in creating environments [which] reflect that significance.” This serves as but one example of why List stands out among its competitors—the company hasn’t lost sight of the human component. For a student-athlete, a locker is no arbitrary object. It embodies meaning, serving not only as an emblem of the student-athlete’s success and hard work, but as an extension of the user’s personality and values. As a social space, the locker room signifies teamwork and togetherness; the individual locker, by a similar logic, is personalized, a signifier of the self within the larger network of a team.

### Best Practices for Planning Athletic Spaces

Troyano understands that launching a project comprised of locker and shelving installation isn’t straightforward for everyone. He offered advice about how to approach any project. “Think of it like planning a great outfit,” he said. “You need the right measurements before you can start tailoring.” As an outsider to the world of locker- and shelf-design, I appreciate how Troyano makes what may seem daunting entirely manageable: “The first step in any successful locker or shelving project is a detailed drawing of the space. That means measuring everything, from walls and doorways to light switches, electrical outlets, even those often-overlooked markerboards. These details are the foundation of a smooth installation, and they help prevent surprises down the road. And here’s a golden rule we live by: pictures are worth a thousand words. Snapping a few photos of the space gives our team a much clearer idea of what’s needed. We can then ensure your locker room or

storage area ends up being functional and stylish in the ways you’d like.”

On the subjects of design and installation, Troyano offered additional advice. “When it comes to athletic locker rooms, not all are created equal. At List, our Metal, Wood, and Phenolic Open Front Lockers are the go-to for team environments. The choice of material comes down to the sport and the school’s budget. No matter the selection, we’re committed to combining durability with thoughtful design.”

I asked about List’s VersaSport Open Front Phenolic Locker, which Troyano cited as one of the company’s “most exciting innovations.” The model has quickly become a favorite on college campuses. He explained why: “For one, it’s unbeatable for its toughness combined with a sleek, modern aesthetic,” Troyano said. “Phenolic resin is incredibly durable. It’s ideal for the kind of wear-and-tear that high-performance athletes require, and it’s naturally resistant to mold, bacteria—even vandalism. But toughness doesn’t mean sacrificing style.”

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List's VersaSport line adds a layer of aesthetic sophistication. "The Formica laminate overlays [allow] schools to customize their lockers with bold team colors or elegant woodgrain finishes. You can even add built-in LED lighting and USB/110V outlets. Suddenly, a locker becomes more than just a storage space—it becomes a personal hub for today's student-athletes."

In several ways, List Industries works to stay ahead of the game with respect to a campus' sports-related needs. For Troyano, lockers are instrumental to the athletic experience. "As a global leader in locker solutions," he said, "we offer an unmatched variety of styles and materials, including metal, wood, melodic, and HDPE plastic." Whether it's a cutting-edge collegiate locker room or a busy public fitness center, List provides the flexibility to adapt to any facility's needs.

For Troyano, it's hard to overstate the importance of flexibility, because different sports "absolutely demand" different designs. "Athletes don't all play—or store gear—in the same way. Take football, for example. Larger players with those shoulder pads and helmets require extra-wide lockers." Lacrosse poses its own unique needs: "We've

got to accommodate everything from 40" attackmen sticks to 72" defensive poles." With basketball, the players "tend to favor open lower shelving to showcase their high-top sneakers [because] sneaker style is a big part of the culture." List works closely with coaches, athletic directors, and equipment managers to tailor every locker layout to match the team's personality and practical needs. Echoing his previous insight about locker spaces as signifiers of identity, Troyano was quick to stress that lockers "reflect the heart and identity of the team that calls them home." List's coast-to-coast network of experienced dealers work closely with higher ed institutions, in addition to architects, to ensure that the most recent trends are incorporated.

### **Catering to Campus-Wide Needs and Values**

List Industries' products can be found across campuses, making the day-to-day work of campus life easier for everyone. From recreation centers to faculty lounges, employee locker rooms, and even gender-inclusive changing areas, List's lockers serve a wide range of spaces well beyond athletics. Prioritizing the needs of the individual, Troyano considers how essential it is that





lockers create a sense of security in a busy campus setting. “For students, they’re a personal space [used to] stash valuables between classes or workouts. And for schools, they’re a practical tool that helps reduce theft and keep campus life running smoothly.”

List’s Safety-View Lockers are a standout favorite among higher ed institutions. They feature high-strength, injection-molded polycarbonate doors, and the lockers offer clear content visibility without compromising durability. They’re ideal for environments where transparency is key, allowing staff to quickly and discreetly verify what’s being stored while maintaining privacy and personal space. “At List Industries, we know that every campus has its own unique set of concerns. That’s why we offer a wide range of secure storage options designed to adapt to virtually any setting—from high-traffic areas to spaces where added oversight is essential. It’s all about giving schools peace of mind while creating safe and functional spaces.”

List is also alert to students’ increasing desire for sustainable products: “We source raw materials here in the U.S., and all recycled content information is available on our website. Depending on location, the project may be eligible for local sourcing credits. Plus, most of our products are Greenguard Gold certified, meaning they meet the highest standards for clean air quality.”

Over the course of our conversation, List Industries’ commitment to its core values was evident. The company applies these values to deliver specialized service and custom-designed lockers and cabinets for individual customer needs. They ensure every finished project fits clients’ functional, aesthetic, and operational priorities.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Dr. David

Vinson has a PhD in English with

specializations in transatlantic literature and cultural studies. He is a committed scholar, teacher, and dad. If you ever meet David, avoid the subject of soccer. His fandom borders on the truly obnoxious.



## IMMERSED IN CAMPUS LIFE

# Integrating Aquatic Facilities into College Recreation Programs

BY ED BAUER

When done right, aquatic facilities on private college and university campuses serve far more than just swim teams. From promoting student wellness and engagement to enhancing recruitment, retention, and even academic performance, a well-integrated aquatic facility can become a vibrant hub of campus life. To realize this potential takes more than opening the pool doors and waiting for students to dive in. It requires deliberate planning, targeted programming, smart facility design, and creative marketing. As institutions face increasing pressure to provide high-impact, wellness-centered recreation opportunities, many are successfully integrating aquatic spaces into broader campus recreation programs. Here's how they're doing it—and how your institution can follow suit.



## The Strategic Role of Aquatic Facilities in Student Life

Wellness, community, and mental health are now critical pillars of student life—and aquatic centers, when properly programmed and promoted, can support all three.

According to the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA), students who participate in recreational programs—including aquatics—report higher levels of satisfaction with their college experience and show stronger retention rates. They also benefit physically, mentally, and socially. Water is a natural equalizer, offering a joint-friendly, calming, and inclusive space that accommodates all fitness levels.

Beyond lap swim and swim lessons, forward-thinking institutions are reimaging aquatic centers as central gathering spaces: places where students can relax, train, socialize, or rehabilitate from injuries. From log-rolling competitions and water basketball to aquatic yoga and scuba classes, there are dozens of ways to activate an aquatic center.

## Begin with Purpose: Define Your Facility's Mission

Before diving into new programming, define how the aquatic facility fits into your institution's broader mission. Is your goal to support competitive swimming? Improve student wellness? Offer therapeutic programming? Serve the local community? Support academic courses such as kinesiology or lifeguard training?

At Butler University in Indianapolis, the Health and Recreation Complex (HRC) integrates its aquatic offerings into a holistic wellness mission. The HRC pool supports everything from fitness swims and group exercise classes to CPR and lifeguard training, tying into both recreational and academic goals.

Your mission statement should help determine pool features, staffing levels, partnerships, and budgets. The more integrated your vision, the easier it is to justify the investment and attract participation across multiple departments.

## Designing for Engagement: Build the Right Space

If your campus is in the planning or renovation stages, architectural design plays a critical role in how successfully your aquatic facility can be used across campus life. The most effective spaces balance competition-level function with flexibility for recreational and therapeutic use.

The University of St. Thomas in Minnesota recently completed a renovation of its aquatic facility that includes both a 25-yard competition pool and a separate leisure pool with warmer water, a whirlpool, and accessible entry. This dual-purpose approach allows the facility to serve varsity athletics, student recreation, and community partnerships without compromise.

Key design considerations include:

- **Depth variation:** Deeper water accommodates diving and water fitness, while shallower water supports therapy and games.
- **Accessibility:** Ramps, lifts, and zero-entry access make the space inclusive for all.
- **Visibility:** Consider adding pool-facing windows or open sightlines into adjacent rec centers to increase visibility and curiosity.
- **Technology:** Timing systems, digital signage, and pool automation enhance functionality and appeal.

Even small changes can dramatically increase usability. Heated water, flexible hours, and comfortable locker rooms create a more welcoming environment for first-time and casual users.

## Develop Creative and Inclusive Programming

A well-designed facility is only as impactful as its programming. Successful campuses build diverse aquatics calendars to meet a variety of student needs.

1. **Group fitness in the water.** Aquatic fitness classes are popular among students who may not be drawn to traditional gym settings. Consider adding classes such as aqua Zumba, deep-water aerobics, water yoga or pilates, or resistance training with water dumbbells. These programs can be marketed as

low-impact, high-benefit alternatives to land-based classes—especially attractive during high-stress times like midterms and finals.

2. **Recreational Games and Competitions.** Fun and novelty go a long way in attracting student engagement. Examples include inner tube water polo, battleship with canoes, and log rolling—popular at Indiana University and Virginia Commonwealth University. Float nights with movies on poolside screens are another creative, crowd-pleasing offering. Student organizations can also sponsor themed events or friendly competitions between dorms, sororities and fraternities, or academic cohorts.
3. **Swim lessons and certifications.** Offering learn-to-swim classes, Red Cross certifications, and scuba diving classes (as provided by Barry University in Miami) not only generate revenue but support student safety and life skills. Many college students arrive with little or no swim training, and filling this gap can be a key contribution to student wellness.
4. **Recovery and wellness use.** Aquatic therapy and hydro-recovery programs are increasingly common, especially when partnered with campus health or athletic training departments. Pools offer a great setting for mindfulness activities, post-injury rehab, or stress-reducing movement.

## Staff and Student Leadership

No recreation program thrives without strong leadership—and aquatics is no exception. Student employees often serve as lifeguards, swim instructors, and program assistants. These positions develop real-world skills in leadership, communication, and crisis response.

Many campuses build peer-to-peer wellness roles into aquatics programs. For example, the University of Richmond employs student-led wellness ambassadors to promote pool-based events and encourage underrepresented populations to participate.

To ensure quality, offer certification reimbursement, ongoing training, and opportunities for advancement. A motivated student aquatics team can become your best



marketing tool.

### Collaborate Across Campus

An aquatic facility succeeds when it transcends its physical space and becomes a shared resource across departments. Build partnerships to extend the reach and impact of your programming:

- **Athletics:** Coordinate with varsity and club teams for shared scheduling, event hosting, and marketing.
- **Health services:** Collaborate on stress relief events, recovery programs, or mental health campaigns.
- **Academic departments:** Offer kinesiology, sports management, or public health classes that use the pool for labs or practicums.
- **Residence life:** Co-sponsor wellness challenges or pool parties with housing staff.
- **Admissions and advancement:**

Showcase the aquatic facility in campus tours and donor campaigns to highlight student engagement.

Campus-wide collaboration positions the aquatic facility as an essential asset rather than a niche offering.

### Market with Intention

Aquatic programming can sometimes suffer from the misconception that “pools are just for swimmers.” To fight this, successful institutions launch active marketing efforts to reposition aquatic spaces as places for everyone.

Key marketing strategies include:

- **Social media:** Share short videos of aquatic fitness classes, pool parties, or staff spotlights.
- **Campus events:** Set up pop-up booths during orientations, welcome weeks, or health fairs with giveaways and sign-up

opportunities.

- **Visual prompts:** Install screens or chalkboards in campus rec areas with daily pool schedules, photos, or QR codes to register.
- **Ambassador programs:** Leverage student leaders to encourage their networks to participate in aquatic events.

The University of Puget Sound hosts an annual “Glow Swim” with black lights and neon floaties, generating buzz and first-time visitors. These experiences often turn casual participants into regulars.

### Measure and Adapt

Integration isn’t a one-time event. Use metrics to assess the success of your aquatics programming and adjust based on feedback.

Metrics might include:

- Attendance counts for different types



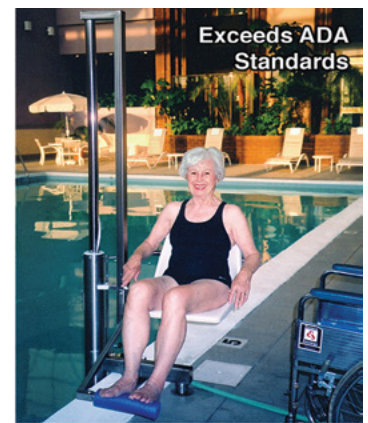
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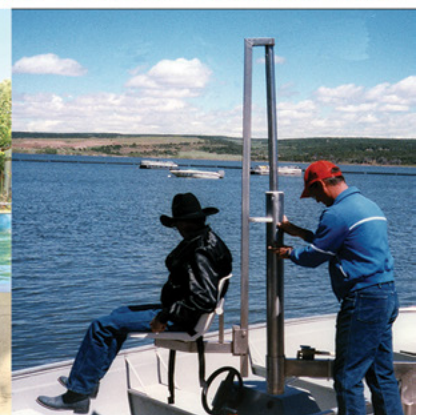
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of swim sessions

- Utilization by different student groups (tracked via ID scans)
- Revenue generated from lessons or special events
- Participant satisfaction surveys

Use this data to refine offerings, adjust staffing, and advocate for budget support. Make it a point to highlight how aquatic use contributes to broader institutional goals—like retention, inclusion, and student satisfaction.

### Success Story: Emory University's Student Success Through Aquatics

At Emory University in Atlanta, the Woodruff P.E. Center's aquatic facility is central to the university's recreation program. By partnering with Emory's Campus Life Division, the aquatics staff co-hosts weekly "Swim & Study" nights during finals, combining relaxation with academic focus

in a calming environment. The facility also offers inclusive "Women's Only Swim" hours, aquatic wellness programming, and collaborative events with cultural organizations.

Their integrated approach has turned what might be seen as a specialized space into one of the most inclusive and popular components of campus recreation—proof that when aquatic facilities are intentionally programmed, they can serve the entire student population.

### Make a Splash that Lasts

Incorporating your aquatic facility into the campus recreation program is not just about filling pool time—it's about deepening student engagement, enhancing wellness, and creating a stronger sense of community. By offering diverse programming, prioritizing inclusivity, collaborating across departments, and listening to student feedback, you can transform your pool into a cornerstone of campus life.

As students increasingly look for colleges that support their whole selves—mind, body, and community—campuses that maximize their aquatic facilities will find themselves not just keeping up, but leading the way.

---

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Ed Bauer has been in publishing for over twenty years. He worked on the staff at Mount Union College.

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