

Village of Orland Park NEWS RELEASE

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Centennial Park Aquatic Center Closes 2009

with Three Five-Star Awards

Orland Park's Pool Staff Lauded for Perfect Season

ORLAND PARK, IL – The nearly 150 lifeguards at the Village of Orland Park Centennial Park Aquatic Center (CPAC) will forever remember the summer of 2009 as the “perfect summer.” This year’s staff earned three Five Star Awards, namely three perfect national audits, for its 2009 season.

The Starfish Aquatics Institute (SAI) awarded Orland Park’s village water park its third Five Star Award following a risk management audit on August 18. “Very few aquatic facilities qualify to receive this honor,” said Leslie Donovan, president of SAI. “It represents a tremendous commitment to safety and training and exceptional performance by the lifeguard staff on duty at that time,” she noted.

The Starfish Aquatics Institute’s StarGuard Lifeguard Certification Program provides pool, water park, and restricted waterfront lifeguards skills exceeding nationally recognized standards. Using an integrated curriculum of emergency skills, StarGuard lifeguards are trained to protect life or prevent further injury until emergency medical personnel arrive.

“Safety is everyone’s number one objective at the Centennial Park Aquatic Center,” said Village Trustee Patricia Gira who chairs the village’s Parks, Recreation and Environmental Initiatives Committee. “Having a national safety organization test and then honor our guards is a tribute to the hard work these kids do every summer,” Gira said.

SAI is one of the largest lifeguard, swim instructor and pool operator certifying agencies in the United States. The institute offers state of the art training courses and provides risk management services for the aquatic industry. Orland Park’s honor was accepted by Facility Manager Kendra Will and Assistant Managers Erica Amoni and Will Seidelmann.

Swimming facilities are tested on a surprise basis with the auditor hiding outside of the facility, secretly video taping the lifeguards. While the guards supervise the pool from their chairs, the auditor evaluates and grades the guards' performances. The auditor studies how often the guards' heads turn, scanning the pool from left, center and right, observes rotation changes and confirms that guards have hydration and shade. Once the hidden audit is completed, the auditor's presence is announced. The auditor then selects guards, team leaders and squad leaders to respond to mock emergency scenarios.

"CPAC staff work hard every day to ensure that the village's patrons enjoy a safe environment," said Director of Recreation Nancy Flores. "The Centennial guards have received a well deserved achievement and it validates the hard work and dedication that goes into making the Centennial Park Aquatic Center such a wonderful family destination," Flores added.

Centennial guards that contributed to the village's most recent award included Lauren Nicholson, Jessica Lahey, Kevin Seidelmann, Dan Carney, Kristen Miller, Matt Stumpf, Amanda Price, J.T. Lipke, Ryan McVickers, Jessica Slaviero, Squad Leader Kellee Vopelak and Amoni.

Recreation Department Facility Administrator Ray Piattoni is the full-time staff person who supervises the aquatic center. "The staff at Centennial was extremely excited to receive its third Five-Star Award of the summer" Piattoni said.

"CPAC guards have worked hard all summer to create a safe environment for pool patrons," Piattoni said, adding, "The success of these audits reflects the comprehensive nature of the in-service training the village's lifeguards complete on a daily basis."

Noting the continued safety training offered for the village's lifeguards, Assistant Pool Manager Will Seidelmann added, "Guards go through an intensive training program in April and May to get their certifications and then train continuously every day before their shifts."

Kendra Will serves as the manager of the Centennial Park Aquatic Center. "Our lifeguards take pride in their jobs. They come to work with a serious attitude, knowing that people's lives are in their hands. We are very fortunate to have the support of the village, its Police Department and the Orland Fire Protection District to help us continue our water safety education." Will added, "I am so proud of the hard work and dedication that the village's lifeguards have put forth to earn this national honor."

The village's Centennial Park Aquatic Center ended its eighteenth season on Labor Day, 2009, having debuted in 1992, during Orland Park's Centennial Celebration.

PERFECT SUMMER

The staff at the Village of Orland Park's Centennial Park Aquatic Center earned three perfect scores during the 2009 season, receiving national honors from the Starfish Aquatics Institute, one of the largest lifeguard, swim instructor and pool operator certifying agencies in the United States.