

347th RCS Salutes Four Seasons Health Club

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Four Seasons Health Club was presented an “Air Force Salutes” award April 25, recognizing their consistent and dedicated support to train future Air Force Battlefield Airmen.

Lt. Col. Scott Dutkus, 347th Recruiting Squadron commander, and Master Sgt. Michael Lear, 347th RCSF-Flight Chief in Bloomington, presented the award to Michelle Bernardi, aquatics manager, who accepted the award on behalf of Four Seasons.

“We gain a sense of pride and community to know that we help to prepare, train and screen potential military personnel who might defend our country,” said Dona Lenz, membership and marketing manager. “Plus, it’s a great example to our own members of motivated and dedicated individuals working so hard in our club.”

The fitness center first opened its doors to supporting Air Force recruits in 2012. As part of the partnership, recruits preparing to join the Air Force as Battlefield Airmen – pararescue, combat controller, and special operations weather – have the opportunity to work out at the gym free of charge, twice per week. This includes getting some hands-on instruction to improve their swim skills – a critical part of the Physical Assessment Skills Test, or PAST, recruits must take in order to enter one of these career specialties.

“I have received feedback from several Airmen that said this training was critical to excel in Basic Military Training,” Lear said. “And, in most cases placed them in the top 10 percent of trainees.”

Lear added that the training also gave them the “best shot physically” to succeed in their technical training following eight-and-a-half weeks of BMT.

Lear recalls one Airman in particular who didn’t know how to swim prior to joining as a combat controller.

“He stays in constant contact with me and says that he wouldn’t be where he is today if it wasn’t

for the pool availability and the dedication to teach him,” Lear added.

“The aquatics center and staff is phenomenal and without their support we wouldn’t be able to accomplish the recruiting mission as well.”

Lenz added that they [club staff] understand the significance and importance of a recruit’s physical growth to increase their chances when testing for these special operations career fields.

“We know that what we do today will make a difference tomorrow and opening doors to the Air Force’s recruiting needs will do just that,” Lenz said.



From top to bottom, Brett Watts, Austin Hobbs and Cole Graham do flutter kicks at the Four Seasons Health Club. Watts is a tactical air control party candidate, Hobbs is a pararescue candidate and Graham is a combat controller candidate. (U.S. Air Force photo)



Master Sgt. Michael Lear and Lt. Col. Scott Dutkus of the 347th Recruiting Squadron present a Salutes plaque to Michelle Bernardi and Jeff Levert of Four Seasons Health Club in Bloomington, Ill. (U.S. Air Force photo)