



COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY – STUDENT RECREATION CENTER

Date opened: **August 2010**
 Student population: **24,000 undergrads, 3,000 graduate**
 Building: **LEED Gold Certified**
 Total area: **160,000 square feet, including pool area**
 Visitors to Center: **5,000 per day/556,000 annually**
 Equipment: **Over 300 cardio machines**

Website: www.colostate.edu

Sport Architecture
 (USA)

WITH 40-FOOT, TWIN CLIMBING WALLS GREETING VISITORS AT THE FACILITY ENTRANCE, THE COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY (CSU) STUDENT RECREATION CENTER IN FORT COLLINS IS DRAWING VISITORS LIKE NEVER BEFORE. OVER 175,000 SQUARE FEET OF SPACE WITH MULTIPLE SPORTING ACTIVITIES OFFERS MANY WAYS TO GET HEALTHY AND STAY FIT, ALL WITH A STUNNING VIEW OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS. ON AVERAGE, THE CENTER REGISTERS 5,000 VISITS PER DAY.

“Students made this beautiful building possible, and we are grateful to them for their foresight and leadership,” says **Judy Muenchow**, executive director of Campus Recreation. “The center is not only a wonderful resource for the entire campus community but a great recruitment tool for prospective students and faculty. The renovations allow us to continue to offer healthy options in supporting student success with a well-rounded college experience.”

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

“This is a comprehensive recreation center and is an all-in-one facility,” says Dave Frock, director, campus recreation. “It has the main gym, four workout studios, the indoor Mondo track, a secondary gym that is a multi-activity center, or MAC, the cardio-weight center that is just under 25,000 square feet, and the swimming pool.”

The entrance lobby acts as a gathering area, with a juice bar and meeting spaces. In addition to the climbing walls, there are boulders and caves for exploration.

The swimming area has a lap lane pool as well as a leisure pool. It also has another climbing wall with a waterfall, sauna/steam room, a 40-person spa, a lazy river, a basketball/volleyball area, and bubblers for small children to play and splash.

“The cardio/weight room is the area that draws the most people,” says Frock. “This section has multiple pieces of equipment and amazing views of the mountains. Users can either enjoy the view or use one of 40 pieces of equipment that have cable television or internet. There is every type of modality to do a workout.”

STUDENTS IN CHARGE



"We do more than open the doors and let people work out – we consider ourselves educators," says Frock. "Our co-curricular activities include having the Center staffed by 350 student employees. As management, our job is to work with them to develop job skills and professional development for their futures that align with their majors as much as possible. We do practicums and internships, and offer leadership series for our student employees. This results in a tiered management structure so the students run the building and we just guide them."

THE GAME OF LIFE

CSU Student Recreation Center offers far more than just fitness options for the participants. "We provide health and wellness information, and services where we train people to do progressive exercise in a healthy, safe way," says Frock. Other activities include wellness fairs and multi-level health-oriented presentations. "We also do intramural programs that teach sportsmanship as a number one priority. This is a life skill that students can use in real world situations so they don't become the irate person challenging umpires or coaches at games. We consider ourselves in alignment with students' lives so we help create positive citizens in our society."

STYLE AND FUNCTION IN HARMONY

When the renovation plans began, a significant effort was made to create an environmentally sound structure. The design team developed an exterior image that met the CSU Student Recreation Center's exterior master plan standards by addressing the following elements: building revitalization, safety, landscaping, outdoor lighting and **Gold LEED certification**. The cost of energy within the new building is less than before the renovation, despite an addition of 70,000 square feet.

A number of initiatives were included to enhance not only the energy efficiency of the building, but also to provide a feeling of safety and relaxing aesthetics for those who use the campus. "The type of outdoor lighting we installed reduces light pollution while providing safe transit," says **Mark Keane**, project designer with **Hastings+Chivetta Architects**. "We added windows in the building for natural lighting wherever possible and used sustainable landscape to enhance the University's Green Corridor."

From the start of the project, the university management and architecture team aimed to create both a functional and exciting interior experience for users. Materials and finishes, chosen for their durability and warmth, were used throughout the new and renovated portions of the facility. The overall effect was to blend the existing facilities with the new, unifying the entire structure without old/new demarcations.

BUILT FOR THE LONG RUN

Dave Frock and his associate director have both had experience with Mondo products and decided early on that this was the best product for the CSU Student Recreation Center. "We wanted to be able to make sure we had the industry leader for the weight room area and the running track," says Frock. "When we were dealing with the volume of rubber flooring required for the student recreation center, I felt Mondo gave us a sense of security that the company would stand behind their product."

They also installed Mondo in two side studios. "One is the cycling studio where we installed brown rubber flooring to simulate dirt or road conditions visually. The space is tiered so the people on the back row can see the instructor. It has black lights, which creates an interesting effect."

DESIGN FREEDOM

Keane's experience in architecture had included over 35 recreation centers, but he says the team was allowed a refreshing amount of freedom on this design. "Most projects blend in with the campus, but with the CSU project, we were able to create an exterior design that stood out. The slopes at the entrance with a peaked roof created a unique flair to the building as it was built to house the climbing walls and bouldering with caves. It has a freestanding pinnacle that was modeled after the Horsetooth rock outcropping that is near Fort Collins." He is also pleased with the landscaping on this job. "It's actually one of the more extensive exteriorscapes that we have had done on one of our projects, using the skills of Jim Sells Design in Fort Collins, Colorado. There is a small boulder on the outside of the building to reflect the structure at the entry." All of the planting used sustainable pieces for low water consumption. The Student Recreation Center at Colorado State University has made its mark on the state's education world, with a significant increase in admissions in the last year. "The amount of tours and visitors that come through our facilities is incredible," says Frock. "This works well for the school's efforts to attract and retain students and faculty. Since this facility opened, we now have increased number of applications for our university in the state of Colorado. This may not be directly related to the rec center, but it seems to be a factor."



