

Columbia Association Aquatics Department Earns Certified Autism Center™ Designation to Enhance Accessibility Offering

Columbia Association Aquatics Department (CA) is the first of its kind in Maryland to earn the Certified Autism Center™ (CAC) designation.

COLUMBIA, MARYLAND, UNITED STATES, May 21, 2024

/EINPresswire.com/ -- The International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES) is proud to announce that [Columbia Association Aquatics Department](#) (CA) becomes the first of its kind in Maryland to earn the [Certified Autism Center™](#) (CAC) designation. This recognition signifies the department's commitment to building inclusive spaces and programs for autistic and sensory-sensitive individuals and their families. The team

completed a comprehensive training and certification process to better understand and welcome these community members. Additionally, IBCCES conducted an onsite review to provide the department with valuable insights on further enhancing their facilities and implementing detailed sensory guides as part of the certification process.

“This is a meaningful step toward better serving individuals with autism that we’re incredibly proud of,” says CA Aquatics Director Matt Helfrich. “IBCCES is recognized around the world as a leading benchmark for autism training and certification. This accreditation is another way that CA is working to prioritize accessibility and ensure that all families in Columbia feel fully welcome and supported in our spaces.”

In addition to their training and certification, all 23 CA pools have a comprehensive sensory guide, which helps prepare children and families for their experience and the impact on their senses. Each pool is also equipped with sensory bags, which include noise-canceling



headphones, water sensory timers and fidget toys.

For the past eight years, CA has partnered with the Autism Society of Maryland to provide autism awareness training for its 300+ lifeguards and managers. This partnership has been instrumental in equipping the team with a deeper understanding of the autism community and the critical need for water safety.

"At the Autism Society of Maryland, we know how important it is for families to feel welcome and comfortable when they leave the familiarity of home," Autism Society of Maryland Executive Director Melissa Rosenberg said. "We are proud to work with CA to ensure facilities across Columbia provide a safe, inclusive space."



Additionally, CA is proud to support families with neurodivergent members by designating Macgill's Commons Pool as a sensory-friendly pool this summer. As part of this effort, CA lifeguards also permit autistic children to remain in the pool during adult swim (with advanced notice and under the supervision of an accompanying adult).

“

This accreditation is another way that CA is working to prioritize accessibility and ensure that all families in Columbia feel fully welcome and supported in our spaces.”

CA Aquatics Director Matt Helfrich

"Water safety and comfort in aquatic settings is so important for all community members, but especially those who are autistic. We're thrilled to partner with Columbia Association to make their aquatic offerings more welcoming for autistic and sensory-sensitive individuals," shares Myron Pincomb, board chairman of IBCCES.

For more than 20 years, IBCCES has been the leader in autism, neurodiversity, and cognitive disorder training and certification for health care, education, and corporate professionals around the globe. IBCCES created programs for a variety of industries, so staff would be more knowledgeable and other accommodations could be offered to this growing, but underserved, part of the community. IBCCES is the only credentialing board offering these types of programs, which include training from subject-matter experts and autistic self-advocates, as well as long-term support and continuous learning, onsite reviews and more.

IBCCES also created [AutismTravel.com](https://www.autismtravel.com) as a free online resource for parents that lists certified locations and professionals. Each organization listed on the site has met Certified Autism Center™ (CAC) requirements.

###

About Columbia Association

Columbia Association (CA) is and has always been here to enhance the quality of life in Columbia. We are committed to the founding goals of this unique and diverse community: stewardship, wellness and inclusion. To achieve this, CA owns and manages a wide array of spaces, facilities and programs that foster authentic connection. We hope you'll find your own way to engage with us and work toward an even brighter future. Visit ColumbiaAssociation.org for more information. Together, #WeAreColumbia.

About IBCCES

Committed to providing the global standard for training and certification in the field of cognitive disorders – IBCCES provides a series of certifications that empower professionals to be leaders in their field and improve the outcomes for the individuals they serve. These programs are recognized around the world as the leading benchmark for training and certification in the areas of autism and other cognitive disorders.

Meredith Tekin

IBCCES

+1 904-508-0135

marketing@ibcces.org

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/713096325>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.