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Fitness Management

ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS FOR FITNESS FACILITIES

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WINNING INNOVATIONS

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[BY AMY SCANLIN, M.S.]

TELOS PERFORMANCE CENTER

Dallas, Texas

Innovation: Team TELOS Training

TELOS (TEL-AUS): Greek word meaning completeness; to set out a definite goal; to accomplish a mission; the end to which all things relate. This definition accurately fits the TELOS Performance Center in Dallas, Texas, for members and employees alike. You may remember that, last year, TELOS won a Nova7Award for facility design. This year, it did it again, with its innovative employee or, as TELOS calls it, team member, training. From customer service skills to exercise science, the team members at TELOS are redefining the fitness experience.

To ensure customer satisfaction, fitness centers must also ensure employee loyalty, knowledge and satisfaction. TELOS does this through a comprehensive training program targeted to all employees, from interns to management. "There are four primary goals for the program," says Brent Darden, co-owner and general manager. Those are "1) Build continuity,

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common purpose and teamwork among the staff; 2) support our concept of 'integration' by sharing education and information between departments; 3) provide leadership training for supervisors; and 4) equip all staff members with knowledge and direction to best serve members and guests."

The preparation and delivery of this training is extensive. Classes include topics such as Traditions Training, which is an orientation for all employees that focuses on the mission and core values of the facility, as well as the employee's role in the organization; Fitness Management 101, aimed toward employees and interns interested in pursuing a career in management of fitness facilities; Fitness Services Continuing Education, which offers a monthly indepth analysis of exercises and proper form, biomechanics and the latest research in fitness; Fitness Services Integration, where different departments come together to discuss terminology to ensure all are speaking the same language to members and to foster referrals to help clients achieve their goals; and Leadership Training,



which reviews popular management books, as well as basic tools for giving reviews, empowering employees and leadership styles.

Team TELOS Training differs from other management training programs in that it is so extensive at all levels. "Most employees want to feel that they belong, feel that they make a difference in the success of the company and feel that they have an opportunity to improve themselves through continuing education," says Darden. "This training program provides a foundation for each of these aspirations, and has helped make TELOS the employer of choice in a highly competitive area."

This highly competitive area includes the world-renowned Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research, an organization that TELOS partners with to provide external trainings and certifications for its employees in hopes of encouraging the pursuit of higher learning. It also partners with Power Pilates of New York.

"New and long-term employees appreciate the investment of time and resources that the club makes to assist them," says Darden. "There is no doubt that this training program [is] ... a major reason for TELOS' success." **FM**

Amy Scanlin is a program manager for L&T Health and Fitness, Falls Church, Va. She has a master's degree in health promotion management, has certifications through ACSM, ACE and the Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research, and she has facilitated health promotion programs both at home and abroad.