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Water Fitness/Pilates

Fitness Making Waves at Fort Monroe

Water fitness classes at Fort Monroe, Va., have grown tremendously in size and frequency over the years, catering to the needs of a diverse community. Aquatics Programs Manager Michael J. Carlomany and his staff continue to offer water fitness programs that appeal to all ages and fitness abilities, from shallow- and deep-water aerobics to Poolates — an internationally trademarked method of Pilates in the pool.

"Ages range from 20 to 80," says Carlomany, although the majority of participants are women and seniors.

Drawing up to 50 people per day, all of the water fitness classes are popular, and Carlomany looks forward to introducing a Step and Poolates class in the fall.

Fort Monroe is planning its first Poolates instructor training class in October, led by the creator of Poolates, Rebecca "Boo" Pfeiffer, JD, MPH, a certified Pilates instructor and certified personal trainer. Pfeiffer, who spends the majority of her business time developing Poolates instructors, notes that there are many benefits to Pilates in the pool.

"Poolates is an extension of land-based Pilates, almost like the pool is an additional piece of Pilates apparatus," she explains. "The aquatic environment enhances flexibility, and is a safe place for balance training, which is crucial for injury prevention. Poolates also provides a safe exercise for people who have or are at risk for osteoporosis. At the other end of the spectrum, the water is the most challenging environment on Earth for stability training; we offer Extreme Poolates for athletes and others who need every extra split second of balance."

Poolates is the only internationally recognized instructor training and licensure program for water-based Pilates, notes Pfeiffer, and offers intense core training, flexibility, stability and balance work — all based on the Pilates principles of concentration, centering, breath, control, precision and awareness.

With Pfeiffer leading the Fort Monroe Poolates instructor training class in October, Carlomany is looking forward to taking the training himself along with some members from his own staff.

"I have great expectations for the fall instructor class," says Carlomany. Registration is open to anyone who wishes to participate, including but not limited to those in the civilian sector and Army-wide. "I hope to see a large turnout from the military services."

Fort Monroe has organized the class, but Carlomany hopes to set the standard for others to use as a benchmark. "I have not set a class schedule to date for the Poolates classes that will be offered here but they will be offered at our pool and I expect it to be very popular among our seniors."

—CJF

Poolates takes Pilates into the pool. It will be offered at Fort Monroe in the fall.

PHOTO COURTESY OF
REBECCA "BOO" PFEIFFER

