

New Reily Center pool and natatorium open to much excitement

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Tulane students, faculty and staff enjoy the natatorium opening at Tulane's Reily Student Recreation Center. Photo by Sabree Hill.

Tulanians wasted no time getting back into the swim of things when the pool and natatorium at the Reily Student Recreation Center reopened on Friday, Aug. 25. Students, faculty and staff were able to use the indoor pool for the first time since the renovation, and many took advantage of the new facility, jumping from the diving board, swimming laps and tossing beach balls.

At the grand reopening, Tulanians enjoyed refreshments, a wheel to spin for prizes and, of course, a newly renovated pool.

After swimming a few laps, freshman Mekonnen Sahle-Selassie said, “I’m excited to be somewhere that has a facility like this so I can swim whenever I want.”

As well as planned pool maintenance, the renovation included added depth for diving from a 3-meter board, new diving stands and starting blocks, new built-in stairs for improved ingress and egress, new lighting, and a state-of-the-art Mythra RenovAction pool surface. The project also features new filtration and sanitation with a UV system for improved water quality, new tile, deck, paint and graphics, and two new air-conditioning units for enhanced air quality and comfort. These upgrades ensure the pool meets all standards for Division I swimming and diving competitions.

“Whether you’re coming in to swim in the morning with swim team or you’re coming in late at night to get some laps in, it stays really nice,” said MacKenzie Kelley, a Tulane student and lifeguard with Campus Recreation. “Especially in this heat, it’s really refreshing.”

“I swam for my entire life until college,” said Maren Meier, another student lifeguard, “so I’m really happy it’s open now.”

On the sundeck, which is open to students year-round, community members enjoyed mocktails, fruit and ice cream in the shade and on rows of chairs as music played. Simona Trubin, a senior, grabbed some refreshments, then was quick to jump in the pool to swim some laps. She is thrilled to have access to a pool now. “I’ve been so excited about today!”

“I started swimming in kindergarten, so I really like swimming,” added Jiani Xu, a senior. “It’s nice for Reily to have such an amazing swimming pool.”

The renovation of the natatorium is part of a series of renovations happening across Tulane’s campuses, including the new Lake and River Residential Halls, a new Tulane University Police Department station on Broadway Street, and Steven and Jann Paul Hall for Science and Engineering, the future home of the School of Science and Engineering, which is scheduled to open this academic year.







Tulane student Mekonnen Sahle-Selassie smiles while stopping to catch his breath, while swimming laps in the natatorium. Photo by Sabree Hill.

Tulane students and student lifeguards at the natatorium opening. Photo by Sabree Hill.

Tulane students Jiani Xu and Wendy Liu enjoy cooling off during a swim in the natatorium. Photo by Sabree Hill