



Kernes Pool Marks 50 Years of Community Impact

BY RENEE BRINCKS

Past Board President Marsha Zeitlin, client Suzanne Brady, and current Board President Peter Bolton at the facility that has improved so many lives over the last 50 years.

Fifty years ago, a visionary Monterey swimming instructor created a one-of-a-kind community resource. Edith Perry had noticed how her students, mostly individuals with special needs, benefited from warm-water therapies. So, she heated her backyard pool and expanded her teaching menu.

The nonprofit Josephine Kernes Memorial Pool, named for Perry's mother, was updated in the early 1990s. Today, Kernes Adaptive Aquatics offers exercise programs for children and adults living with autism, cerebral palsy, post-surgery challenges, spinal cord injuries, age-related mobility loss and other conditions. The facility has a 92-degree pool, a lift and amenities tailored to nonambulatory individuals.

"For people who use wheelchairs, or those who find land-based exercises difficult or

impossible, this is an opportunity to have freedom of movement," says Lynn Young, the organization's executive director.

Health practitioners refer individuals to Kernes Pool, and services range from independent exercise to partially or fully assisted programs. Grants, community donations and scholarships support clients with limited financial resources.

Ongoing surveys show the facility's lasting impact: "About 85% of our clients report improved strength and overall health, and 100% report a better quality of life," Young says. "It's just a lovely place to get healthy, stay healthy, be strong and feel good about what you're able to accomplish."

For more information, or to support Kernes Adaptive Aquatics, visit www.kernespool.org or call 831/372-1240.