



An indoor go-kart track (left) and the Nuclear Rush spinning coaster (right) deliver thrills and family fun to guests at Scene75 in Columbus, Ohio. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON

## Making it big, Scene75 opens largest FEC location yet

AT: John W.C. Robinson  
jrobinson@amusementtoday.com

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The family entertainment center (FEC) marketplace is one of the fastest growing in the amusement industry. That very growth is what's paved the way for the **Scene75** entertainment center brand, which started with a single location in 2012 in Dayton, Ohio, to now open its fifth location just seven years later. Scene75 in Columbus, Ohio, opened in October after much anticipation.

Originally expanding from Dayton into the Cincinnati, Cleveland and Pittsburgh markets, the Columbus expansion of Scene75 marks the chain's largest center to date. Occupying a former **Macy's** anchor store in the **Tuttle Mall**, the two-floor complex is more than 225,000 square feet of entertainment options and family fun.

"We brand ourselves as operating the largest indoor entertainment centers in the country, so size is part of our strategy," said **Jonah Sandler**, who founded Scene75 with his father, **Les Sandler**. "But this is a large undertaking at the same time; [the former Macy's was an] unbelievable shell of a building for our uses."

Within the massive space, Scene75 has raised the bar of what an FEC can offer in variety. Outfitted with a cashless card system from **Embed**, being a home to more than 200 video games is only the beginning for the venue.

"We can have so many different components in our building that are taken from our years of learning," stated Sandler.

The facility boasts an indoor go-kart track (supplied

► See SCENE, page 8

## IAAPA's Orlando global headquarters officially opens, an attraction all its own

AT: David Fake  
Special to Amusement Today

ORLANDO — The amusement industry has a new must-see "attraction" in Orlando, the theme park capital of the world, with the opening of IAAPA's new global headquarters. While not the typical attraction for which Orlando is known, the new 22,000-square-foot facility that officially opened on September 27, is a beautifully and functionally designed home for the association's employees, as well as a home-away-from-home for its traveling members.

From outside IAAPA's headquarters, visitors will notice a unique architectural wave pattern adorning the

building designed to represent the dynamic attributes of the attractions industry. The door pulls of the main entrance incorporate IAAPA's logo with its eight multicolored triangles arranged in a circle representing the sum of its unique perspectives and how, when inspiring each other, its members move the attractions industry forward. Within the walls of the headquarters, the colorful triangles of the logo and its theme of diversity-forward takes shape in the murals on the walls and ceiling forming icons of the different aspects of the industry.

The building is also a museum, of sorts, with several historic industry artifacts on display throughout the facility. These

museum-class pieces include an original doll from **Walt Disney's It's a Small World** that was part of the attraction's original incarnation at the 1964 New York World's Fair and a carousel horse presented to IAAPA from **Dynamic Attractions** and **Chance Rides**.

While the headquarters does provide office space for more than three-quarters of IAAPA's 75 employees worldwide, this building is truly designed for the organization's 6,000+ member companies and their employees who represent more than 100 countries. This is evidenced by the dedication of more than half the build-

► See IAAPA, page 6



IAAPA officially opened its new Orlando, Florida, headquarters with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house event. Pictured during the ribbon cutting are (l to r): **Jerry Demings**, mayor, Orange County, Fla.; **David Rosenberg**, ICAE, chairman of the board IAAPA and vice president, Monterey Bay Aquarium; and **Hal McEvoy**, ICAE, president and CEO, IAAPA. AT/DAVID FAKE







# AMUSEMENT VIEWS

**AT NOTEBOOK:** Gary Slade, gslade@amusementtoday.com

## IAAPA's new HQ built for its membership



Slade

After three years of planning and hard work, IAAPA officially opened its beautiful new global headquarters building on September 27.

The spacious 22,000-square-foot facility is a short drive from the Orange County Convention Center (annual home to IAAPA's Expo) in Orlando. It is located on seven acres of land that was built to house the 50-plus IAAPA Orlando-based staff members.

What should not be overlooked is a trip to visit in person. According to IAAPA's top brass, the building was designed for its members, and to be used by its members. Inside, it features exclusive meeting rooms that are available for booking, special event space, workstations and even an electronic media/video production room. Outside, a spacious patio features a full kitchen and seating while overlooking the headwaters that become Florida's famous Everglades.

The IAAPA membership now has a home away from home when visiting the greater Orlando market. *Amusement Today* urges all IAAPA members to make time during this year's Expo to visit the new building, and, most of all, make plans in the future to use it, for meetings, your park or firm's special gathering or a place to come learn through IAAPA's interactive area and multimedia displays.

Congratulations to the IAAPA team for creating a beautiful new facility that the membership can enjoy for years to come.

Speaking of new facilities, construction is well underway in Plainview, Texas, on the new 10,000-square-foot expansion of the Mark Moore Memorial Wing of the National Roller Coaster Museum & Archives. The building's steel, walls and roof are completed with interior work scheduled next.

See building construction photos on page 93.

**FLINT'S VIEW:** Bubba Flint



**GUEST OPINION:** Reno Deschaine, VP, IAAPA Global Education & Member Services

### The power of learning

Some say success happens when preparation meets opportunity. And many credit lifelong learning with an endless spark of curiosity as fundamental to success. I think we all need a bit of both.

I am honored to be a part of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) team that focuses on providing educational opportunities to attractions industry professionals around the world. We strive to provide diverse events and programs year-round that inspire professionals to take the next step in their career, enhance their knowledge and skills, and learn from industry experts.

During the annual IAAPA Expo, we host our largest education conference of the year. For the 2019 event, we will have more than 100 educational experiences that include in-depth learning opportunities such as IAAPA Safety Institute and exclusive EDUTours around Orlando.

We are thrilled to have Christine Duffy, president of Carnival Cruise Line, as the keynote speaker during the GM and Owners' Breakfast. Christine will share how our industry plays an ever-increasing role



Deschaine

at her company. We also look forward to the session "Game Changer: Creativity is the New Attraction," featuring Vince Kadlubek, cofounder of the interactive experience-creating multimedia art collective Meow Wolf.

In addition, the "Young Professional: Welcome to the Industry Forum" will be a must-attend event for young professionals who are passionate about the industry.

While IAAPA Expo is truly our busiest week, IAAPA's educational work does not stop there. IAAPA members receive complimentary access to all IAAPA webinars all year long. In December, we will host our second virtual IAAPA Safety Institute. The IAAPA Certification program is a great way for members to track their participation in our education programs while also working toward earning professional achievement. If you don't know about IAAPA Certification, I invite you to learn more today. Please visit [iaapa.org/education](http://iaapa.org/education).

I am honored to help industry professionals further their careers through IAAPA's education programs. I encourage our members to look to IAAPA and the many ways we can help further their pathway to lifelong learning.

*Opinions expressed on this page are those of the columnist(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.*



*Amusement Today* is an independent, privately-owned trade newspaper published 14 times per year by Amusement Today Inc., P.O. Box 5427, Arlington, Texas 76005. Print issues are \$50 per year and are mailed Presort Standard Postage (permit No. 2069) Pre-Paid Fort Worth, Texas. The entire contents of this newspaper, and its related websites, are Copyrighted and Trademarked 2019 by Amusement Today Inc., all rights reserved.

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# **PARKS, FAIRS & ATTRACTIONS**

► Record-setting coasters coming to Florida — page 16 / Sesame Place San Diego announced — page 32

## Fun Spot America properties are growing with new attractions

AT: Pam Sherborne

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ORLANDO — Fun is what it is all about for **Fun Spot America Theme Parks**, and the company owners don't want that to stop. To stay on that roll, new experiences and attractions are added annually.

Fun Spot America Theme Parks currently has three parks in three different locations. There are two in Florida, Orlando and Kissimmee. The third and newest location is Atlanta, Georgia.

"Business has been great for all three parks," said **John Arie, Jr.**, park owner and CEO. "Atlanta is showing the biggest increases right now with all the new rides we have been adding up there. Since we have owned that property just over two years, we have added over a dozen new rides and millions of dollars in improvements."

Arie feels the popularity of the Orlando and Kissimmee parks speak for themselves.

"They are incredible and we have built such a great foundation in the Central Florida market," he said.

The family-owned and operated company has taken the success of the parks and rein-



The 100-foot-tall wheel by **Technical Park** (above left) is a recent addition to Fun Spot America Orlando, Florida. That location also recently added a new splash pad (top right) designed by **Martin Aquatic Design and Engineering** with water features supplied by **Vortex**. Fun Spot America's Kissimmee park plans to have its latest addition — a **Gosetto** five-story fun house (bottom right) — open in early November. COURTESY FUN SPOT AMERICA

vested into them to keep up the level of excitement.

The newest attractions at Fun Spot America Orlando is a splash pad and a 100-foot-tall wheel.

"We listen to our guests and what they want to see in our parks," Arie said. "The splash pad had been the number one request-

ed attraction for many years."

The splash pad was designed by **Martin Aquatic Design and Engineering** (formerly **Aquatic Design and Engineering**).

"The water features were supplied by **Vortex** (**Aquatic Structures**) and our amazing floor with a huge Fun Spot America embedded in it was supplied by **Life Floor**," Arie said. "They were all wonderful vendors to work with, and we would recommend them all for anyone looking to add a splash pad."

The next addition to Orlando was a new wheel. Manufactured by **Technical Park**, Arie said it has "a spectacular LED lighting package."

"Many of our guests say it's like watching a fireworks show," he said. "Each gondola lights up individually and all of the spokes on both sides light up as well. This has given us a great street view for our guests traveling by the park."

After installing the splash pad and wheel, construction

began on two new attractions at Fun Spot Kissimmee. Those include a three-story, American-themed fun house from **Gosetto** and a 52-foot tall **E&F Miler** Hi-Miler steel roller coaster.

"This fun house is so cool, with so many different features for not only the kids but the adults will love it, too," he said.

Hopes are to have this piece open by the first week in November, in time to showcase it to guests attending the **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo 2019**.

Fun Spot Kissimmee is the third home for the coaster. Its first location was **Celebration City**, a now shuttered park in Branson, Missouri. Its second was **Wild Adventures** in Valdosta, Georgia.

"We have not yet named it or themed it as we are allowing our guests to give us feedback on what they want the name and theme to be," Arie said.

The coaster has a triple out-and-back layout over 1,300 feet of

track and seating for six per train.

"We have a similar Hi-Miler coaster in Fun Spot Atlanta, so we know, with a 42-inch minimum height restriction, it will be fun for the whole family," Arie said, adding they hope to have the coaster operational by mid-November.

And if that wasn't enough, Arie said they purchased four kiddie rides from **Coney Island** in Cincinnati, Ohio, to go into Fun Spot Atlanta. Those rides are an **S&S Frog Hopper**, **Chance Rides** carousel, **SBF-Visa** swing ride and **Moser** drop tower.

"These kiddie rides should complete our kid spot in Atlanta," Arie said.

Fortunately, so far, the installation of all the new attractions at the three parks has not required the removal or relocation of any other rides. However, since the Orlando and Kissimmee locations are land-locked, that will likely change in the future, as the company is currently in the middle of master planning.

•fun-spot.com



Recently, Fun Spot America purchased this Hi-Miler roller coaster from **Wild Adventures** in Valdosta, Georgia, where this photo originated. The coaster is currently being installed at Fun Spot's Kissimmee, Florida, location. COURTESY FUN SPOT AMERICA

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# WATER PARKS & RECREATION

▶ 40 years of Schlitterbahn — page 60 / Great Wolf Lodge opens in Arizona — page 62

## Australia's Maze Sequoia Park transforms into Outback Splash

AT: Jeffrey Seifert  
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PERTH, Australia — Just in time for the summer season (down under), Perth's **Outback Splash** is set to open its new four-slide tower complex. Designed by **Polin Waterparks** of Turkey, the complex features two body slides and two raft slides, adding almost half a kilometer of waterslides to the park, including the fastest body slide in Western Australia.

The slides will run from a new six-story slide tower and were on track to make their debut on Nov. 20. According to **Paul Woodcock**, Outback Splash director, all the structural steel of the slide tower was completely assembled by August and all the fiberglass was onsite. He stated, "We will soon see the mammoth task of lifting and installing almost half a kilometer of fiberglass waterslides. We are working with the ongoing support of the **WA Health Department**, our safety specialists and a world-class international engineering team."

Woodcock added, "We are proud to expand our range of attractions here, which will increase the park's appeal for visitors of all ages."

The Wedgie, one of the tallest in all of Australia, will offer thrill-seekers an adrenaline-filled plunge with a near-vertical drop in an open tube. Single riders will achieve a speed of up to 47 mph as they plummet feet-first down the slide.

Gold Rush pays homage to Western Australia's mining history. Also for solo riders, this enclosed tube will take guests on their own "gold rush" as they careen at up to 38 mph through multiple twists and turns in a gold-colored translucent body slide.

Two people can experience Blackout together. Starting out



**Outback Splash is going after the thrill-seeker market with a new slide complex from Polin. A colorful array of stripes awaits riders who challenge Blackout (far right).**

COURTESY

OUTBACK SPLASH; POLIN

true to its name, the enclosed tube raft slide will begin with a pitch-black section, but then suddenly surprise riders with a dazzling display of colorful translucent stripes and other special lighting effects.

The fourth attraction is one of the more popular slides from the Polin catalogue — a Turbolance. Dubbed The Wall, it will be the first of its kind in Western Australia. Riders aboard a two-person raft will meander in an enclosed tube with special lighting effects similar to Blackout, but with slower acceleration. As the raft bursts into daylight, riders will suddenly plunge down a steep drop, only to be met by "the wall," where they climb almost 30 feet up a near-vertical open fiberglass section. Eventually

losing momentum, riders will experience weightlessness as the raft reverses direction. It then traverses back down the wall, pops over a speed bump and terminates into a splashy runoff.

Along with the enhancements to the property comes a new name. The water park formerly known as Outback Splash at the Maze was a part of **The Maze Sequoia Park**. The combined park will now be called Perth's Outback Splash. The entire complex features the expanded seasonal water park and several attractions that are open year-round such as mazes, miniature golf and a children's playground, as well as some unique animal encounters. The park, which opened in 1981,

originally gained attention with its 27,000-square-foot timber labyrinth and now includes a hedge maze, tractor tire maze, two brain-teaser mazes and, for the little ones, a tangle maze. Guests also have the opportunity to experience encounters with koalas, emus, kangaroos and wombats. The Splash Island waterslide playground made its debut in 2013 and three years later Octopus Bay Kids Splash Zone was added. On weekends and school holidays, the park also operates a 30-foot inflatable slide called The Plummet.

The four-slide addition is the first expansion aimed at thrill-seekers in their teens and twenties as the park is looking to expand its appeal to a

broader age-range audience. The park, located near the Swan Valley region, is hoping to capture more tourists from Perth, Western Australia's capital city and the fourth most populous city in the country. Swan Valley, noted for its fertile soil, has seen a recent expansion of tourism-based destinations such as numerous wineries, microbreweries, a chocolate factory, restaurants and cafes, as well as food festivals based on locally grown produce.

Completion of the NorthLink dual carriageway multi-lane highway later this year should shorten the drive time from central Perth to about 30 minutes.

•outbacksplash.com.au

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# BUSINESS & NEWSMAKERS

► S&S Worldwide's Tim Timco — page 70 / Legacy Entertainment launches multiple attractions — page 74

## 2019 WWA Symposium and Trade Show one of association's best

AT: Pam Sherborne

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ORLANDO, Fla. — Buzzwords like interactivity and customization frequently were heard this year on the trade show floor of the 39th Annual World Waterpark Association (WWA) Symposium and Trade Show, held Oct. 7-10 at the Walt Disney World Resort.

"Park owners want to customize the experience for their guests," said **Tony Hansen, Techni-Lux**, a design and supply firm. "They want interactivity."

**Joel Schafer, Big Squirt**, echoed Hansen's sentiments.

"Park owners are taking experiences and making them more interactive," Schafer said. "Games are becoming more interactive."

Schafer was exhibiting some new interactive possibilities for his Big Squirt product involving a fun use of new technology.

From exhibitors to attendees to WWA staff, the 2019 event was deemed a success. In fact, a report released by the WWA indicated this year's was one of the best. There were more than 1,800 owners, operators, developers, suppliers and designers on hand this year. They came from 23 countries and six continents to be a part of the experience.

In addition, the 2019 show welcomed more than 300 first-time attendees, many of whom have new water park devel-



More than 1,800 attended the WWA Symposium and Trade Show, including Water Odyssey (left). Above right; Andrew Mowatt celebrated his WWA Hall of Fame induction on the show floor in the WhiteWater booth. During the celebration, Mowatt got a hug from Geoff Chutter, president and CEO, Whitewater. AT/JOHN W.C. ROBINSON; PAM SHERBORNE

opment projects in the works around the world.

There were 380 booths on the WWA trade show floor representing 225 exhibiting companies spread out across 100,000 square feet of exhibit space. Exhibitors showcased their products and services, some brand new and some tried and true.

Exhibitors also boasted quite a bit of business going on throughout the show. **Pete Downs**, exhibiting products under **Shade Creations by Waterloo**, a division of **Waterloo Tent and Tarp Co.** was one of those.

"Yep," Downs said. "We have had a good show. We have gotten some business done."

**Georg Dobler, Sunkid**, a company which traditionally has about 150 projects a year just for conveyor systems, has been pleased with the company's push into the water park market. The company has been working on the Kasai Canoe Slalom, part of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

**Rick Root**, WWA president, was very happy with the results of the 2019 Symposium and Trade Show.

"Working with a partner like Disney allowed us to deliver on all the things our attendees expect from us, but with even more 'magic,'" Root said. "We saw impressive attendance in our educational programs, in

the support from our sponsors and in the turnout to our fantastic networking events. Attendees traveled to Orlando, Florida, from parks large and small, public and private, indoor and outdoor, from all over the world."

Root said some of the 23 countries represented this year outside of the U.S. included Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Jamaica, Lebanon, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, the Philippines, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom.

"The WWA Show has al-

ways been the intersection for all things water park-related," said **Aleatha Ezra**, WWA director of park member development. "We were excited to see so many water park professionals from all over the world come together to learn and share challenges and successes in order to make the industry safer and more impactful in the lives of the guests we serve."

The educational events were very well attended, said Ezra. There were more than 100 water park professionals this year sharing their best ideas on the things that matter most to

► See WWA, page 69



There were 225 companies exhibiting at this year's WWA trade show, spanning more than 380 booths and 100,000 square feet of exhibit space. Pictured from left are Gary Patrick and Georg Dobler, Sunkid; Arielle Dworetzky and Brittlyn Miller, American Jewel; Joel Schafer and his daughter, Ona-Michelle Schafer, from Big Squirt; and Techni-Lux's Lisa Hansen, Alex Gonzalez, Steffie Murphy and Tony Hansen. AT/PAM SHERBORNE

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# **SAFETY, MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS**

► 2020 safety seminars and conferences preview — page 80 / Drones complete safety inspections — page 88

## Disney Skyliner expands Walt Disney World transportation network

**AT:** David Fake  
Special to Amusement Today

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — **Walt Disney World Resort** added a fourth mode of complimentary public transportation on Sept. 29 when the resort opened Disney Skyliner, a gondola lift system that connects two of the resort's four theme parks and four of its 20-plus resort hotels and accommodation offerings. Disney Skyliner, which the resort calls "the most magical flight on earth," operates in the same manner as a ski resort's gondola lift system utilizing a moving cable with attached vehicles (gondolas). At Disney, these gondolas, nearly 300 in total, can accommodate up to 10 passengers per cabin or six passengers in the system's wheelchair-accessible cabins.

Disney Skyliner fills a gap in transportation options for the **Epcot** and **Disney's Hollywood Studios** parks and the resort hotels in that area, which previously had only two options of complimentary transportation: bus and, in some cases, boat. The system has three lines with four routes that connects five stations/terminals along five miles of cable. But Disney Skyliner is more than just another mode of complimentary transportation at Walt Disney World.

"Disney Skyliner is so much more than getting from point A to B. It's an experience," said **Thomas Mazloun**, Walt Disney World Resort's senior vice president of resort and transportation. "You get a whole new appreciation of Walt Disney World



Disney Skyliner's nearly 300 gondolas soar over the Walt Disney World Resort, connecting Epcot, Disney's Hollywood Studios and four of the resorts hotels, including the Disney's new Riviera Resort (opening in December). Each spacious gondola can accommodate up to 10 passengers (inset).

COURTESY  
WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORT  
from up there."

The Skyliner's cabins are not air-conditioned, but the windows of a capsule are tinted to reduce direct sunlight and each contains multiple vents with a design that focuses on cross-ventilation. The vents are screened and located at the top of the cabins on the two long sides and on the wall opposite of the door. Passengers can slide them shut should it ever get too chilly or too windy. There are also vents near the floor, beneath the benches.

Walt Disney World Resort has a long tradition



of innovative transportation options that began at the opening of the Florida resort in 1971, with its monorail system and ferryboats connecting the resort's parking areas, hotels, and the **Magic Kingdom** around and across Bay Lake. In 1982, with the addition of Epcot, the resort added an additional monorail line connecting it with the Magic Kingdom's transportation hub and parking lot. **Disney's Animal Kingdom** is the only remaining park of the resort's four for which bus transportation is the only means of compli-

mentary access.

Disney Skyliner experienced a malfunction on Oct. 5, less than a week after it officially opened. The incident resulted in hundreds of passengers being stranded, some for three hours.

The transportation system was closed to the public for over a week as a result, and it was reopened with limited service on Oct. 14 accompanied by an official statement:

"We know many of you have been looking for an update on Disney Skyliner and are glad to share that

**FAST FACTS**

**Disney Skyliner routes and travel times**

- Disney's Hollywood Studios to Disney's Caribbean Beach Resort: 5 minutes
- Epcot to Disney's Caribbean Beach Resort: 12 minutes
- Disney's Caribbean Beach Resort to Disney's Riviera Resort: 3 minutes
- Disney's Caribbean Beach Resort to Disney's Art of Animation and Pop Century Resorts: 5 minutes

it has reopened to guests today. Following a complete review with the manufacturer, we've made adjustments to our processes and training, and we are improving how we communicate with guests during their flight with Disney Skyliner. We again offer our deepest apologies to the guests impacted by the malfunction that resulted in extended operating delays on Oct. 5. Similar to ski lift systems, Disney Skyliner may slow or come to some stops during the ride, particularly when we need to accommodate guests who require additional time to load their cabin. We want to assure you that the comfort of every guest is important to us."

Disney Skyliner has since resumed regular operations.

•disney.com



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### 10 reasons to attend the 2020 AIMS Safety Seminar in Galveston, Texas

With the world watching through the lens of social media and extensive mainstream media coverage, amusement industry safety, employee training and education are the best ways to ensure attractions are equipped to avoid and prevent accidents. The **AIMS Safety Seminar** is a once-a-year opportunity to learn from industry experts in a weeklong educational setting. Here are 10 great reasons to attend the 2020 AIMS Safety Seminar:



1. Safety is the # 1 priority in the amusement industry.

2. The **AIMS Safety Seminar** is the top-rated amusement industry safety seminar worldwide.

3. The seminar attracts more than 450 students from all areas of the industry: theme and amusement parks, water parks, carnivals, zoos, FECs and other attractions. From

maintenance and operations workers to top management as well as industry suppliers, you will learn from your peers and make friendships. These are connections you can use for years to come.

4. Classes are taught by more than 100 instructors — all top-quality industry experts in their fields. More great connections!

5. No other seminar offers such a diverse range of classes. At the AIMS Seminar, you can choose classes that fit your needs.

6. Learning takes place in the classroom, where students and instructors exchange information, as well as through hands-on opportunities at local attractions.

7. AIMS offers certifications in maintenance, operations, ride inspection and aquatics. A Certified Pool Operator course is also offered.

8. Tuition is \$645 and includes class materials, an opening reception, all lunches and snack breaks, a completion certificate and CEU from **Old Dominion University**. AIMS has a discounted rate of \$115 per night at the **Galveston Hilton** with free parking!

9. You can apply for scholarships! **IAAPA** provides five scholarships to the AIMS Safety Seminar in memory of **Alan Ramsay**. Application forms can be found at [aimsintl.org](http://aimsintl.org). **OABA** offers four scholarships to OABA members who are first-time Safety Seminar attendees. Contact [oaba@oaba.org](mailto:oaba@oaba.org) for more information.

10. AIMS delivers! More than 92% of students who attend an AIMS Safety Seminar plan to return to another AIMS Safety Seminar.

A complete schedule and class list, along with hotel and other information, can be found at [aimsintl.org](http://aimsintl.org). For more information about the AIMS Safety Seminar, please email [info@aimsintl.org](mailto:info@aimsintl.org) or contact **Holly Coston**, seminar manager at 714.697.6654.

Please stop by and visit the AIMS International booth #4527 at **IAAPA Expo**!

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ADVERTISER INDEX

- 2, Polin Waterparks
- 3, Dynamic Attractions
- 6, Soaring Eagle
- 7, Dippin' Dots
- 9, Bob's Space Racers
- 10, EWorks Pro
- 11, Intermark Ride Group
- 12, Montgomery Inn
- 13, Cavu
- 14, Ride Entertainment Group
- 15, Larson International
- 17, Premier Rides
- 18, Rocky Mountain Construction
- 19, X Insurance
- 20, Jack Rouse Associates (JRA)
- 21, Great Coasters International, Inc.
- 22, Urban Air Adventure Park
- 23, S&S-Sansei Technologies
- 25, Mack Rides
- 26, Big Squirt, Inc.
- 23, 49, WhiteWater West
- 24, Leisure & Recreation Concepts
- 25, Haas & Wilkerson Insurance
- 26, Philadelphia Toboggan Coasters
- 27, WhiteWater West
- 28, Vekoma
- 29, Haas & Wilkerson Insurance
- 30, Naughton Insurance
- 30, Inermark Ride Group
- 30, R&R Creative Design
- 30, SkyTrans Manufacturing
- 31, Chance Rides
- 32, Lagotronics Projects
- 33, Ride Engineers Switzerland
- 34, Setpoint
- 35, Gould Manufacturing
- 35, Huss Rides
- 36, Gerstlauer Amusement Rides GmbH
- 37, Sunkid
- 38, Firestone Financial
- 38, Montgomery Inn
- 39, Intamin
- 40, Zierer
- 41, Ride 4 U
- 42, Kumbak
- 43, Gosetto
- 43, Severn Lamb
- 45, Skyline Attractions, LLC
- 46, William H. Robinson, Inc.
- 47, ETF
- 48,49, Pro Slide Technologies, Inc.
- 50, IISF Trade Show
- 51, Ital International, LLC
- 52, Indiana Ticket Company
- 52, Wapello Fabrication Company
- 52, Gull Wing Industries
- 52,, Get It Done Marketing
- 53, ARM
- 54, Rides 4 U
- 55, Waterloo Tent
- 56, OABA
- 56, Rides 4 U
- 57, Wisdom Rides of America
- 58, Zebec Water Sports
- 63, WhiteWater West
- 65, Weigand Waterrides GmbH
- 66, Turnstile Advertising, Inc.
- 67, WhiteWater West
- 71, Ukrop's Threads
- 75, Amusement Expo
- 76, Aeria
- 77, Premier Service
- 78, Maclan Corporation
- 79, LJM & Associates
- 80, NACE International
- 81, Amuse Rides
- 82, Chairkit
- 83, Irvine Ondrey Engineering
- 84, International Ride Training
- 84, Midwest Safety & Operations Conf.
- 85, AIMS International
- 86, Mobaro
- 87, Ralph S. Alberts Company, Inc.
- 88, Northwest Coasters
- 89, Baynum Painting, Inc.
- 90, The Hoffman Consulting Group, LLC
- 90, Intermountain Lift, Inc.
- 90, Audio Innovators
- 90, Worldwide Safety Group
- 90, Gull Wing
- 90, ASTM International
- 91, NAARSO
- 92, CPI Amusement
- 93, Eli Bridge Company
- 94, Classifieds
- 95, Allied Specialty Insurance
- 96, Zamperla



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