



HEUICHUL KIM

**OLYMPIC-SIZE RENOVATIONS** The athletic center Asphalt Green on East 90th Street has fully reopened.

## Asphalt Green Gets Back in the Swim

By **TATYANA GERSHKOVICH**  
*Special to the Sun*

A popular Upper East Side public athletic center, Asphalt Green, is fully reopened after nine months and a \$12.8 million renovation. Improvements include wireless Internet access, an upgrade of Manhattan's only Olympic-size swimming pool, state of the art exercise equipment, revamped locker rooms, and a computer system that stores and tracks workout data.

When members come for a workout they may plug into a central computer that adjusts their training regiment, and if they should skip a week or two they can expect a call from one of the fitness trainers.

"As a result, we have a higher percentage of members that regularly use the facilities," a personal trainer, DeJuana Richardson, said.

A not-for-profit organization, Asphalt Green is situated on a five and a half acre campus on East 90th Street near the FDR Drive.

It organizes community programs, including a free annual

swimming competition for children.

After school, an aspiring college swimmer, Jessica Kleinbart, comes to practice with the Asphalt Green swim school and to scope out her competition. "I'm on the swim team at my school, and when we talk about the top people to beat, I know all of them because they all come here," she said.

Two years ago, an Asphalt Green swimmer, Lia Neal, 10, broke a national record in the 50-meter free-style swim in her age category. The programs director, Paul Weiss, said that Ms. Neal is training to become an Olympic swimmer.

Olympic swimmers Rowdy Gaines, Janet Evans, Maritza Cor-

reia, and Anthony Ervin have attended the swimming competition to award prizes and chat with the competitors. The 2006 swimmer of the year, Michael Phelps, has also been known to drop by for a dip.

Not all Asphalt Green swimmers hope to become professional athletes. "I love swimming but my passion is to become a vet," a middle-school student, Jessica Reynoso, said as she completed a fraction problem.

Ms. Reynoso said many fellow swimmers use the center's newly installed wireless Internet access to work on their school assignments. Ms. Kleinbart said she often uses the Internet, but mostly to go to Facebook.com.