

## CASE STUDY 05

# CENTER FOR SURVIVORSHIP

**Skyfold<sup>®</sup> Classic 51™ offers flexibility and long-term value at a “peaceful, beautiful” fitness and counseling facility for cancer survivors.**

Cancer survivors need inspiration, empowerment, nutrition and exercise – four essentials delivered by the new Connecticut Challenge Center for Survivorship in Southport, Conn. This modest nonprofit facility, operated entirely by donations, is the first of its kind in North America, merging the idea of wellness with the amenities and mindset of “an Olympic training facility,” says director Jeff Keith.

The center is a godsend for cancer survivors. Yet, like many not-for-profits, Connecticut Challenge had to carefully balance its initial construction costs with the long-term mission for the renovated building. Working with local designers including architect David Preusch, AIA, and interior designer Jackie Richardson, the charity looked for ways to maximize flexibility while preserving the uplifting aesthetics and serene aura of interior spaces dedicated to

### PROJECT FACTS

**CENTER FOR SURVIVORSHIP**

Southport, Connecticut

**Project type:** Medical (nonprofit)

**Design challenge:** Creating a flexible, acoustically separate interior space

**Design team:** David Preusch Architect (architect)

Jackie Richardson (interior design)

WILLCO Sales & Service (dealer)

**GC:** Waverly Construction, Inc.

### SKYFOLD SPECS

**Number of walls:** 1

**Largest size:** 29.1' long x 12' high (8.73m x 3.60m)

**Motor style:** Compact drive

**Panel finish:** Vinyl, Koroseal Linley #E520-22 Innocent

**Installation date:** April 2012



When not needed, the Skyfold partition is completely hidden.

yoga, fitness, and counseling. Skyfold® Classic 51™, with its low maintenance needs, quiet operation and long-term performance, was a natural choice, says Preusch.

While other folding partitions cost less, as co-founder of the charity, Keith saw Skyfold as integral to the facility's operations. The durable, quiet partitions are known for quality construction and easy, smooth operation. Over the center's life cycle, the well-engineered Skyfold system would hold up to multiple daily uses with almost no maintenance. Keith recommended it to the design team early in planning.

"We traveled to leading health clubs, hotel wellness centers and spas, and looked for ideas that support our mission, new ways to offer hope and inspiration," says Keith, a 35-year cancer survivor who lost his leg at age 12 and then, in 1985, became the first amputee ever to run across North America. "Many of our survivors don't want to go back to their hospitals. Part of our approach is, if you exercise you'll reduce your chances of getting cancer again by 50 percent."

#### **A ROADMAP TO HEALTH**

In addition to exercise, clients of the Center for Survivorship get a "road map" on nutrition, fitness and mindset through group events and one-on-one counseling. Classes and training take place in the bright, sunny interiors carved out of a 7,800-square-foot former radiology practice that was

previously a coal-fueling station. The original building had no outdoor views or sunlight, two essential aspects of recovery that Connecticut Challenge envisaged as part of a very different experience.

"We opened up the walls for new windows to let in daylight, and added two large, glass-walled studios for yoga," says Keith. "With the operable Skyfold wall, the studio space was designed to work in multiple ways: We can divide the large space in two, to conduct a workshop on one side while we have a speaker giving a presentation on the other."

The 12-foot Skyfold wall retracts into the ceiling, saving valuable floor space needed for survivor programs. It's completely automated, and requires no skills, strength or training to operate – quite literally, anyone can do it. "In this way, the space works like an elementary school gym," Keith quips, the separation retracting and deploying easily in just over a minute, allowing the staff to respond to changing program needs. The fast, simple operation helps maximize the nonprofit center's flexibility and effectiveness for cancer survivors.

The multipurpose yoga studios, however, are the centerpiece of the Center for Survivorship. With rich bamboo flooring and large glass partitions, the feel is airy and energetic. In addition to yoga, classes in Pilates, meditation and other fitness regimes are blended to suit each survivor's personal needs. The Skyfold wall can be hidden or deployed depending on class size.



#### **QUIET FLEXIBILITY, IN AN INSTANT**

The center needed an acoustic separation to allow quiet yoga classes while talks or music take place next door.

#### **QUICKLY DEPLOYS AND RETRACTS**

The 12-foot-tall Skyfold partition retracts into the ceiling in just over a minute – about 1 foot per 10 seconds.

#### **CONTEMPORARY LOOKS AND FUNCTION**

With a high-quality, protective vinyl finish to match the bright yet calm interior, the wall has no exposed hardware or tracks.





“THE SKYFOLD WALL IS AN ELEGANT, INTEGRAL ELEMENT OF THE DESIGN.”  
DAVID PREUSCH, AIA, ARCHITECT

“For cancer survivors who need to do yoga and other types of classes, the Skyfold wall makes an intimate space out of the larger, full studio space,” says the architect Preusch.

#### ‘BEAUTIFUL’ AND ‘PEACEFUL’

In fact, the Skyfold wall is an elegant, integral element of the design, Preusch adds. Its ability to stop sound preserves the tranquil, meditative aura between sessions, thanks to two steel panels separated by an 8-inch air chamber and acoustical insulation. The reliable air space helps achieve a high acoustical rating (STC of 51), which exceeds typical needs at the Center. It can block sounds from an amplified talk or loud musical instruments on one side while yoga or meditation takes place on the other side.

Known for high-end homes and inventive designs, Preusch – principal of David Preusch Architect in Westport, Conn. – was impressed by the Skyfold solution. “The center had need for those studios, and they needed the rooms to be adaptable to be large or small at various times. Skyfold was the ideal space-planning solution,” he explains. “Skyfold is a lift-up wall, and it’s very beautiful.”

Beauty was indeed vital to Keith’s conception of the Center for Survivorship. Every choice of material, detail, and

craftsmanship was made with the survivor’s challenges in mind. The operable wall offered a finish matching the overall décor, and when retracted it is practically invisible, fully integrated with the ceiling and overall look. In this way, Skyfold reinforces the Center for Survivorship’s overall theme and aura.

“You walk in and you feel just like anyone else,” says Keith, who dedicates his life to the survivorship challenge. “It’s kind of peaceful in here, too. With the sunlight coming in, it even reinforces our identity – our logo is the sun, after all, and the sun carries many metaphors for cancer survivors and their mindset.”

Though the Connecticut Challenge Center for Survivorship is the first such standalone program in North America, Keith expects that it could be a model for many others. The building offers solid, long-term value, which is vital for a nonprofit charity’s home. The 12-week wellness programming has been acclaimed for improving care among today’s growing population of survivors.

Yet it’s the feel of the place that inspires Keith, too – on a daily basis, he says. Achieving peace of mind is essential to survivors.



**SKYFOLD'S EXCLUSIVE LINE OF VERTICALLY FOLDING OPERABLE WALL SYSTEMS PROVIDE A UNIQUE WAY TO SUBDIVIDE SPACE. OUR CUSTOM BUILT SYSTEMS ARE COMPLETELY AUTOMATIC AND RETRACT INTO A CEILING CAVITY WITH A SIMPLE KEYPAD OPERATION.**

**// CLASSIC SERIES**

State-of-the-art acoustics for privacy and soundproofing

**// ZENITH SERIES**

Cutting-edge, innovative vertical wall technology

**// ZENITH PREMIUM SERIES**

Enhances the Zenith experience!

**// MIRAGE**

Brings in the light with your choice of transparent panels

Skyfold is pleased to be an official member of the U.S. Green Building Council. The Green Council is committed to promoting better designed buildings that are not only more environmentally and socially responsible, but also help improve the quality of life for those who occupy them and the communities in which they are built. The Council has developed a benchmarking system known as LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design). When it comes to recycled materials, architects and owners who choose a Skyfold vertically folding operable wall system can calculate the following toward LEED accreditation on their projects.

In order to continue protecting our environment, it is essential that we all do our part by using recycled materials whenever possible. Skyfold is proud to help.



<b>Recycled materials</b>	Up to 97%
<b>Post-consumer</b>	Up to 27%
<b>Pre-consumer</b>	Up to 51%



**SKYFOLD® LIMITED WARRANTY**

**WORKMANSHIP:** Parts & labour - 2 years or 5,000 cycles\*  
**Optional extended warranty on parts available - 10 years or 5,000 cycles\*  
Acoustical Performance - 10 years**

\*First occurrence from date of shipment.  
Digital touch screen excluded from extended warranty.

SKYFOLD®, SKYFOLD® Classic™, SKYFOLD Zenith® and SKYFOLD Mirage® are registered trademarks of Skyfold Inc. and Skyfold Investments Ltd.

For more information visit our website or contact us directly.

**MAIN OFFICE**  
325 Lee Avenue  
Montreal, Quebec  
CANADA H9X 3S3

T +1 (514) 457-4767  
F +1 (514) 457-7111  
info@skyfold.com  
[www.skyfold.com](http://www.skyfold.com)

