

64th Annual Conference & Tradeshow



Connecticut Recreation & Parks Association

November

25 & 26, 2024

Mohegan Sun

More opportunities to network & collaborate than ever before! **Three engaging roundtables, 20 sessions, two cocktail parties, a packed exhibit hall & a team building challenge...you don't want to miss this!**

Thank you to our Sponsors!



Monday, November 25th

Room → ↓ Time	Schaghticoke	Abenaki	Oneida/Penobscot	Pequot	Paugussett
8:00 - 8:30 am	Registration				
Breakouts & Breakfast! Session 1 8:45 - 9:45 am	Stop Taking it Personally (0.1)	YPN Roundtable (0.1)	Director's Roundtable (0.1)	Do's & Don'ts of Indoor Pickleball (0.1)	Exploring Person-First vs. Identity-First Philosophies: Implications for Rec Therapy & Community Rec (0.1)
Keynote: 9:55 - 11:00 am	The Heroes' Call: Turning Potential in Power Colten Daly & Alex Korpita - Salon B (0.1)				
Session 2 11:10 am - 12:10 pm	Design, Build, Manage: Creating Sustainable Athletic Fields & Greenspaces (0.1)	Beyond Good Job: Understanding & Expressing Appreciation in the Workplace (0.1)	Ageism: Are Recreation Professionals Promoting or Dismantling (0.1)	ChatGPT Chronicles: Exploring AI Conversations (0.1)	MRC Recreation/ GameTime Playgrounds Sales Session
12:15 - 1:15 pm	Buffet Lunch & Annual Meeting - Salon B				
12:45 - 5:00 pm	Exhibit Hall Open (Dessert & Coffee)				
Session 3 2:50 - 3:50 pm		Emotional Detox: Dealing with Negative People (0.1)	FUNDamentals of Data, Technology, & Math (0.1)		
4:00 - 5:00 pm	Happy Hour in the Exhibit Hall				
8:00 pm	Social - Lansdowne Irish Pub				

Tuesday, November 26th

Room → ↓ Time	Schaghticoke	Abenaki	Oneida/Penobscot	Pequot	Paugussett
8:00 - 8:30 am	Registration				
8:30 - 10:00 am	Breakfast				
8:30 am - 12:00 pm	Exhibit Hall				
10:00 - 11:00 am	Crack-the-Code Exhibit Hall Team Building Challenge (0.1)				
Session 1 11:10 am - 12:10 pm	Power of Thought: Cultivating a Mindset for Success (0.1)	How to Protect Yourself from a Liability Lawsuit (0.1)	Empower Yourself: Measure Your Economic Impact (0.1)	Beyond the Feed: Mastering Social Media Storytelling (0.1)	
Session 2 12:20 - 1:20 pm	Effective Time Management: Why We Do It & How It's Done (0.1)	Reviving the Splash: Aquatic Master Planning (0.1)	Putting the "Special" in Events (0.1)	"BE YOU. BE HERE. BELONG. BE KIND." (0.1)	
1:30 - 3:00 pm	Awards Luncheon				

MONDAY KEYNOTE

The Heroes' Call: Turning Potential Into Power

9:55 - 11:00 am
Salon B
0.1 (CEU) 



Learn how to **UNLOCK** your inner hero & take your organization to the next **LEVEL!**

Many of the great heroes we've come to know in today's age started with humble beginnings. An ordinary life that would one day be changed forever, marked by a sudden call to action and the undertaking of a perilous journey. Having conquered their battles, they return home an indomitable force that inevitably saves the day. Join our keynote speakers, Alex Korpita and Colton Daly, to embark on your own journey of self-mastery, answer your hero's call, and turn your potential into power.

Turn Obstacles into Opportunity

Establish Purpose

Transform Potential into Power

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SESSIONS AT A GLANCE: Use this guide to find the sessions that best suit you!

All sessions are approved for NRPA designation CEU's at .01 CEU's per session

AQUATICS (AQU)

- Reviving the Splash: Aquatic Master Planning

FINANCE (FIN)

- Empower Yourself: Measure Your Economic Impact
- FUNDamentals of Data, Technology, & Math: Equipping Parks & Recreation Professionals for Success

MANAGEMENT (MGT)

- Beyond "Good Job": Understanding & Expressing Appreciation in the Workplace
- Crack-the-Code Exhibit Hall Team Building Challenge
- Director's Roundtable
- Effective Time Management: Why We Do It & How It's Done

- Emotional Detox: Dealing with Negative People
- Exploring Person-First vs. Identity-First Philosophies: Implications for Recreation Therapy & Community Recreation
- How to Protect Yourself from a Liability Lawsuit
- Power of Thought: Cultivating a Mindset for Success
- Stop Taking it Personally
- The Heroes' Call: Turning Potential into Power
- Young Professional Network Roundtable

MARKETING (MKT)

- Beyond the Feed: Mastering Social Media Storytelling
- ChatGPT Chronicles: Exploring AI Conversations

PARKS

- Design, Build, Manage: Creating Sustainable Athletic Fields & Greenspaces
- How to Protect Yourself from a Liability Lawsuit

PROGRAMMING (PRG)

- Ageism: Are Recreation Professionals Promoting or Dismantling?
- "BE YOU. BE HERE. BELONG. BE KIND."
- Do's and Don'ts of Indoor Pickleball
- Putting the "Special" in Events

THERAPUTIC REC (TR)

12 sessions



The 12 sessions approved by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) are indicated with a

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: Monday, November 25th

8:45 - 9:45 am

Stop Taking it Personally

Diane Lang, MA, PPC, Owner, DL Counseling
Category: MGT (0.1 CEU)

"Don't take anything personally" is advice that asks us to look at our reactions, be aware of our own thoughts, and then take full responsibility for our behaviors. As the old saying goes, "No one can make you feel a certain way without your permission." When we do the work of "not taking anything personally," we stop playing the victim, and giving away our power. And that leads to healthier relationships, a stronger sense of personal empowerment, and more choices about what the next right step can be.

Young Professional Network Roundtable

Molly Keys, Director, South Windsor Parks & Recreation

Category: MGT (0.1 CEU)

In this session, you will have the opportunity to network with fellow young or new professionals and discuss topics pertaining to young professionals in the parks and recreation field such as career growth, trends in recreation, tips for working and/or transitioning into the field, and managing work-life balance. This session will also include a "catch-all" roundtable dedicated to sharing success and failure stories, current challenges, and ideas/resources to help mitigate challenges. Whether you are a student, new to the profession, young in the profession, or a seasoned professional looking to meet CT YPs and share insight... we hope you will join us and leave with new connections, new ideas, and new motivation to do good work!

Director's Roundtable

Josh Medeiros, Ed.D, Superintendent of Parks, Recreation, Youth, & Community Services, City of Bristol Parks & Recreation, Youth & Community Services

Category: MGT (0.1 CEU)

Join fellow directors for a high-level roundtable discussion on the issues impacting the future of the parks and recreation field such as resource constraints, political infusion, homelessness, inequities, employee retention and an evolving work culture. The session will be an opportunity to share challenges, discuss opportunities, and workshop solutions with likeminded department heads from across the state. Session will be moderated by Dr. Josh Medeiros, Superintendent of Parks, Recreation, Youth & Community Services with the City of Bristol.

Do's and Don'ts of Indoor Pickleball

Noreen Wilpiseski, Recreation Program Manager, Trumbull Parks & Recreation

Category: PRG (0.1 CEU)

With 20 outdoor Pickleball courts, the Town of Trumbull only had ONE indoor court! Learn HOW we've expanded the indoor program(s) to seven courts, what problems we've faced, and what management strategies we are using to control the different user groups. Opportunity for short discussion about issues/successes others have faced.

Exploring Person-First vs. Identity-First Philosophies: Implications for Recreation Therapy & Community Recreation

Sage Hojda, CTRS, CTRS & Professor, CT State Community College Manchester

Category: MGT (0.1 CEU)

Language matters. This session will look at language and philosophy in regards to how we talk and think about disability within our practice and settings. We will define and identify ableism in programming and discuss the Therapeutic Recreation implications for inclusive and segregated programming in various settings. This session will provide valuable insights to enhance your therapeutic approach and foster meaningful connections with your clients.

11:10 am - 12:10 pm

Design, Build, Manage: Creating Sustainable Athletic Fields & Greenspaces

Ian Lacy, Lead Project Advisor, Tom Irwin Advisors

Category: Parks (0.1 CEU)

Join Ian Lacy of Tom Irwin Advisors for a presentation that will help to ensure your project's success. Ian will guide you in creating sustainable athletic fields and greenspaces by outlining the required steps in achieving a successful design. This includes learning about the client needs analysis process, how to select a qualified contractor, outlining accurate specifications, the creation of a procurement bidding strategy, and the importance of creating a realistic maintenance plan, inclusive of equipment and labor resources at the design phase. Successful sustainability lies in the design, build, and management stages of a project. Learn how to make your next project a success!

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: Monday, November 25th

Beyond "Good Job": Understanding & Expressing Appreciation in the Workplace


Ryan Davis, CPRE, Director of Parks & Recreation, City of Miamisburg Parks & Recreation

Category: MGT (0.1 CEU) 
Effective leadership involves more than just recognizing good work—it's about understanding how each member of your team experiences and responds to appreciation. Join us for an insightful session inspired by Gary Chapman's renowned book, "The Five Love Languages," as we explore how these languages manifest in the workplace and discover actionable strategies for fostering a culture of appreciation and engagement. In this interactive workshop, we'll delve into the five languages of staff appreciation and uncover how they translate into the professional realm. Through thought-provoking discussions and real-world examples, you'll gain valuable insights into the diverse ways in which individuals feel valued and appreciated in their work environment. Armed with this understanding, you'll learn practical techniques for expressing appreciation tailored to the preferences of each team member. Don't miss this opportunity to empower yourself as a leader and enhance your workplace culture by nurturing the growth and well-being of your team.

Ageism: Are Recreation Professionals

Promoting or Dismantling?


MaryJo Archambault, CTRS, Associate Professor/Coordinator of Recreational Therapy Programs, Southern Connecticut State University

Category: PRG (0.1 CEU) 
In a society that values youth, it is no surprise that ageism, discrimination against individuals or groups based on age exists. Not only can ageism erode relationships between generations, but it can also impact global health, longevity, and limit our effectiveness

as recreation professionals. Furthermore, we have an ethical responsibility to lead efforts to dismantle ageism in practice. This session will focus on both personal reflection and specific programming strategies to assist in reducing age bias in our practice.

ChatGPT Chronicles: Exploring AI Conversations

Anthony Calabrese, CPRP, Director of Parks & Recreation & Gianna Salce, Town of Fairfield

Category: MGT/MKT (0.1 CEU) 
Dive into the world of ChatGPT, an advanced conversational AI model, in this engaging session. Discover how ChatGPT is revolutionizing interactions through natural language processing. Explore its capabilities, from generating human-like responses to assisting with various tasks. Learn practical applications, such as customer service automation, content creation, and personal assistance. Gain insights into leveraging ChatGPT effectively to enhance user experiences and streamline workflows. Whether you're a developer, marketer, or business owner, this presentation offers valuable insights into harnessing the power of AI-driven conversations for success in the digital age.

MRC Recreation/GameTime Playgrounds Sales Session

Josh Hartley, Regional Manager, MRC Recreation/GameTime Playgrounds


Category: Sales
Learn the ins and outs of designing and installing a fully inclusive playground environment by using PlayCore's 7 Principles of Inclusive Playground Design as a guide. During this session you'll learn the difference between accessible and inclusive, and be introduced to a wide range of inclusive play products that GameTime offers. You will leave with an understanding of how to go above minimum accessibility guidelines to provide inclusive, multigenerational play

destinations for your community.

2:50 pm - 3:50 pm

Emotional Detox:

Dealing with Negative People

Diane Lang, MA, PPC, Owner, DL Counseling
Category: MGT (0.1 CEU) 

We all have people who push our buttons, drain our energy, and take us off track. From co-workers to neighbors, friends, and family members. Difficult people can be found anywhere. These types of people can create situations that cause us to feel frustrated, drained, fatigued, and unhappy. What are the consequences of too much negativity in your life and why are people so negative? Join Diane to learn tips for dealing with negative people and effective communication techniques to handle them.

FUNDamentals of Data, Technology, & Math: Equipping Parks & Recreation Professionals for Success

Ryan Davis, CPRE, Director of Parks & Recreation, City of Miamisburg Parks & Recreation

Category: FIN (0.1 CEU)
In today's dynamic landscape, parks and recreation professionals are not just stewards of recreation centers, events and green spaces; they are also data-driven decision-makers, technology enthusiasts, and analytical thinkers. However, navigating these realms may seem daunting, especially for those who haven't been traditionally trained in these areas. Fear not! This engaging session is designed to reveal and simplify the core principles of data, technology, and math, making them accessible and enjoyable for all. Join us for this enlightening session and embark on a journey to unlock the FUNdamentals of data, technology, and math. Whether you're a seasoned professional or new to the field, this session promises to equip you with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in today's fast-paced and data-driven environment. Let's embrace the power of numbers, technology, and innovation together!

HAPPY HOUR | Monday 4:00 - 5:00 pm | Exhibit Hall

Join us for happy hour on the exhibit hall floor! Enjoy food & refreshments while networking with the many exhibitors who can provide solutions to your department's needs.



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LATE NIGHT SOCIAL | Monday 8:00 pm



Looking for the perfect way to cap off the evening? Choose from an assortment of beers on tap, enjoy a cocktail with friends at the bar, and relax in this amazing atmosphere. CRPA's late night social is the ideal place to unwind with colleagues and new acquaintances after a long day at conference!

Generously Sponsored By:



2024 AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Presented at the Annual Awards Luncheon - Tuesday, November 26th

NOMINATE SOMEONE TODAY!



CRPA is now accepting nominations for the 2024 Awards & Scholarship Program. This is your chance to recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the parks and recreation profession!

Please take the time to participate in this worthwhile program and submit a nomination for consideration.

Nomination forms can be found online at:
crpa.com/awards/nomination-forms

Please return completed nomination forms to:

CRPA

135 Day St. 2nd Floor, 2H,
Newington, CT 06111

or by email to:
val@crpa.com

Nominations must be submitted by 9/6/24

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: Tuesday, November 26th

10:00 - 11:00 am

Crack-the-Code Exhibit Hall Team Building Challenge


Category: MGT (0.1 CEU) 

Attendees will work collaboratively in small teams to solve various puzzle/riddle-style challenges that will be set-up throughout the exhibit hall. Teams must think creatively, communicate effectively, and problem-solve efficiently to complete the challenges! You do not need to come as a team.

11:10 am - 12:10 pm

Power of Thought: Cultivating a Mindset for Success

Colton Daly, Keynote Speaker

Category: MGT (0.1 CEU) 

In this dynamic breakout session, participants will embark on a transformative journey to unlock the untapped potential within themselves. Through engaging discussions, interactive exercises, and real-life examples, attendees will explore the profound impact of perspective, vision, and identity on their personal and professional lives. They will gain practical tools and strategies to cultivate a mindset for success, enabling them to overcome obstacles, seize opportunities, and create a more fulfilling and empowering future. Join us as we delve into the power of mindset and discover how to unleash your inner greatness!

How to Protect Yourself from a Liability Lawsuit

Jeffrey Reed, CPSI, Vice President, Playground Medic

Category: MGT/PARKS (0.1 CEU) 

During this session we will cover the history of accidents on play areas and the regulations that followed. Following the implementation of stricter regulations, lawsuits increased dramatically. The session will cover how to minimize liability exposure

through several procedures and practices. The course will emphasize the importance of retaining paperwork history and will also cover the various ways of communicating with the users of your facilities. Standards and guidelines that staff should follow to maintain safe facilities will also be reviewed. The seminar will contain several real life scenarios that participants will find fun and shocking. The class not only covers playgrounds but park facilities in general.

Empower Yourself:

Measure Your Economic Impact

Ryan Davis, CPRE, Director of Parks & Recreation, City of Miamisburg Parks & Recreation

Category: FIN (0.1 CEU) 

Discover the power of measuring your economic impact in this engaging education session designed to demystify Economic Impact Studies. Whether you're a small agency, a mid-level manager, or a director, this session will equip you with the knowledge and skills to quantify your economic contributions effectively. Through a blend of theory, practical examples, and interactive discussions, participants will embark on a journey to understand the intricacies of Economic Impact Studies and harness their potential to drive positive change.

Beyond the Feed: Mastering Social Media Storytelling

Anthony Calabrese, CPRP, Director of Parks & Recreation & Gianna Salce, Town of Fairfield

Category: MGT/MKT (0.1 CEU) 

Join Fairfield Parks and Recreation for an interactive session on strategies to grow a local audience on social media. Social media can be difficult to navigate as is, but when various challenges and limited resources are added to the equation, growing an audience with informational messaging can seem

nearly impossible. Learn about the challenges other professionals in the field are overcoming along with strategies to utilize current trends for content creation and increased engagement from members of your community. There's always a story to tell when it comes to marketing; is yours providing the narrative you've intended, or do you have more to share?

12:20 - 1:20 pm

Effective Time Management: Why We Do It & How It's Done

Alex Korpita, Keynote Speaker

Category: MGT (0.1 CEU) 

In a twist of irony, selfless goals are most often realized through selfish time management. Join Alex Korpita as he walks through time management strategies and tactical steps you can take to win the day. Participants will also learn about the philosophy of time management, how to set boundaries, and the art of adaptability.

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BREAKOUT SESSIONS: Tuesday, November 26th

Reviving the Splash:

Aquatic Master Planning

Jon Cleveland, OLY,CPO, Regional Sales & Marketing Manager, Myrtha Pools USA

Category: Aquatics (0.1 CEU)

Join past Olympians and national leaders in the Aquatic Industry to learn how to maximize user experience and wellness options when building and renovating pools. Take a dive into the steps and timelines that are needed in properly planning a rehabilitation of a facility or design of a new facility. The session will also focus on the particular phases within the process such as: audits, preliminary engineering, engineering and permitting, construction, timelines, and costs. It will touch on the latest technology in the aquatic industry and the current trends. Case studies will also be explored providing examples of successfully built multi-dimensional and multi-generational facilities that not only draw patron attendance but also ensure financial stability.

Putting the "Special" in Events

Matt Scofield, Recreation Service Coordinator, City of New Britain Parks, Recreation & Community Services

Category: PRG (0.1 CEU)

Join this special events roundtable and learn the do's and don'ts of running large scale special events! Discussion will center around special event themes, sponsorships, marketing, operations, and how particular special events impact communities both large and small. Professionals are asked to come prepared to contribute to the discussion to ensure a social atmosphere where both high level and young professionals can learn from each other about how events become truly "special" around the state.

"BE YOU. BE HERE. BELONG. BE KIND."

Kelly Murphy, Assistant Afterschool Program Coordinator, City of New Britain Parks, Recreation & Community Services

Category: PRG (0.1 CEU) 

Are your camp participants struggling to be kind to each other? We can help. This session uses a solution-based approach to emphasize the importance of incorporating and prioritizing SEL, acknowledging and encouraging kind behaviors and how to provide space and empower camp participants to create a "Kind Community". This session will begin with the history and development of the "Be a Kind Human." Campaign which has encouraged and empowered students, staff, and our community to spread kindness. This session will teach how to build, program, develop, maintain, and grow a micro-community within camp programs.

Join us for the 64th ANNUAL CONFERENCE & TRADESHOW!

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Mohegan Sun Hotel & Convention Center

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Sessions



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