

# SESSIONS AT A GLANCE:

Use this guide to find the sessions that best suit you!

## AQUATICS (AQU)

- Aquatic Risk Management Basics
- How to Make Your Adolescent Lifeguards Professionals
- Managing the Aftermath of a Critical Incident
- The Changing World of Aquatics

## CAMPS/PROGRAMMING (CAMP/PRG)

- Activating Brain Health: A Recreation Professional's Guide to Dementia Prevention
- A Revolutionary Roundtable: Special Events Planning
- Camp Staff Training & Leadership Development
- Camp Teamwork & Collaboration
- Camp Weather Preparedness

## FINANCE (FIN)

- Brownfields as Opportunities: Strategies in Transforming Contaminated Lands into

## Community Parks

- Director's Roundtable: Budget & Finance

## MANAGEMENT (MGT)

- Building a Strategic Board
- Conflict Unpackaged
- Crack-the-Code Exhibit Hall Team Building Challenge
- Culture by Design
- Director's Roundtable: Budget & Finance
- Lessons for a Parks & Recreation Professional from Walter Elias Disney
- The Leadership Adventure: Blazing Trails, Building Legacies
- Young Professional Network Roundtable

## MARKETING /TECHNOLOGY (MKT/TECH)

- Learning Common AI Tools to Improve Everyday Productivity
- Take Control of Your Online Presence: Create & Utilize Your Digital Footprint to Boost Participation in Your Community

## PARKS

- Between the Blades: Synthetic Turf Testing & Maintenance
- Brownfields as Opportunities: Strategies in Transforming Contaminated Lands into Community Parks
- Seeing Red: Identifying & Tackling Invasive Plant Problems in Town Open Spaces
- Turf Grass Maintenance Essentials

## THERAPUTIC REC (TR)

- Activating Brain Health: A Recreation Professional's Guide to Dementia Prevention
- Bibliotherapy as a Recreational Therapy Intervention for Family Caregivers



The 9 sessions approved by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) are indicated with a 

# BREAKOUT SESSIONS: Monday, November 24<sup>th</sup>

## 8:45 - 9:45 am

### **Brownfields as Opportunities: Strategies in Transforming Contaminated Lands into Community Parks**

**Ryan Chmielewski**, *Landscape Architect*, **Weston & Sampson**, **Lindsay Suhr**, *Office Director for the Land Acquisition and Management (LAM) Unit*, CT DEEP

**Category: FIN/PARKS (0.1 CEU)**

This session explores how municipalities can transform contaminated properties, often in environmental justice neighborhoods, into vibrant parks and open spaces. These projects offer unique opportunities to repurpose underutilized parcels and expand outdoor recreation. Attendees will learn about due diligence for assessing contaminated sites, including soil analysis, risk evaluation, and steps for safe reuse. The session highlights how integrating park design with remediation maximizes community impact. Through case studies from three diverse park agencies, attendees will discover strategies for overcoming challenges and achieving outcomes. These examples showcase how contaminated sites can become thriving spaces that promote biodiversity, ecological restoration, neighborhood revitalization, economic development, and resilience. State and federal grant funding sources will also be reviewed. Join us to explore urban renewal, environmental justice, and creative recreation, and gain tools for converting neglected properties into community assets.

### **Director's Roundtable: Budget & Finance** **Missy Mendiogral Orosz, MS., CPRP, CYSA, CCMO**, *Director*, Monroe Parks & Recreation **Category: FIN/MGT (0.1 CEU)**

Join fellow directors for a high-level roundtable discussion on the issues impacting the future of parks and recreation field. The session will be an opportunity to share challenges, discuss opportunities, and workshop solutions with likeminded department heads from across the state. This

session will be moderated by the CRPA Director's Network Co-Chairs.

### **Camp Teamwork & Collaboration**

**Steve Maguire, M.Ed**, *Keynote Speaker, Trainer, Award-Winning Author/Educator, Dad*  
**Category: CAMP/PRG (0.1 CEU)**

In this interactive session, explore how to create a high-functioning seasonal camp team culture where every counselor feels valued, supported, and inspired. Discover strategies for building trust, resolving conflicts with a positive mindset, and developing communication skills that strengthen collaboration between your summer staff. Learn the essential role leadership plays in creating team cohesion and how to lead by example in a way that motivates and inspires your team. Whether you're a seasoned supervisor or emerging leader, this session will give you the tools to transform your team dynamics and lead with confidence. Participants should expect to participate in group challenges and team building activities.

### **Young Professional Network Roundtable** **Molly Keays**, *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!

### **Activating Brain Health: A Recreation Professional's Guide to Dementia Prevention**

**MaryJo Archambault, CTRS, EdD**, *Associate Professor*, SCSU

**Category: PRG/TR (0.1 CEU)** 

This dynamic session explores evidence-based recreational approaches to reduce dementia risk factors through lifestyle modifications. Recreation professionals will learn practical strategies to implement cognitive stimulation, physical activity, and social engagement programs that can be readily incorporated into various settings. Participants will discover how deliver meaningful activities that support brain health while addressing multiple dimensions of wellness. This session emphasizes the unique position recreation professionals hold in providing preventive interventions through engaging programming.

## 11:10 am - 12:10 pm

### **Turf Grass Maintenance Essentials**

**Scott Vose**, *Technical Advisor*, Tom Irwin Advisors, Inc.

**Category: PARKS (0.1 CEU)**

Participants will learn the key traits and maintenance necessities for cool season grasses and the factors affecting growth and establishment in CT. By gaining a better understanding of scouting and performance testing techniques maintainers will acquire skills to identify differing growing environments. CT State Turfgrass IPM compliance will be reviewed as well as turf health solutions. Case studies involving innovative renovation strategies will be highlighted to provide examples of how these investments create more consistency across your playing surfaces and more sustainability to your maintenance practices.

# BREAKOUT SESSIONS: Monday, November 24<sup>th</sup>

## Take Control of Your Online Presence: Create & Utilize Your Digital Footprint to Boost Participation In Your Community

**Jared Moore**, Co-founder & President,  
Athletify

**Category: MKT/TECH**

**(0.1 CEU)**

Building and managing a strong digital presence is vital for boosting community participation, but it doesn't have to drain your resources. This session explores free and paid tools from Google, Facebook, and Instagram to help you effectively engage with your audience. Learn the key differences between having a social media presence and an advertising presence, and discover best practices for maximizing your impact online for your parks and recreation department. You'll gain insights into essential "must-do" strategies, as well as pitfalls to avoid when navigating the digital landscape. From understanding the power of targeted ads to knowing which platforms offer the best return on investment, this session equips you with actionable knowledge to create a more efficient and impactful online presence.

## Camp Staff Training & Leadership Development

**Steve Maguire**, M.Ed., Keynote Speaker,  
Trainer, Award-Winning Author/Educator, Dad  
**Category: CAMP/PRG**

**(0.1 CEU)**

A thriving and positive camp experience starts with a strong, supportive team and a camper-first mindset. This session dives into the essentials of building a culture of positivity and motivation where both campers and staff can shine. Learn how to confidently manage camper behavior, use conflict resolution and de-escalation strategies, and foster effective communication among your team. Explore ways to keep motivation high, create a culture of encouragement, and practice self-care to prevent burnout throughout the season. You'll leave with practical tools to build stronger relationships, boost team morale, and put campers at the heart of every decision.

## The Changing World of Aquatics

**Shawn DeRosa**, J.D., AqP, Attorney, Risk  
Management and Aquatic Specialist, DeRosa  
Aquatic Consulting

**Category: AQU**

**(0.1 CEU)**

Managing an aquatic facility, whether a pool or beach, requires special knowledge and an attention to issues that do not arise in other recreational programming arenas. Whether you are a seasoned risk manager or have been just assigned the responsibility of overseeing a pool or beach, this session will highlight a practical approach to key concepts designed to minimize risks at your facility, utilizing standards often cited in litigation.

## MyRec.com Recreation Software:

### Simplify Your Recreation Management

**Colleen Kinkade**, Territory Sales Executive,

MyRec.com Recreation Software

**Category: SALES**

Join us for an engaging overview of MyRec.com's powerful recreation management software. This session will introduce you to our core features, as well as showcase our unique capabilities such as custom forms, time-based advanced activities, and more - designed to streamline your daily operations. Learn practical tips and tricks to help you save time and increase efficiency. Discover the MyRec.com Difference and how it can drive real success in your department.

## 2:50 - 3:50 pm

### A Revolutionary Roundtable: Special Events Planning

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

**Category: PRG**

**(0.1 CEU)**

Join us for some REVOLUTIONARY ideas! As the United States approaches the 250th Anniversary of its independence communities across the nation are preparing to celebrate this historic milestone! Participants will learn what other communities across the state are planning as well as the do's and don'ts of running large scale special events! Discussion will include other 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 to revolutionize their events around the state.

### Building a Strategic Board

**Annie Frisoli**, Founder & CEO, Creating  
Community, LLC

**Category: MGT**

**(0.1 CEU)**

Does your Board have clarity in their purpose to best serve your department? Do your Board members leave meetings and know exactly how they can be an asset to you and your department before returning to the next scheduled Board meeting? This engaging presentation will share lessons learned, along with practical tools to encourage action of your Board members through the design of clear and detailed Board strategic plan.

## Camp Weather Preparedness

**Steve Maguire**, M.Ed., Keynote Speaker,  
Trainer, Award-Winning Author/Educator, Dad  
**Category: CAMP/PRG**

**(0.1 CEU)**

When the weather takes a turn, will your camp staff be ready? From lightning and heat waves to sudden downpours and cold snaps, this session equips parks and recreation professionals with the tools to keep participants safe and programs running smoothly. Learn how to develop and implement effective Emergency Action Plans for severe weather events, train staff in weather safety and awareness, and make smart gear and clothing choices for every forecast. We'll also explore how to adapt activities and leverage technology and real-time alerts to stay one step ahead. "Weather" it's blazing sun or rumbling skies, you'll leave this session ready to lead with confidence and remain safe, rain or shine.

## Aquatic Risk Management Basics

**Shawn DeRosa**, J.D., AqP, Attorney, Risk  
Management and Aquatic Specialist, DeRosa  
Aquatic Consulting

**Category: AQU**

**(0.1 CEU)**

Managing an aquatic facility, whether a pool or beach, requires special knowledge and an attention to issues that do not arise in other recreational programming arenas. Whether you are a seasoned risk manager or have been just assigned the responsibility of overseeing a pool or beach, this session will highlight a practical approach to key concepts designed to minimize risks at your facility.

## Bibliotherapy as a Recreation Therapy Intervention for Family Caregivers

**Tarah Loy-Ashe**, PhD, CTRS, Associate  
Professor, SCSU

**Category: TR**

**(0.1 CEU)**

For decades, bibliotherapy has been used successfully to treat addiction, PTSD, childhood and adult trauma, and mental illness. This session will discuss the history of bibliotherapy, evidence-based practice in the field of RT, and how graphic medicine, a newer form of bibliotherapy, can be used as an intervention for family caregivers.

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

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

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