

SESSIONS AT A GLANCE:

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

AQUATICS (AQU)

- Lifeguard Surveillance: Turning Research Into Practice
- Visual Challenges in Lifeguarding: What Instructors & Supervisors Need to Know

CAMPS/PROGRAMMING (CAMP/PRG)

- "Riding the Wave" How to Identify, Plan, & Implement New Programming Successfully
- Where Play Meets Discovery: Bringing STEM to Parks & Recreation

FINANCE (FIN)

- Budget 101: Budget Basics for New Professionals
- Funding Fun - Sponsorship for Municipal Recreation
- Revenue Generation for Parks & Recreation

MANAGEMENT (MGT)

- A Culture of Leadership-Empowering a Team
- Be Essential by Tracking Performance Measures
- Building for the Future with Intentional Focus

- Crack-the-Code Exhibit Hall Team Building Challenge
- Director's Roundtable
- GET REC'D: The Recreation Road Map
- Panic-Proof Planning: We Don't Wing It, We P.L.A.N. It
- Smarter RFPs: Crafting Clear Solutions That Deliver Results
- Wow Factor: Unleashing Creativity in Recreation
- YPN Roundtable

MARKETING /TECHNOLOGY (MKT/TECH)

- Tech That Works: Real Tools for Real Parks & Rec Departments

PARKS

- Green Space ROI: Balancing User Fees, Maintenance & Field Performance
- Innovate the Outdoors: Cutting-Edge Tech for Park Maintenance Professionals
- Smarter RFPs: Crafting Clear Solicitations That Deliver Results

- Why Forest Management is Needed in Recreational Open Spaces!

SALES (Does not offer CEUs)

- Autonomous Solutions for Turf Care featuring Husqvarna Robotic Mowers from MTE Equipment Solutions, Inc.

THERAPEUTIC REC (TR)

- From Intent to Impact: Cost-Effective Inclusion in Recreation
- From Vision to Village: Crafting a Memory Café-Lessons Learned
- Roots of Resilience: Harnessing the Healing Power of Therapeutic Horticulture



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

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: Monday, November 23rd

8:45 - 9:45 am

Director's Roundtable:

Missy Mendygral-Orosz, MS., CPRP, CYSA, CCMO, Director, Monroe Parks & Recreation
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. This session will be an opportunity to share challenges, discuss opportunities, and workshop solutions with like-minded department heads from across the state. This session will be moderated by fellow CRPA directors.

Young Professional Roundtable:

Molly Keays, Director, South Windsor Parks & Recreation
Category: MGT (0.1 CEU)

In this session, participants 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 entering and/or transitioning within 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 insights... we hope you will join us and leave with new connections, new ideas, and new motivation to do good work

Funding Fun - Sponsorship for Municipal Recreation

Adam LaPointe, CPRP, SHRMCP, MPA, Recreation Director, Grafton Recreation
Category: FIN (0.1 CEU)

Looking to boost your recreation budget without raising fees? Discover how to successfully identify, approach, and secure sponsorships that align with your community values and programs. "Funding Fun" is a practical, interactive workshop designed specifically for municipal recreation professionals. Whether you're new to

sponsorships or looking to refine your approach, this session will provide the tools, templates, and confidence you need to build lasting partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and stakeholders to expand programmatic and special event reach. Leave with actionable strategies, customizable templates, and a renewed sense of possibility for funding your programs, events, and facilities - while keeping them accessible and fun for everyone.

Visual Challenges in Lifeguarding: What Instructors & Supervisors Need to Know

Lyndsey K. Lanagan-Leitzel, Ph.D, Professor of Psychological Science, Assistant Department Chair, Eastern Connecticut State University
Category: AQU (0.1 CEU)

Surveillance is a critical component of lifeguarding, but errors can occur due to flaws in visual perception and attention. This presentation will discuss how the visual system processes distress and drowning, and how that could lead to errors and missed drowning incidents. It will also discuss the factors that affect how well lifeguards can pay attention over time, and why distress and drowning incidents could be missed. Lifeguard instructors and supervisors will gain practical tips to instruct and mentor their lifeguards to be aware of these challenges and take steps to address them.

Roots of Resilience: Harnessing the Healing Power of Therapeutic Horticulture

MaryJo Archambault, CTRS, CDP, FDRT, EdD, Professor, Southern Connecticut State University
Category: TR (0.1 CEU)

Step into the garden and discover how the simple act of nurturing living things can transform well-being. This immersive session explores the evidence-based benefits of Therapeutic Horticulture and equips recreation professionals with the knowledge and practical tools to incorporate nature-based interventions into their programming. Participants will examine how purposeful engagement with plants - from seed starting

and container gardening to sensory herb gardens - addresses physical, cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions of health. Drawing on current research and real-world program examples, this session highlights how Therapeutic Horticulture can be adapted across diverse populations and settings, from long-term care facilities and inpatient rehabilitation to community centers and schools. Whether you have access to a greenhouse or just a windowsill, you will leave with a fresh perspective and a toolkit ready to grow.

11:10 am - 12:10 pm

"Riding the Wave" How to Identify, Plan, & Implement New Programming Successfully

Rachel Arbige, CPRP, Recreation Manager, East Greenwich Community Services
Category: PRG (0.1 CEU)

Recreation is far more than youth camps and seasonal offerings - it is a powerful tool for building community, promoting wellness, and engaging residents of all ages. Riding the Wave explores how recreation professionals can stay ahead of trends, respond to shifting community needs, and successfully launch innovative programming that resonates across generations. This session will guide participants through practical strategies for identifying gaps and opportunities within their communities, using data, feedback, and observation to shape relevant and inclusive programs. Attendees will learn how to transform ideas into action through thoughtful planning, effective partnerships, creative marketing, and flexible implementation. Through real-world examples of workshops, classes, and special events, this session will highlight programs that encourage participation from young adults, families, active older adults, and everyone in between. Participants will leave with actionable tools, inspiration, and confidence to expand their programming portfolio, adapt to change, and "ride the wave" of emerging recreation trends while strengthening community connection and engagement.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: Monday, November 23rd

Panic-Proof Planning:

We Don't Wing It, We P.L.A.N. It

Jason Chadock, Founder/CEO, The Chadock Group, LLC

Category: MGT

(0.1 CEU) 

When pressure spikes, most teams default to heroics, reactivity, and guesswork. This session gives leaders a panic-proof way to plan using three simple Thought Leadership Frameworks you can put to work immediately. You'll learn The P.L.A.N. Canvas to Picture the destination, Listen & Link stakeholders, Architect the systems, and Normalize the cadence. You'll explore The Panic-Proof Pathway, which moves any initiative from Trigger → Prepare → Plan → People → Process → Pulse → Perform → Post-Game. And you'll use The Stakeholder Merge Map to unify Staff, Board, and Community input into one shared plan. Expect a fast, story-driven hour with micro exercises so you leave with a one-page plan, a clear execution rhythm, and a buy-in method your team will actually use.

From Intent to Impact:

Cost-Effective Inclusion in Recreation

Adam LaPointe, CPRP, SHRM-CP, MPA, Recreation Director, Grafton Recreation

Category: TR

(0.1 CEU) 

Participants will examine evidence-informed, cost-effective strategies for improving access and participation for individuals of all abilities across recreation programs, facilities, and services. Emphasis will be placed on inclusive design principles, proactive planning, staff practices, and policy considerations that reduce reliance on individual accommodations and minimize financial impact.

Green Space ROI: Balancing User Fees, Maintenance & Field Performance

Scott Vose, Technical Advisor, Tom Irwin Advisors

Category: PARKS

(0.1 CEU)

The Green Spaces in our communities are subject to increasing demand from sports groups and community events. Understanding each Green Space's anticipated usage throughout the year is the first step to creating a sustainable maintenance plan tailored to supporting activity level. The intensity of field maintenance is directly related to the type of field user and duration of activity. Establishing field use policies and user fee structures for supporting field maintenance will be discussed. Essential cultural practices for high performance fields will be reviewed as well as strategies for lower maintenance areas.

Autonomous Solutions for Turf Care featuring Husqvarna Robotic Mowers from MTE Equipment Solutions, Inc

Sean Smith, Sales Manager, MTE Equipment Solutions, Inc

Category: Sales

This session will provide information about how Husqvarna robotic mowers operate, the benefits they provide, and how they measure up against

traditional mowing equipment. From installation and setup to ongoing service and support, the MTE Equipment Solutions, Inc. team is committed to setting your turf care operations up for success.

2:50 - 3:50 pm

Revenue Generation for Parks & Recreation

Mark Honberger, Coach/Mentor, Remarkable Recreation Solutions

Category: FIN

(0.1 CEU) 

It is vital that Park and Recreation Agencies press forward in their efforts to generate additional Revenue, instead of being passive and just "hoping" that more participants register for the recreation programs. This workshop will dive into 50 to 60 ideas for generating revenue for your agency. Some of these, you will likely already be doing, but may need to think about them in new ways. Others will be new ideas that you can put into practice starting tomorrow. By increasing revenues, you will allow your agency to have more resources available for other programs, and will help your agency reach its cost recovery goals.

A Culture of Leadership – Empowering a Team

Jason Chadock, Founder/CEO, The Chadock Group, LLC

Category: MGT

(0.1 CEU)

What happens to an organization when leadership isn't just a role - but a culture? In today's rapidly shifting workplace, teams without strong leadership struggle with turnover, low morale, and stalled productivity. This session explores a real transformational journey that demonstrates how empowered leadership at every level fuels resilience and long-term success. Participants will learn practical strategies to strengthen culture, navigate adversity, and create an environment where every employee has a voice and a shared sense of purpose. Walk away with tools you can use immediately to build a workplace where people feel valued, connected, and committed to a common cause.

Where Play Meets Discovery: Bringing STEM to Parks & Recreation

Kenny Michaels CMO, Director, Wallingford Parks and Recreation

Category: CAMP/PRG

(0.1 CEU)

The Wallingford Parks and Recreation Department and CT STEM Academy are proud to share their community engagement work that supports informal STEM Education in Parks and Recreation. Since 2011, the Town of Wallingford and CT STEM Academy have been at the forefront of engaging youth populations in STEM programming in partnership with non-profit agencies and the local school district. This partnership received national recognition in 2019 through the Rec2Tech National Design Challenge and multiple NASA education grants

since 2011. Most recently, our program has established a strong partnership with NASA Astro Camp and VEX IQ Robotics. Join us to hear about our journey, tips for beginning your own movement in your community, and engage in a fun hands-on STEM investigation!

Innovate the Outdoors: Cutting - Edge Tech for Park Maintenance Professionals

Greg Foran, Parks Superintendent & Tree Warden, Glastonbury Parks & Recreation

Category: PARKS

(0.1 CEU) 

"Innovation" may not be a new idea but the speed at which it's reshaping our work certainly is. Across pools, playgrounds, irrigation, turf, and trees, emerging technologies are driving safer and more efficient practices which help to produce better outcomes. From sustainability initiatives such as synthetic fields to organic alternatives due to the K-8 IPM ban, the landscape of our industry is evolving in real time. This session dives into that evolution-where we've been, what's changing now, and what's coming up just around the corner. We'll explore how tools like automated systems, remote monitoring, and advanced equipment are saving time and empowering teams. We'll look at innovations already making an impact - like laser grading, weather stations, ground-penetrating radar, and autonomous mowers - and ask what role they should play in our spaces. Along the way, we'll tackle the balance between tried-and-true practices and what's new and exciting. How do we adapt? What's worth the investment? And how can we stay ahead without getting overwhelmed? Expect a fast-paced, thought-provoking session that connects big ideas to practical applications - and might just leave you rethinking what's possible. This presentation promises to not drone on and on, but you may want one when it's done.

From Vision to Village: Creating a Memory Café - Lessons Learned

MaryJo Archambault, CTRS, CDP, FDRT, EdD, Professor, Southern Connecticut State University

Category: TR

(0.1 CEU)

A Memory Cafe offers a welcoming, stigma-free space where individuals living with dementia and their care partners can connect, laugh, create, and simply be - together. But how do you build one from the ground up? This candid and practical session walks participants through the real-world journey of creating a Memory Cafe, sharing both the milestones and the missteps along the way. Presenters will address the critical planning elements - from identifying community need and securing partnerships to designing programming that honors dignity and cognitive ability. Attendees will gain insight into navigating logistical challenges, sustaining volunteer and community support, and evaluating program impact. With an emphasis on honest reflection and transferable lessons, this session provides a roadmap for recreation professionals who want to launch or strengthen a Memory Cafe in their own community.

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.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSOR!

YOUR LOGO
COULD BE HERE!

