

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 cocktails 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 the conference!

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2026 AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Presented at the Annual Awards Luncheon - Tuesday, November 24th

NOMINATE SOMEONE TODAY!

CRPA is now accepting nominations for the 2026 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 9/4/26

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: Tuesday, November 24th

10:00 - 11:00 am

**Crack-the-Code Exhibit Hall
Team Building Challenge**

Dan Jaskot, President & General Manager, Empower Leadership
Category: MGT

(0.1 CEU)

Attendees will work collaboratively in small teams to solve various puzzle and 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!

11:10 am - 12:10 pm

**WOW FACTOR: Unleashing
Creativity in Recreation**

Mark Honberger, Coach/Mentor, Remarkable Recreation Solutions
Category: MGT

(0.1 CEU)

Can we have "Wow Factor" (That ability to stand out with something unique) without sacrificing our agency's original mission? Yes. We. Can. JUST WOW: We will dig into what is Wow and also how to accomplish this Wow without straying from our mission. HOW TO WOW: We will investigate how to create an agency that values innovation and incubates creative ideas. BE A WOW FACTOR(Y): Discover how to keep churning out Wow-Ness as we explore some dozens of real-life examples for adding Wow on a budget. Then, at the end, we will practice activating our personal creativity. Come learn "How To Wow"

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

Nick Campion, CPRP, Assistant Director, Danvers Recreation
Category: MKT/TECH

(0.1 CEU)

Even small tech investments can transform how a parks & recreation department operates. This session offers practical, accessible strategies drawn from real-world experience: using AI writing assistants to accelerate communications and administrative work; leveraging design tools to elevate marketing without a dedicated staff; applying community data platforms to inform decisions and demonstrate impact; using public engagement tools to capture resident sentiment beyond the usual voices; and automating routine workflows to reclaim staff time. The session is interactive and will share examples of relevant technology - attendees will share their own tools - and everyone will leave with actionable ideas regardless of department size or budget.

**Budget 101: Budget Basics
for New Professionals**

Tim Davis, CPRE, Director of Recreation, Brookline Recreation
Category: FIN

(0.1 CEU)

Navigating the financial landscape of municipal finances can feel overwhelming for new professionals. This introductory session provides a welcoming overview of the common financial models used in municipal recreation

management. Participants will gain insight into various funding structures, such as General Fund support, Enterprise Funds, Special Revenue Funds and more. This foundational knowledge will empower new recreation professionals to make informed financial decisions and strategically support their departments.

**Smarter RFPs: Crafting Clear
Solicitations That Deliver Results**
**Jonathan Tunsky, PLA, CPSI, Senior Project
Manager,** Weston and Sampson
Category: MGT/Parks


(0.1 CEU)

Looking to improve your Park Capital Improvement Project RFPs and get more meaningful, accurate responses? Join Jonathan Tunsky of Weston & Sampson for an insightful session packed with practical tips and real-world guidance. Learn how overly complex or unclear RFPs can unintentionally confuse vendors, resulting in weaker responses and a more time-consuming process overall. This session will break down what works - and what doesn't - so you can approach your next solicitation with clarity and confidence. Attendees will gain actionable strategies for crafting clear, concise, and effective RFPs that drive stronger results. We'll also explore alternatives to the traditional RFP process - especially for smaller-budget projects-including how leveraging the CT DAS contract can streamline selection and save both time and resources. You'll leave equipped with the tools and confidence to create well-structured, efficient solicitations that are easier to manage and deliver better outcomes.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS: Tuesday, November 24th


12:20 pm - 1:20 pm

Be Essential by Tracking Performance Measures

Mark Honberger, *Coach/Mentor,*
Remarkable Recreation Solutions
Category: MGT (0.1 CEU) 

By turning basic data into vital information that tells our agency's story, we can highlight our agency as an "Essential Service" to both our elected policy makers and the community. We'll investigate how to harness the power of Excel to properly track performance measures. We'll identify how to present those performance measures in a beautiful report that tells your agency story. And we'll cover unique ideas for accomplishing budget projections that are accurate and reliable.

Building for the Future with Intentional Focus

Jason Chadock, *Founder/CEO,* The Chadock Group, LLC
Category: MGT (0.1 CEU) 

Across the country, communities are changing faster than many agencies can adapt. Aging facilities, shifting demographics, and limited resources create pressure to "do more with less," often without a clear roadmap. This session shows how future - focused planning, intentional storytelling, and proactive operations can transform how departments serve their communities. Participants will explore practical methods for diagnosing current operations, aligning vision across stakeholders, and building strategic and capital plans that anticipate - not chase - community needs. Through real examples and guided exercises, you'll learn how to strengthen your department's narrative, identify gaps before they become failures, and build the confidence to make bold, well supported asks. Walk away with tools to plan forward, communicate clearly, and position your department for long term relevance and success.

Lifeguard Surveillance: Turning Research into Practice

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

How do lifeguards scan the water and recognize distress and drowning? Many researchers have studied this question in the laboratory and in the field. This presentation will review how lifeguard surveillance has been studied, what has been found, and how lifeguard instructors and supervisors can put those results into practice at their own facilities. It will also examine the future of lifeguard surveillance research and how technology can be utilized to enhance research and training.

Why Forest Management is Needed in Recreational Open Spaces!

David Irwin, *Certified Forester,* State of Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection, Forestry Division
Category: PARKS (0.1 CEU)

Forests of public parks are often seen as a place for unchanged preservation, or are otherwise "back acres" that are ignored. But forestry has an important place in our open spaces, as resilience in the face of climate change is increasingly important, and forest pests and invasive plants continue to threaten future ecosystems and habitats. Join DEEP Forester, David Irwin, as he discusses forest history, the state of our forests today, and what can be done to ensure healthier future open spaces, without sacrificing recreational opportunities of today.

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