



FALL WORKSHOP 2023 – Cedar Falls
September 18-20, 2023



FALL WORKSHOP 2023 – Cedar Falls

September 18-20, 2023



Hotel Information:

Hilton Garden Inn
7213 Nordic Drive
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613
\$119 plus plus per night

Reservations:

Room Block Name: IPRA

Room Block Ends: September 8, 2023

Guests can call the hotel directly at 319-266-6611 press "0" for the front desk
or use the Hilton Link below for reservations:

<https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/ipra-fall-professional-development/>

IPRA is collaborating with Adaptive Sports Iowa as they host a one day summit along side the Fall Workshop on Wednesday, September 20, 2023.

[Registration Link](#)

Hannah Bowman, CTRS

Director of Adaptive Sports Iowa

hannah.bowman@adaptivesportsiowa.org

.....

**ADAPTIVE SPORTS
AND RECREATION SUMMIT**

.....

Join other professionals to share,
plan, and develop strategies in order
to help Iowans with disabilities

Wednesday
Sept 20, 2023

9:00 am - 4:00pm

*CTRS, CPRP, & CPRE CEUs available

adaptersportsiowa.org

2023

A photograph showing a group of people seated in a room, facing a screen displaying a presentation. The room has a wooden wall and a large window.

FALL WORKSHOP 2023 – Cedar Falls

September 18-20, 2023

Delegate Registration:

Early Bird Deadline - Thursday, September 7th

IPRA Member Rate

Non Member Rate

Full Package: \$175

\$275

Tuesday only: \$135

\$210

Student Full Package: \$20

Late Registration - Begins Friday, September 8th

IPRA Member Rate

Non Member Rate

Full Package: \$225

\$325

Tuesday only: \$185

\$235

Student Full Package: \$20

Additional Fall Workshop information and Registration can be found at -

<https://iapra.org/education/fall-workshop/>

Contact Information:

Steven E. Jordison, CPRP

President and CEO

steve@iapra.org

515-291-4917

Kelly M. Johnson Rose, CPRP

Vice President of Membership Engagement
and Communication

kelly@iapra.org

641-990-1606



Monday, September 18

12:00 - 5:00 PM Golf Outing

Pheasant Ridge Golf Course
3205 W 12th Street, Cedar Falls

Shotgun start at Noon / Best Shot / \$60 per golfer

Presented by: Boland Recreation

Golf Fee Includes:

Light sack lunch

18 holes

Cart

Two beverage tickets

Flight and hole prizes

Evening social



*If you are interested in just the golf outing
with no Fall Workshop attendance,
Contact Steve Jordison at steve@iapra.org*

5:30 - 7:30 PM Evening Social

Pheasant Ridge Golf Course
3205 W 12th Street, Cedar Falls

Activities include:

Golf outing awards will be presented

Iowa Foundation for Parks and Recreation Silent Auction



IOWA FOUNDATION
FOR PARKS AND
RECREATION

Presented by: Bolton-Menk



Real People. Real Solutions.

Tuesday, September 19



7:30 AM Registration Table Opens

Presented by: Shade Creations by Waterloo

8:30-9:30AM Educational Sessions

Session #1 - If You Are Not At The Table, You Are On The Menu

Matt Boggess / city of Vinton & Cris Christenson / ACCO Unlimited Corporation

Room: Panther CEU 0.1

Learn how current and upcoming legislation is affecting your park and recreation departments. If property tax growth and levy restrictions are put in place, the amount of money that local governments can utilize for their general fund obligations will drastically be altered. Join our discussion on how we can work together to affect changes to these bills.

Session #2 - Disc Golf Panel Discussion

Garret Riordan, Erik Young & Paul Cheville/ city of Waverly

Room: Black Hawk CEU 0.1

Learn how the city of Waverly and a group of avid disc golfers partnered to create an 18 hole disc golf course in Waverly.

Session #3 - Off Highway Vehicle Parks in Iowa

Paul Huting / city of Waterloo, Dan Kleen / Iowa OHV Association & Jessica Flatt / Iowa DNR

Room: Viking CEU 0.1

This session will introduce you to what OVH parks are and the many benefits of creating a park in your community. Representatives of the Iowa DNR OVH Program and Iowa OHV Association will present.

9:30-9:45 AM Break

Presented by: MSA Professional Services



9:45-10:45 AM Educational Sessions

Session #4 - Insights from Park and Recreation Leaders

Shawn O'Shea & Shannon Gapp / MSA Professional Services

Room: Panther CEU 0.1

The best ideas come from each other. In this panel conversation with park and recreation leaders, along with MSA's Shawn O'Shea and Shannon Gapp as moderators, we will discuss topics around effectively working with legislators, public engagement best practices, the do's and don'ts of park amenities and more.

Tuesday, September 19

9:45-10:45 AM Educational Sessions continued

Session #5 - Adel Power Wheels Nationals

Ramona Dillinger / city of Adel

Room: Black Hawk CEU 0.1

Exploring special events - what's new and unique - how we set up / organized and ran the Adel Power Wheels Nationals taking it to a level above and beyond what other communities across the United States have done.

Session #6 - What Parks and Rec Need to Know About HR and Workers Compensation

Lisa England / IMWCA

Room: Viking CEU 0.1

Learn how to keep your employees safe save your employer money by keeping worker compensation cost down and recognizing unsafe areas/acts.

10:45-11:00 AM Break

Presented by: RecDesk



11:00-12:00 PM Educational Sessions

Session #7 - Introduction to Outdoor Bocce Ball

Katie Poirier / city of Urbandale

Room: Panther CEU 0.1

Bocce ball is an outdoor game that is easily adapted to different ages, physical abilities, and playing surfaces. We'll walk you through the rules of the game with instructions and demonstrations. We'll discuss playing surfaces, sports league potential, and start up costs.

Session #8 - Agency Cooperation in Reducing Crime within Parks

Dennis O'Neill / city of Cedar Falls Police Department

Room: Black Hawk CEU 0.1

A brief description of developing a working relationship between a city's Parks Division and the Police Division. The focus of the session is showing how both divisions can work together in the prevention/ apprehension of crimes within parks (i.e. vandalism, burglary, illegal drug use, assaults). The presenters will give 1st hand accounts of the challenges of developing the working relationship and their combined efforts to make the project a success.

Session #9 - Teen Workers

Lisa England / IMWCA

Room: Viking CEU 0.1

Teens usually make up most of parks and recreation employees. Do you know the laws you need to employ them? Do you know how to recruit them?

Tuesday, September 19

12:00-1:30 PM Buffet Lunch
Presented by: Burbach Aquatics, Inc



Highlights include but not limited to new board member installation, announcing new board officers, financial update, annual report, and more Association insider tips.

1:30-2:30 PM Educational Sessions

Session #10 - Parks, Partnerships, & Policy

Anna Gray & Andrea Boulton / Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation

Room: Panther CEU 0.1

This session will demonstrate the power of partnerships and engagement in public policy for developing and enhancing Iowa's parks, trails, and open spaces. INHF will discuss funding opportunities and how to build support for community-centered conservation and outdoor amenities. Finally, the session will provide participants with tools for engaging elected officials and local leaders in parks and recreation initiatives.

Session #11 - Recreation Center Facilities - Development, Operations, and Partnerships

Matt Siders / city of Mt. Vernon & Paxton Petersen / city of Humboldt

Room: Black Hawk CEU 0.1

This session will be focused on recently built, city operated recreation facilities in the state of Iowa. Including funding sources and development, daily operations of facilities, programming and special events, and the partnerships with in the community.

Session #12 - Updates to Red Cross Programs

Cindy Dassow / American Red Cross

Room: Viking CEU 0.1

This session will provide updates to the Red Cross Programs and timelines for the updates.



2:30-2:45 PM Break
Presented by: Pilot Rock / RJ Thomas



Tuesday, September 19

2:45-3:45 PM Educational Sessions

Session #13 - Importance of Communications with Park & Rec

Janet Wilwerding / city of Johnston

Room: Panther CEU 0.1

Communications is essential to ensure residents receive information on events, activities, and projects happening within the community. Let the experts help tell your story through the appropriate channels.

Session #14 - Performing Arts Programs

Daniel Sheridan / city of Davenport

Room: Black Hawk CEU 0.1

You don't need a theatre or dance studio to start serving youth with the arts. Session will focus on those interested in integrating or expanding performing arts opportunities. Also, applicable to assessing programs, creating culture, and building success for rec programs.

Session #15 - Fish and Wildlife Management in Urban Areas

Tyler Stubbs & Ross Ellingson / Iowa DNR

Room: Viking CEU 0.1

This two part presentation will focus on how cities can work with the DNR to provide public fishing access while also providing ways to limit negative interactions between people and wildlife through park planning and design. Through improving how stormwater basins and the surrounding areas are planned and managed, cities can better serve their users and the resource.

3:45-4:00 PM Break

Presented by:

4:00-5:00 PM Educational Sessions

Session #16 - Hot Topics In The Pool Industry

David Peters / Carrico Aquatic Resources

Room: Panther CEU 0.1

Discuss what has been seen this past summer pool season by pool staff and health inspectors.

Session #17 - More Partnerships & Collaboration Between Parks and Libraries

Becca Niles & Brittany Peacock / city of Davenport

Room: Black Hawk CEU 0.1

Continued discussions about how parks and libraries can partner to better serve community members. Includes examples of collaborations in Davenport as well as other cities and counties.

Session #18 - Managing Prairies on the UNI Campus Off-Site Tour

Max of 15 participants. Pre-register at Registration Table CEU 0.1

Tuesday, September 19

5:45 - 7:45 PM Evening Social

River Place Plaza

200 State Street, Cedar Falls

Presented by: Carrico Aquatics



Why come? Food truck, beverages, tailgate games, and music by Austin Tasler.
Wear your favorite team apparel.



Wednesday, September 20

7:30 AM Registration Table Opens

Presented by:

8:30-9:30 AM Educational Sessions

Session #19 - How Community Parks and Recreation are Places of Mental Health

Rodney Dieser / University of Northern Iowa

Room: Panther CEU 0.1

There is a great deal of research-based evidence that community parks and recreation services provide psychological or mental health beneficial outcomes. This session will explain five mental health benefits that are offered by engagement in community parks and recreation services.

Session #20 - YPN Roundtable

Steve Jordison / IPRA

Room: Black Hawk

Open to all delegates age 35 years and younger. Mix and mingle as we share the good, bad, and ugly. Our goal is to listen and learn how to improve our work environment, new program ideas, and creating a network of like-minded colleagues.

9:30-9:45 AM Break

Presented by: Kay Park Recreation



KAY PARK RECREATION

MAKING PLACES PEOPLE FRIENDLY • SINCE 1954

9:45-10:45 AM Educational Sessions

Session #21 - Burnout Prevention for Community Parks and Recreation Professionals

Rodney Dieser / University of Northern Iowa

Room: Panther CEU 0.1

Over 50% of people in the U.S. have experienced burnout. Over 10 years ago (in 2012), a top profession concern identified by Illinois Park and Recreation Association members was burnout. This session will explain the seven features of burnout and how parks and recreation professionals can remedy or prevent burnout by creating a self-care plan.

Session #22 - Summer 2023 Pool Season Wrap-Up

Kate Connell / city of Iowa City & Ashley Bjork / city of North Liberty

Room: Black Hawk

Non-CEU sessions. A chance to share ideas and ask questions prior to the Aquatics Committee meetings starting later in the fall.

Wednesday, September 20

10:45-11:00 AM Break

Presented By:

11:00-12:00 PM Educational Sessions

Session #23 - 24 Equity and Inclusion Ideas for 2024

Kate Connell & Malory Smysor / city of Iowa City

Room: Panther CEU 0.1

Equity and inclusion are the future; but to some these are very scary words. In this session we will look at 24 opportunities to promote equity and inclusion within your organization, in simple, accessible ways, that can have a big impact on your community.

Session #24 - Getting the Real Scoop: Successful Focus Groups

Sarah Hardin & Anna Jensen / University of Iowa

Room: Black Hawk CEU 0.1

Focus group interviews are frequently used by communities (and corporate marketing agencies) to explore the question behind the question or to gather deeper information than can be gleaned from survey data alone. If you have found yourself attempting to navigate focus group research without a clear roadmap or you've avoided it because you were unsure of the purpose and process, this session is for you! Gain insights into successful focus group process and strategies that result in useful data.



A special shout out to the Tiger Team members for organizing this event:

Kari Allen, Johnston

Molly Moore, Urbandale

Paxton Petersen, Humboldt

Amanda Randerson, CPRP, Davenport

Garrett Riordan, Waverly

Speaker bios

Matt Boggess / city of Vinton



Matt Boggess is the Director of the Vinton Parks and Recreation Department. During Matt's tenure as Park's and Recreation Director the Vinton Parks & Recreation Department has built new amenities including multiple playgrounds and a splashpad, introduced a state-of-the-art eSports Lab, and lead the design and construction of the Nathan's Miles Glow Trail, the longest such trail in the United States. Matt has spent over 17 years in the fields of fundraising consulting, community parks and recreation and private not for profit recreation. Along with his passion for Parks and Recreation, Matt also enjoys, lecturing on college campuses and workshops about topics pertaining to leadership philosophy, program implementation, and career building. In his free time, Matt enjoys spending time with his wife Cyanna, his two daughters Rylee and Parker. Matt also serves as the Assistant High School Girls Golf Coach. He enjoys a good craft beer, golf, mountain biking, and going to Hawkeye and UNI Panther sporting events.

Cris Christenson / ACCO Unlimited Corporation



Cris Christenson is an accomplished business leader who has spent over 30 years driving strategic business development, key account management, and operational enhancements. As the President of ACCO Unlimited Corporation, located in Johnston, Cris has helped maintain the company's position as the premier supplier of chemicals and services for the water treatment industry. His expertise spans all facets of the water/wastewater industry, from underground utilities to facility construction and water and wastewater systems that sets Cris apart is not just his business acumen, but also his dedication to the community. He has actively supported various non-profit organizations, serving on boards with roles as treasurer, legislative affairs, corporate sponsorships. In addition to his work as President of ACCO Unlimited, Cris is managing partner of Capitol Connect, a company that helps clients achieve their objectives in the political arena. Whether it's lobbying for a policy change or raising funds to facilitate change, Capitol Connect connects clients with the right people, strategies, and solutions. Cris's well-rounded approach to leadership and commitment to causes he believes in makes him an asset to any organization. Cris's biggest accomplishment is the role he plays as a father of 4, and loving husband. He has a passion for golf and enjoys traveling.

Paul Cheville / city of Waverly

Paul is a 2001 graduate of Hawkeye Community College Horticulture School. He is currently the Public Grounds Manager for the city of Waverly Leisure Services department. Before joining the city of Waverly in 2008, Paul worked in lawn care, full-service tree care and wholesale containerized nursery production. He enjoys hanging out with his wife and family doing anything that they find interesting and working in and around the community trying to help Waverly have safe, fun and aesthetically pleasing places to play.

Speaker bios

Erik Young / Waverly

Erik is an avid disc golfer for 10 years. While out playing disc golf one day, a group of friends decided to start a disc golf league. The Cedar Valley Disc Golf League was formed seven years ago. The league has over 700 members with additional ones adding daily. The league gives back funds to the community that are raised during tournaments along with weekly prizes for league play. Funds are also used for course maintenance not only in Waverly but other community courses.

Paul Huting / city of Waterloo



Paul is a graduate of Iowa State University and has been employed by the City of Waterloo for 43 years, serving as Landscape Foreman, Superintendent of Parks, and Leisure Services Director. He has served as a City Department Head for 29 years.

Major projects during Paul's tenure include the opening of the Cedar Valley SportsPlex, the Waterloo Cedar River Boat House, RiverLoop Amphitheater, Riverfront Sports Complex, Riverside Skate Park, Riverview Recreation Area, Mark's Park Spray Park, Sherwood Park Recreation Area, and major renovations and improvements at Lincoln

Park, Lafayette Park, Greenbelt Lake, Gates Park, Byrnes Park, Riverfront Baseball Stadium, Young Ice Arena, and at Waterloo's 3 municipal golf courses.

Dan Kleen / President with National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC)



Dan is the President of the Board of Directors National for Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC). He has been on the NOHVCC Board for 24 years serving as President for the past 21 years. He helped establish the Iowa Off-Highway Vehicle Association (IOHVA) in 1987 and has represented the IOHVA as their Vice-President, President, Lobbyist, Executive Director and is currently the Public Relations Director. In 2005, Dan formed the Iowa Motorsports Coalition. He has served on Iowa's Federal RTP advisory committee for over 25 years.

Dan is also a founding member of the Friends of Iowa's Trails group who sponsor the annual Iowa Trails Summit. After a diving accident in the mid-80's, Dan was left wheelchair bound. The accident didn't stop Dan from enjoying outdoor recreation. He is still an avid hunter and has turned to OHVs and other forms of motorized mobility to get into the great outdoors. Dan has been instrumental in setting up disabled hunts and rides for our disabled veterans in his home state of Iowa as well as in other states.

Speaker Bios

Jessica Flatt / Iowa DNR



Jessica Flatt is a Recreational Grants Manager with the Iowa DNR Parks, Forests, and Preserves Bureau. In this role, she is responsible for managing several grant programs, including the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Federal Recreational Trails grant, the OHV & snowmobile programs, among others. Prior to this position, Jessica served as the Area Forester for Stephens State Forest in south-central Iowa for over 14 years. Her favorite part of working as a grant manager is that she gets to help partners increase access to recreational opportunities for their communities.

Shawn O'Shae / MSA Professional Services



Shawn O'Shea, AICP is a Client Service Manager, Urban Planner and Remote Pilot. His experience includes Community/Regional Planning and Design, GIS Analysis and Planning, Comprehensive Planning, Land-use Planning Downtown Planning, Park Planning, Funding and Public Engagement. He is a certified planner (AICP) and he has both Private Pilot and Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS) Airman Certificates. Shawn has 10 years of experience as an urban/regional planner and has secured more than \$2 million in grant funding for his client communities. Shawn

holds a Master's Degree in Community and Regional Planning from Iowa State University.

Shannon Gapp / MSA Professionals



Shannon is dedicated to creating equitable, sustainable, healthy, and resilient communities. With a bachelor's degree in community and regional planning and a master's degree in landscape architecture, she has a wide range of interests and passions. As both a project planner and landscape designer, she understands how planning principles inform the built environment. This connection drives holistic solutions that, above all, improve the quality of life for residents. Her experience includes: urban design, parks and community master planning, public engagement, GIS

analysis and mapping, community visioning, land use planning, construction documentation, digital rendering, and more. Having worked in both the public and private sector has allowed her to see first-hand what works, and the importance of community involvement in planning and design.

Speaker Bios

Ramona Dillinger / city of Adel



Ramona has worked as a recreation manager / aquatics supervisor for 24 years – spent 22 years in her home community and the last two years has been with the Adel Parks and Recreation Department as their Aquatics / Recreation Supervisor. She is on the Iowa Foundation for Parks and Recreation Board and a member of the IPRA Aquatics Committee. Ramona received her BS in Recreation / Corporate Health and Wellness from Northwest Missouri State University as well as a MS in Recreation Management. She is the proud mother of twin boys and love spending time exploring the great outdoors either riding my bike or on horseback.

Lisa England, SPHR, SHRM, SCP, IMWCA & Iowa League of Cities



Lisa served as a human resource professional for over twenty years, both in the public and private sectors, before becoming the IMWCA Human Resources and Management Adviser. She provides consultations for the Iowa League of Cities and IMWCA members on employment issues. Lisa is also a library board president and a retired EMT/Volunteer firefighter. She is currently working on a graduate degree and enjoys spending time with her three teenage children. You can often find Lisa doing her homework while sitting on the sidelines of their activities.

Katie Poirier / city of Urbandale



Katie works for the city of Urbandale Parks and Rec as a Recreation Coordinator, She creates and supports events and activities specifically for the 55+ population. This includes several sports leagues like pickleball, cornhole, shuffleboard, and bocce ball.

Dennis O’Niell / city of Cedar Falls Police Department



Dennis has been with the Cedar Falls Police Department since 1999. During his time he has worked all 3 shifts. Dennis has also worked in the Investigative Unit as well as with the Tri-County Drug Task force as an undercover officer. In addition, he has served specialty assignments with the city’s Bike Patrol Unit and SWAT. Dennis was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in 2005. Currently, he is assigned as the Lieutenant of the Investigative Unit where he oversee five Investigators, a School Resource Officer, and a civilian analyst.

Speaker Bios

Anna Gray / Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation



Anna Gray serves as the Public Policy Director & Counsel for Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, working to protect Iowa's natural and agricultural lands, improve water quality, and create outdoor recreation opportunities through law and policy. Anna works closely with elected and agency officials to inform policy initiatives and coordinates with partners to develop tools that empower grassroots advocates. Anna holds a degree in Agricultural Business and Economics from Iowa State University and a law degree from Drake University Law School.

Andrea Boulton / Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation



Andrea Boulton joined the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation in 2006. She began her career working with community groups, and public agencies to plan and develop multi-use trails. She has since expanded her role to continue working with public and private partners to grow opportunities for community conservation and outdoor recreation. Andrea provides support through land acquisition, community organizing, proposal writing, and technical assistance. Andrea graduated from Drake University with a degree in Environmental Policy and Law, Politics & Society in 2004 and her master's degree in Public Administration from Drake University in 2009.

Matt Siders / city of Mt. Vernon



Matt is currently the Director of Parks and Recreation and Director for the Lester Buresh Family Community Wellness Center (LBC) for the City of Mount Vernon IA. He is entering his 12th year. He has held various positions in recreation in Missouri, South Carolina, and Iowa. Matt has been honored with the Young Professional Award in two states, Missouri and Iowa. In his spare time he enjoys any type of sporting event and exploring new destinations.

Paxton Petersen / city of Humboldt

Paxton is the Recreation director for the city of Humboldt since 2020 and has worked for the city of Humboldt for over five years in various roles.

Speaker Bios

Cindy Dassow / American Red Cross



Cindy spent over 20 years in the recreation field prior to joining the Red Cross team in 2012 and held WSIT and LGIT certifications. Cindy specializes in working with aquatics and public safety divisions for the states of Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. In her spare time Cindy enjoys hiking, biking, and spending time with her family.

Janet Wilwerding / city of Johnston



Janet Wilwerding has served for six years as the Communications Manager at the city of Johnston, Iowa. Before joining the city of Johnston, she worked for the city of Pleasant Hill, Iowa as a Communications Specialist. Her previous experience includes working in advertising and marketing at several advertising agencies and at the Meredith Corporation. Her knowledge of marketing and communications has helped to ensure residents understand the information being shared. She holds a bachelor's degree in Marketing

from Iowa State University and a master's degree from Drake University. Outside of work, Janet takes pleasure in watching her kids participate in various activities; including baseball, basketball, Ninja, football and competitive dance. She also enjoys teaching early morning fitness classes at 5:15 a.m. Her motto in life is wake up and become a better you because no one else will do it for you.

Daniel Sheridan / city of Davenport

Daniel Sheridan is the Performing Arts Supervisor for Davenport Parks & Recreation (DPR). A native of Davenport, Daniel went on to get his BA in theatre (St. Ambrose) and Master of Fine Arts (University of Connecticut). In 2008, he started with DPR as a part time coordinator with a team of six part time employees. Today the Performing Arts boast 33 part time employees and many Youth/AmeriCorps serving throughout the year. With over 2,000 annual enrollments and participants from 35+ communities and towns enrolled, Daniel supervises programs in theatre, dance, tumbling, magic, special events and more. His belief in mission driven leadership and practical management has helped create culture where staff celebrate and support one another.

Speaker Bios

Ross Ellingson / Iowa DNR

Ross Ellingson is the Wildlife Depredation Biologist for Eastern Iowa. He has been with the Iowa DNR Wildlife Bureau for over 20 years, spending the last 14 years with Iowa's Wildlife Depredation Program. He enjoys meeting new people and the opportunity to see so much of eastern Iowa private land.

Tyler Stubbs / Iowa DNR



Tyler Stubbs has been the statewide Community Fishing Biologist for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources based out of Des Moines since 2016. Prior to being in this position he was a Fisheries Biologist with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks for 5 years. In his spare time, Tyler enjoys fishing and exploring the 100+ city park fisheries with his family in the Des Moines metro.

David Peters, Carrico Aquatic Resources



David has been helping commercial pools and spas for over 24 years. He is the lead instructor for Pool & Hot Tub Alliance Certified Pool/Spa Operator (R) for more than two decades. He also enjoys going to UNI games, hunting, and golfing.

Becca Niles / city of Davenport



Becca Niles is a transplant to Iowa from California where she worked in the industry within the public, nonprofit and academic sectors for over 20 years. While her primary focus currently is in communication, community engagement, and social media management she has worked as a recreation programmer, special events manager and educator throughout her career. But her passion lies in creating opportunities for collaboration between departments and agencies to best serve her community.

Speaker Bios

Brittany Peacock / city of Davenport



Brittany Peacock is the Community Outreach Supervisor for Davenport Public Library in Davenport, Iowa. Peacock has been with Davenport Public Library for 4.5 years and enjoys performing story times, bring library materials to folks unable to visit the library, and sharing her love for literacy with her community. To support her passion for outreach, Peacock is the current President of the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services an national, professional organization that provides support to outreach professionals in libraries. When Peacock isn't collaborating with Becca or out reading to kiddos, she enjoys spending time with her husband, two kiddos, and pets.

Rodney Dieser / University of Northern Iowa



Rodney B. Dieser, Ph.D., LMHC is the author of seven books and over 100 articles on the topic of leisure and mental health. His writings have appeared in the USA Today, History of Psychiatry, Lancet Psychiatry, Mayo Clinic Proceedings Journal of Leisure Research and the Therapeutic Recreation Journal. He is a Professor of recreation, tourism and nonprofit leadership at the University of Northern Iowa and works 10 hours a week as a Licensed Mental Health Counselor at Wartburg College in Waverly Iowa.

Kate Connell / city of Iowa City



Kate Connell is the Aquatics Supervisor in Iowa City, Iowa. She has worked in the aquatics field for 15+ years sharing her passion for safety and leadership through staff management, development, and training. Kate is an advocate for equity in recreational water use and has assisted in providing free swimming lessons, safety education, and accessible pool events to the diverse Iowa community where she lives. She's a founding member of AOAP's Diversity and Inclusion Committee and recently was honored as a 2022 NRPA Young Professional Fellow and Downtown Iowa City Woman of Impact. She loves to spend her recreational time outside with her partner and son in their airstream.

Ashley Bjork / city of North Liberty



Ashley Bjork is the Aquatic Supervisor for the city of North Liberty. She has worked in the aquatics field for over 15 years and has experience in both private and public sectors. Ashley began her supervisory career with Life Time Fitness before moving to the city of North Liberty. Throughout the years she has grown a passion for coaching and developing staff into leaders. Ashley enjoys spending free time outdoors with her husband and two kids.

Speaker Bios

Malory Smysor / city of Iowa City



Malory Smysor is a CTRS with over twenty years' experience working with individuals with disabilities. A Graduate of Western Illinois University, Malory has a master's degree in Therapeutic Recreation with an undergrad in Communications. An Iowa native, Malory's career has taken her all around the Midwest, finally bringing her back to Iowa this past year where she is currently working at the Iowa City Parks and Recreation Department as the Recreation Program Supervisor of Adaptive and Inclusive Recreation and Outreach.

Sarah Hardin / University of Iowa



Sarah Hardin: Sarah is a recent addition to the University of Iowa SRM faculty. For over 30 years, she has been engaged in leadership experiences in collegiate, community, and nonprofit recreation with a focus on student professional preparation. Her passion for the importance of recreation in lifestyle enhancement is demonstrated through work with collegiate recreation and fitness administration, public and nonprofit board membership, and development of curriculum to prepare aspiring recreation professionals.

Anna Jensen / University of Iowa



Anna Jensen: Anna prepares University of Iowa students for careers in sport and recreation management roles through experiential learning. As the Director of Field Experience in UISRM, she works closely with students and external partners to identify opportunities for engagement and enrichment for all parties. She has spent decades connecting experiential learning and growth mindset development to student experiences and community outcomes. Looking for ways to get students interested in your internships...or to build out an internship? Reach out and connect!