

2024 Conference - Des Moines, Iowa

March 25-28, 2024

DELEGATE BROCHURE



IOWA 
PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION

*** Pictures courtesy of Ashley McLain ***

CONFERENCE 2024 – Des Moines

March 25-28, 2024

Event / Hotel Information:

Marriott Downtown Des Moines

700 Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50309

Hotel Room Block

\$145 plus applicable taxes per night
Double Queen Rooms



Reservation link - [Click here](#)

Room block: Iowa Parks and Recreation Association

Room block deadline: March 4, 2024

Rooms are limited and not guaranteed—Tuesday evening is already sold out

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

Courtney Haley, Des Moines

Danya Moore, West Des Moines

Kari Allen, CPRP, Johnston

Kate Connell, CPRP, Councilman Hunsaker

Molly Rupert, CPRP, Des Moines

Shauneica Lane, Norwalk

CONFERENCE 2024 – Des Moines

March 25-28, 2024

Delegate Registration:

Early Bird Deadline - Wednesday, March 13

IPRA Member Rate	Non Member Rate
Full Package: \$275	\$325
Tuesday only: \$190	\$240
Wednesday only: \$190	\$240
Student Full Package: \$50 / Student One Day only: \$20	

Late Registration - begins Thursday, March 14

IPRA Member Rate	Non Member Rate
Full Package: \$325	\$375
Tuesday only: \$215	\$260
Wednesday only: \$215	\$260
Student Full Package: \$55 / Student One Day only: \$20	

Aquatic CEU Workshop - \$50 (Must be a paid conference delegate. In-person only.)

Additional Conference information and Registration can be found at -

<https://iapra.org/education/iowa-conference/>

Contact Information:

Kelly M. Johnson Rose, CPRP

President & CEO

Kelly@iapra.org

641-325-2164

Mallory Iverson

Vice President

Mallory@iapra.org

641-990-3887



Event Parking

Overnight valet parking is available at the Marriott for \$35 per night

Short term valet parking for up to 8 hours is available at the Marriott for \$23 per day

Ramp parking is available at several downtown ramps

Street parking is available with use of the ParkDSM app

INFORMATION FOR THE NEW

PARKING TECHNOLOGY



OVERVIEW OF THE NEW SYSTEM

Replacing the 3,000 individual parking meters are Stall Marker IDs with unique 6-digit numbers. Use these space numbers at a kiosk, mobile app or text to park to pay for parking.



HOW DO THE STALL MARKERS WORK?

Each stall marker will have a unique 6-digit space number associated with each parking space. This number is necessary to remember to pay for parking at the kiosks and on the mobile app. Remember your space number to pay for your parking.



HOW DO THE KIOSKS WORK?

The kiosks have on-screen instructions to walk you through the process. Make sure to have your unique 6-digit number to pay for parking. You can make a payment at any kiosk location, not just the kiosk on the block where you parked.



HOW DOES THE MOBILE APP WORK?

The mobile app, ParkDSM, shows all available parking downtown. Once parked, you can enter your space number, a debit/credit card, and pay for parking from your phone. You can extend your parking anytime through



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION & WAYS TO PAY

Time limits on parking are not changing. Your session will only last as long as the limit (4 or 12 hours.) You can text "PARK" to 77223, or if you do not have a smartphone, you can call 833-930-0050 for your parking session. The kiosks function in three languages; English, French and Spanish. ParkDSM is available in English and Spanish.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
DSM.CITY/MOBILEPARKING

Tours

Tour #1 - MacRae Park

CEU 0.1

Tour MacRae Park improvements, a signature, multi-phase major park renovation project of the Des Moines Park System

Tour #2 - West Des Moines RecPlex

CEU 0.1

The MidAmerican Energy Company RecPlex, a 66-acre, city-owned facility is a youth-focused athletic venue, offering soccer, ice hockey, basketball, and a wide range of other recreational, educational, and adaptive programs.

Tour #3 - John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park

CEU 0.1

This will be an overview of the landscape maintenance of the Pappajohn Sculpture Park. Information on the maintenance of the turf, irrigation and the landscape beds, and the challenges that are faced. After the discussion there will be a walking tour of the park with information on all the artwork.

Tour #4 - Riverview Park

CEU 0.1

A back stage tour of the Prairie Meadows Riviera Stage at Riverview Park; the City's biggest outdoor event venue

You can register for the tours at the Registration Table. A maximum of 15 participants per tour.

Delegate Gift

Outdoor Recreation Products is once again the sponsor of our delegate gifts.

Stop by the registration table to pick up your gift.



Outdoor Recreation Products

MONDAY, MARCH 25

12:00-5:00 PM Bike & Brew

An optional bike ride that will start and end at the Marriott Hotel. The ride is a little over six miles with stops at Single Speed, RAGBRAI, Confluence, Exile, and Big Grove.

Contact Matt Boggess mboggess@vintonia.gov for more information.

[Register Here](#)



6:00 - 8:00 PM Evening Social

Presented by:

ACCO Unlimited Corporation
Bolton & Menk

RAGBRAI Headquarters

501 Scott Ave

Des Moines, Iowa 50309



Hey party people! It's cornhole tournament time at the Monday night social of the IPRA Spring Conference. Hosted by Iowa Foundation for Parks and Recreation, you're invited to grab a fellow recreator and get ready for some epic cornhole action. All are welcome and sign-up is FREE! Register when you arrive at the social and battle it out for bragging rights and rad prizes. This is THE Monday night plans. See you there!

Get ready for some bracket-busting fun at the IPRA Spring Conference! Iowa Foundation for Parks and Recreation is hosting a March Madness Basketball Squares pool with cash prizes for picking the winning teams. Even if your picks get busted, you'll still be supporting Iowa's parks and recreation through the Foundation. Square prices are \$2/square or 3 for \$5. Cash and Venmo accepted. No need to sweat setting up the tourney, communicating to coaches or parents, or worrying if jerseys will arrive in time - just sit back, fill in your squares, and enjoy the madness with your fellow basketball and parks and rec fanatics!



**BOLTON
& MENK**

Real People. Real Solutions.

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

7:30 AM Registration Table Opens

Presented by:

Boland Recreation



8:30-9:30 AM Educational Sessions

Session #1 - Bringing Home the Gold Medal

Ben Page / Des Moines

A panel of leaders from the Des Moines Parks and Recreation will share their journey as they become the first city in Iowa to ever be awarded the NRPA Gold Medal.

Room: Cedar Rapids CEU 0.1

Session #2 - Shaping the Future Urban Forests

Emma Hanigan / Iowa DNR

Urban forests are critical infrastructure for mitigating environmental and social challenges cities face. Municipalities, Counties, and non-governmental entities, among others, often set goals to support urban forests and their benefits. How can we meet these goals with large setbacks like natural disasters, invasive pests and disease, and tight budgets?

Room: Sioux City CEU 0.1

Session #3 - Therapeutic Recreation 101

Malory Smysor / Iowa City

An overview of Therapeutic Recreation, why it is important and simple ways to be more inclusive in your department.

Room: Waterloo CEU 0.1

9:30-9:45 AM Break

Presented by:

Pilot Rock



9:45-10:45 AM Educational Sessions

Session #4 - Transforming Cemeteries

Ganesh Ganpat / Des Moines

Woodland Cemetery has gone through a significant transformation through historical preservation, volunteer engagement and a number of private/ public partnerships. The cemetery was established 175 years ago and was in major disrepair. Learn how strategies were implemented to transform the cemetery.

Room: Waterloo CEU 0.1

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

9:45-10:45 AM Educational Sessions continued

Session #5 - Aquatic Facilities - Strategically Improving Your Facility

Andrew Pennekamp & Amber Wyatt / JEO Consulting

Successful outcomes begin with the proper amount of preparation. This session will cover the importance of strategic planning for aquatic facilities, giving you an overview of the process and timeline while also developing a better understanding of when your facility needs a major renovation project and potential opportunities to implement at your facility.

Room: Cedar Rapids CEU 0.1

Session #6 - Recreation Program Hacks

Danae Edwards / Waukee & Whitney Garcia / Ankeny

Stuck in a rut? Don't try to recreate the wheel; come to this session and we'll provide tons of recreational programming ideas that'll make your head spin. We've asked Programmers, just like you, from across the state to submit their best program and event ideas. Leave inspired and ready to take on the summer with ambition!

Room: Sioux City CEU 0.1

11:00 - 2:00 PM Exhibit Hall / Social

Exhibit Hall Presented by: Musco Lighting

Lunch Presented by: ACCO Unlimited Corporation

Delegates and commercial exhibitors will enjoy a buffet lunch and three hours of exhibit hall booth time. Delegates will have the opportunity to collect tickets from exhibitors for a chance to win prizes that will be announced throughout the three hours. Exhibitors also have the option for giveaways at their individual booth space.



TUESDAY, MARCH 26

2:15 - 3:15 PM Educational Sessions

Session #7 - Redefining Inclusive Play

Monica Aalbers / Orange City Area Health System

Get ready for a bold and counter-intuitive presentation on inclusion. For years, the ADA has set the lowest bar for accessible play. While it was a great step forward in helping provide inclusive play, our parks have been flooded with playgrounds that meet the language of the law, but not the spirit of inclusion. We need to set a new standard for inclusive play that goes beyond ADA and invites children of all abilities to play side by side. Learn how to be the leader of the inclusive playground of the future

Room: Cedar Rapids CEU 0.1

Session #8 - Swimming Pool Test Kits / Water Chemistry

Andy Smith / Carrico Aquatic Resources

To teach people about the different kinds of water test kits and how they work and the benefits of one over another.

Room: Council Bluffs CEU 0.1

Session #9 - Legislative Updates

Cris Christenson / ACCO & Matt Boggess / Vinton

Learn how current and upcoming Legislation is affecting your park and recreation departments. Review the consequences of these changes and brainstorm other revenue sources. Join our discussion on how we can work together to affect changes to these bills

Room: Davenport CEU 0.1

3:15-3:30 PM Break

Presented by:

Shive-Hattery



3:30-4:30 PM Educational Sessions

Session #10 - Red Cross Program Updates

Cindy Dassow / American Red Cross

This session will discuss updates to the Red Cross Lifeguarding Suite of programs and requirements to complete the update.

Room: Cedar Rapids CEU 0.1

Session #11 - Behavior Management Skills and Inclusive Interventions

Malory Smyser / Iowa City

Learn about the simple and effective ways to manage behaviors in programs. Learn about inclusive interventions, how to use them and who will benefit.

Room: Council Bluffs CEU 0.1

TUESDAY, MARCH 26

3:30-4:30 PM Educational Sessions Continued

Session #12 - Mapping Excellence: Navigating Parks with GIS

Shawn O'Shea & Jeff Powell / MSA Professional Services

Modern parks and recreational facilities have complex built and natural infrastructure. They are like mini cities with assets that require inspections and maintenance. GIS empowers staff to manage their assets from anywhere. In this session, attendees will learn about asset management, using interactive GIS maps to engage visitors and crowdsource application for public engagement.

Room: Davenport CEU 0.1

Tour #1 - MacRae Park CEU 0.1

Transportation leaves at 3:25 and returns at 4:45PM

6:00 - 9:00 PM Evening Social

Presented by: Carrico Aquatic Resources



Evening Entertainment:
Iowa Wild Hockey Game
Pre-registration required

Delegates will receive a ticket for concession food and beverages at the event entrance. Indicate at the time of registration you would like to attend.

A final survey will go out to all delegates to confirm your attendance.

More details to come.



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

7:30 AM Registration Table Opens

Presented by: Barkpass

barkpass



Tour #2 - RecPlex CEU 0.1

Transportation leaves at 8:00 and returns at 9:30AM

Presented by:

Play - Pro Recreation

8:30-9:30 AM Educational Sessions

Session #13 - Making Miracles Happen

Keith Abraham / Ames

The City of Ames opened a \$2.4 million Miracle Park in 2020 by expending only \$50,000 in City funds! How is this possible? Come to the session to find out how working with the Ames Foundation made this possible.

Room: Cedar Rapids CEU 0.1

Session #14 - Balancing Access and Sustainability in Water Recreation

Amanda Prosser & Paul Marston / ISG

The planning and design of recreational areas that incorporate lakes, rivers and streams requires solutions that address the needs of users while restoring and conserving the waterway, reinvigorating underused space and enhancing the natural resources of the area. This session uncovers a clear path forward to implementation to ensure water quality in recreational design.

Room: Council Bluffs CEU 0.1

Session #15 - Teen Workers

Lisa England / IMWCA

Lisa will educate attendees on different aspects of employing teen workers. She will discuss applicable laws and best practices for efficient and effective management.

Room: Davenport CEU 0.1

9:30-9:45 AM Break

Presented by:

MSA Professional Services



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

9:45-10:45 AM Educational Sessions

Session #16 - Growing the Next Jack Trice Field

Adam Thomas / Iowa State University

This session will discuss the steps that were taken to successfully renovate the playing surface at Jack Trice Stadium in one year. The topics discussed will include all things from proper sand selection, fertilizer choices, turfgrass cultivars, and growing additions to actual steps used such as how we took a corn field and turned it into a sand-based sod farm. We will also discuss the cost of this project and how we involved students in the project.

Room: Cedar Rapids CEU 0.1

Session #17 - Ice Arenas and Drawing People to Them

Taylor Bassett

Join us to learn the difference between indoor and outdoor ice arenas and what makes them special. Program and marketing to bring in all groups of people will be discussed.

Room: Council Bluffs CEU 0.1

Session #18 - Women Leaders in Parks and Recreation Roundtable

Kristine Stratton / NRPA; Laura Murphy / West Des Moines & Dana Edwards / Waukee

Join NRPA President & CEO Kristine Stratton and IPRA Members in a lively discussion about navigating the challenges and opportunities as women leaders in parks and recreation. Topics include professional development, networking and support, navigating work stressors, team conflict and more. This is participatory sessions, so attendees should come prepared to engage.

Room: Davenport CEU 0.1

Tour #3 - John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park CEU 0.1

Participants will walk to the park, leaving as a group at 9:40 and returning at 10:50AM

10:45-11:00 AM Break

Presented by:
Boland Recreation



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

11:00-12:00 PM Educational Sessions

Session #19 - ESports in Your Community

Ryan Anderson / Center Point

Learn about the growing world of E-Sports and how you can implement this in your community.

Room: Cedar Rapids CEU 0.1

Session #20 - Artificial Turf Field: Trends, Designs and Safety

Mitchell Workmon / ISG

If you have an existing field or facility with artificial turf, or you are in the planning stages to build a new one, learn key best practices to ensure value and longevity. Along with current design trends, this session will dissect fact from fiction as it relates to artificial turf field design and maintenance. Attendees will learn key areas to consider for site selection, planning, and design, and hear the latest on health and safety testing.

Room: Council Bluffs CEU 0.1

Session #21 - Less Stress - More Life

Juli Seydell Johnson

Work, Life, Family....it all can be a bit too much. Learn how research of rest, play, and planning can help make time "magically" appear in your life. Focusing on a small framework of planning each week can help calm chaos so you can better manage priorities.

Room: Davenport CEU 0.1

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

12:00-1:30 PM Lunch

Presented by:
Burbach Aquatics



Keynote Speaker:
Kristine Stratton, NRPA, President & CEO

Presented by:
Landscape Structure

1:45-2:45 PM Educational Sessions

Session #22-Public Participation: Where Everyone Belongs

Juli Seydell Johnson & Tyler Baird / Iowa City

Are you interested in public participation? How about diversity, equity, and inclusion? This session explores the intersection of these topics. We will present lessons learned and best practices implemented during a series of recent comprehensive and Parks and Recreation site planning processes. Our presentation will journey from public participation theory to implementation using case studies from a midsize municipality. We will discuss how diversity, equity, and inclusion is often overpowered by volume of participation. Examples of how traditional participatory processes have amplified powerful traditional voices while silencing those we strain to hear – more input doesn't necessarily lead to better input. Our successes and learning opportunities will serve as a model to consider when conducting your own public outreach.

Room: Cedar Rapids CEU 0.1

Session #23 - Yoga in the Park

Heidi Draisey / Spirited Yoga & Wellness & Geoff Hubbard / Marshalltown

Learn how the community of Marshalltown has partnered with reputable yoga organizations to provide Yoga in the Park programming since 2015! Learn how to establish a successful Yoga in the Park program in your community and get tips on how to sustain, engage and grow your program affordably and safely!

Room: Council Bluffs CEU 0.1

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

1:45-2:45 PM Educational Sessions continued

Session #24 - Under the Dome: High Performance Indoor Athletic Facilities

Amanda Prosser / ISG & Mark Bigelbach / SFDM

To ensure that your new dome or indoor facility project serves your programming needs, learn how to navigate through the endless possibilities and custom solutions. This session provides insight on choosing the right size, structure type, surfacing, and amenities along with evaluating revenue and operations and maintenance considerations.

Room: Davenport CEU 0.1

2:45-3:00 PM Break

Presented by:

Pilot Rock



3:00-4:00 PM Educational Sessions

Session #25 - Crafting a Digital Presence

Janet Wilwerding / Johnston

Join our presentation, 'Crafting a Digital Presence,' as we decode social media best practices and unveil the art of photo editing. Gain insights into the latest trends, hands-on tips, and strategies to elevate your online presence. Whether you're a social media enthusiast or a professional, learn to curate engaging content, optimize visuals for diverse platforms, and authentically connect with your audience. Don't miss this opportunity to thrive in the digital age.

Room: Cedar Rapids CEU 0.1

Session #26 - What NRPA Can Do for You

Kristine Stratton / NRPA & Ryan Maehal / Fort Dodge

Learn about resources to level up your work as a park and recreation professional, from professional certifications to toolkits and networking opportunities. Hear about the latest your national organization offers to support your community goals. Expect to learn about free and member-based resources that NRPA offers the field and learn how you can get more involved in your national organization.

Room: Council Bluffs CEU 0.1

Tour #4 - Riverview Park CEU 0.1

Transportation leaves at 2:55 and returns at 4:15PM

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

6:30 - 8:00 PM Best of the Best Banquet

Presented by:
Boland Recreation



6:00-6:30 PM - Social

6:30-8:00 PM - Buffet dinner followed by Awards Presentation

Awards Presented:

Administrative Assistant
Part-Time Team Member
Claude Ahrens Community Service
Volunteer Group
Business Support
Service Club
T. Ray Frame Parks Maintenance
Dr. Carole Hanson New Professional
Richard Slattery / Terry Trueblood outstanding Professional

Evening Master of Ceremonies

John Byrnes, Recreation Superintendent, Sioux City



THURSDAY MARCH 28

7:30 AM Registration Table Opens

Presented by:

Fry & Associates, Inc



8:30 -11:30 AM Aquatic CEU

Session #32 - Aquatic CEU Workshop - Pre-registration and additional fee required. In-Person only.

David Peters / Carrico Aquatic Resources

Location: Cedar Rapids CEU 0.25

8:30-9:30 AM Educational Session

Session #28 - Building & Operating the Largest Skatepark in America

Kami Rankin / Polk County & Norm Sterzenback / Skate DSM

The Lauridsen Skatepark opened in May of 2021. The 88,000 square feet attraction showcases Olympic caliber park and street courses. Thrilling features include a promenade, flow bowl, amoeba pool, snake run, and a skateable art piece entitled WOW. Designed and constructed by California Skateparks, the Lauridsen Skatepark hosts local, regional, national, and Olympic qualifying events. Significant community engagement continues to be pivotal to the success of the skatepark. Learn about current partnerships in place and programming that breathes life into the park. Also, find out how operations and maintenance are addressed seasonally, along with challenges and opportunities that have resulted since the park's inception.

Room: Council Bluffs CEU 0.1

Session #29 - Monarchs, Education, Native Plants and Citizen Science

Joel Van Roekel & Paul Strome / city of Des Moines

How you can to use Monarch butterfly tagging to engage, entertain and educate the public about native species, pollinators and conservation in your parks in a fun and active hands on programs.

Room: Davenport CEU 0.1

9:30-9:45 AM Break

Presented by:

Shade Creations



THURSDAY MARCH 28

9:45-10:45 AM Educational Sessions

Session #30 - Take this Job and...Love It!

Chris Lee / Parks & Recreation Podcast

An ecologist's guide to creating places people want to work. "Workplace Ecologist" Chris Lee shows how focusing on the workplace "ecosystem" is the most important work a leader can do today. His framework, the 5-P's of a Thriving Culture, gives actionable strategies to improve organizational culture.

Room: Council Bluffs CEU 0.1

Session #31 -YPN Roundtable

Room: Davenport

Speaker Bios

Keynote Speaker:



Kristine Stratton (she/her) is the president and chief executive officer of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), which works to ensure that all people have access to the health, social and environmental benefits of parks and recreation. NRPA advances this vision by investing in and championing the work of park and recreation professionals as a catalyst for positive change in service of equity, climate-readiness, and overall health and well-being. Her passion is working at the intersection of people and the environment, and she holds a Master of Arts degree in environmental policy and urban planning from Tufts University and a Bachelor of Science degree in

business administration from Boston University

Speaker Bios

Emma Hanigan, Urban & Community Forestry Coordinator, Iowa DNR



Emma is the State Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. She is responsible for the statewide Community Forestry Program, providing technical assistance to all 99 counties. Her work as a coordinator includes education and training to city staff, tree boards, volunteers and others interested in managing the public tree resource. Additionally, she assists with tree inventories, urban forest management plans, mitigation planning for invasive species, updating tree ordinances, and planting selection for underserved communities. She is an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist and Certified Public Manager®. Emma graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry with an emphasis in Urban and Community Forestry from Iowa State University.

Malory Smyor, Recreation Supervisor for Adaptive and Inclusive Recreation and Outreach, City of Iowa City



Malory 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.

Ganesh Ganpat, Cemetery Manager, City of Des Moines



Ganesh has use is experience with not-for-profit organizations, fund development, museums and volunteer engagement to begin to transform the city cemeteries. Ganesh has a BS Degree in Marketing from Drake university and has coursework toward his MPA from Texas Tech University. Ganesh is married, has two grown sons and is engaged in volleyball, Rotary and on two other board of directors.

Andrew Pennekamp, Aquatics Senior Project Manager, JEO Consulting Group



Andrew is the lead design engineer and a senior project manager in JEO's Aquatic Department. He brings creative leadership and technical expertise to aquatic projects, with experience in designing over 50 new aquatic facility projects throughout the Midwest. Andrew is well versed in the feasibility process, conceptual design, master planning of park and aquatic facilities, and engineering cost estimates.

Speaker Bios

Amber Wyatt, Creative Project Manager, JEO Consulting Group



Amber has over 10 years of experience designing multiple award-winning projects within the themed entertainment and aquatics industry. Leading creative teams as a senior designer, she's also been a featured speaker at MPRA and KRPA on branding and developing experiential spaces in facilities. Her degree in interior design gives her a unique perspective to projects with an emphasis on user experience needs.

Danae Edwards, Recreation Supervisor, City of Waukee



Danae has worked for the City of Waukee for 10 years. She currently oversees various summer camps, senior programming, family & adult trips, special events, the Waukee Community Center, and the clubhouse at Sugar Creek Municipal Golf Course.

Whitney Garcia, Recreation Supervisor, City of Waukee



Whitney has worked in the recreation field for 14 years. She started as a Recreation Specialist for Fort Bragg FMWR for 3 years, then moved back to Iowa and has been a Recreation Supervisor for Ankeny Parks & Recreation for the last 11 years. She currently oversees Ankeny's new Senior Community Center as well as a variety of youth and adult recreation programs/camps, sports leagues, special events, the dog park and more.

Monica Aalbers, Pediatric Physical Therapist, Orange City Area Health System

Monica is a pediatric physical therapist. She serves in her community as an ambassador and also on the Chamber Board in her home town of Orange City. She understands parks and recreation well as her husband served as the Orange City Parks and Recreation Director for 16 years. Monica recently served on a committee designing an inclusive park design which was headed by ABcreative Inc.

Speaker Bios

Andrew Smith, Director of Iowa Operations, Carrico Aquatic Resources

Andrew has been in the pool industry for 25 years and is the head of Carrico Aquatics for the State of Iowa. Andrew has been involved with every aspect of the pool business from operation, installation, education, renovation, sales, and as a service Technician.

Matt Boggess, Director of Parks and Recreation, City of Vinton



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.

Cris Christenson, President, ACCO Unlimited Corporation



Cris 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.

Speaker Bios

Cindy Dassow, Strategic Account Executive Public Safety and Aquatics, 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.

Shawn O'Shae, Client Services Manager, MSA Professional Services



Shawn is a certified planner with expertise in park planning, community design, grant writing and administration, comprehensive planning, public engagement, GIS analysis and mapping, land use planning and graphic imagery.

Jeff Powell, Team Leader - GIS, MSA Professional Services



Jeff specializes in ArcGIS Online and other commercial software configurations for municipalities seeking advanced asset management solutions for the field and office. He provides comprehensive GIS services to over 40 municipal clients and leads MSA GIS Solutions Team.

Keith Abraham, Directory, City of Ames



Keith has been in the Parks and Recreation field for over 35 years and is the City of Ames Parks and Recreation Director, a position he has held for over 10 years. Keith has also served as a Recreation Supervisor and Recreation Superintendent for the City of Ames. He is a former IPRA President and also a recipient of the Slattery Trueblood Award. Keith enjoys spending time with family and friends in the outdoors including camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, biking, kayaking, and sitting around a campfire.

Speaker Bios

Amanda Prosser, Vice President, ISG



environmental stewardship.

Amanda believes in design's power to enhance daily life, defining her nearly 20-year career as a Landscape Architect and leader of ISG's Sports and Recreation Business Unit. An outdoor enthusiast, she fosters authentic connections with clients who share her passion for holistic well-being. Serving diverse ages, abilities, and purposes, Amanda designs resilient water trail networks that help cities to develop strong trail communities while maximizing

benefits including improved public health, economic development, and

Paul Marston, Environmental Practice Group Leader, ISG



enhancing waterbodies.

As environmental practice group leader at ISG, Paul brings a comprehensive perspective to surface water projects with expertise in hydrology, geomorphology, water quality monitoring, watershed planning, stream biology assessment, and modeling and data assessment. Backed by over nine years of experience, Paul applies his technical expertise and planning experience to align project outcomes with stakeholder goals when protecting, restoring, and

enhancing waterbodies.

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



Lisa is the Human Resources and Management Adviser for the Iowa League of Cities (ILOC) and Iowa Municipalities Workers Compensation Association (IMWCA). Her current responsibilities at the ILOC/IMWCA include assisting members with Human Resources and Management-related questions and concerns. Lisa has a diverse background, both professionally and personally that contributes to her knowledge and experience. She has held Human Resources Director positions as well as functioned as a Consultant. She is a former Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Firefighter (FF) and has served on a variety of non-profit boards of directors and is currently on the Polk City library board.

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Lisa has a diverse background, both professionally and personally that contributes to her knowledge and experience. She has held Human Resources Director positions as well as functioned as a Consultant. She is a former Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Firefighter (FF) and has served on a variety of non-profit boards of directors and is currently on the Polk City library board.

Adam Thomas, Associate Professor, Iowa State University

Adam is an Associate Professor of Commercial Turfgrass at Iowa State University and the State Turfgrass Specialist. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Tennessee. Currently, he teaches, conducts research and fields Extension calls for Iowa State.

Speaker Bios

Taylor Bassett



Taylor Bassett, has been working in ice arenas since 2016. With a recreation background of running softball and baseball tournaments all throughout college, Taylor's life took an unexpected turn in the professional field when she accepted a position in Cheyenne, Wyoming running recreation program classes as well as ice arena programs. During her 4 years in Cheyenne, her position transformed from working in recreation and ice arenas to strictly ice arena programming and then was promoted to assistant manager of the Cheyenne Ice and Events Center. In 2020, Taylor accepted the manager position at the Ames/ISU Ice Arena and moved to the great state of Iowa. Her goal as the Ice Arena manager was to not only maintain the current customer base but to be innovative and bring in people who may not want to skate but can do something at the ice arena. She continues to share her love of ice arenas and all the great information about them through speaking to groups, teaching classes and so much more.



Juli Seydell Johnson, Director of Parks & Recreation, City of Iowa City

Juli has been Iowa City's Director of Parks & Recreation since January 2016. She was previously the Parks & Recreation Director for Eagan, Minnesota and Coralville, Iowa. Juli has a bachelor's degree from Iowa State University and a Master's Degree from the University of South Dakota.



Ryan Anderson, Director, City of Center Point

Ryan grew up in Urbandale, Iowa. He received his two-year degree from Des Moines Area Community College. Graduating with a Leisure Youth and Human Services degree and Certificate of Entrepreneurship from the University of Northern Iowa. Ryan was the Assistant Director in Vinton for three years where we worked as a team to develop and implement one of the first esports facilities in the state of Iowa. Ryan joined the city of Center Point as the Director of Parks and Recreation in 2022 where he has completed several large projects and added multiple new programs to the department. He married his wife Rachel in 2021. They have a cat, Sylvester, and are expecting their first child in early February! Ryan enjoys playing Pokémon, coaching the CPU High School Esports Team, watching NFL, and going on hikes with my family.

Speaker Bios

Mitchell Workmon, Landscape Architect Group Leader, ISG



Mitch brings over 11 years of practice as a Landscape Architect and specializes in world of sports and recreation. His experience in the upper Midwest is vast, working with educational partners, municipalities, and private clients to plan for large scale athletic complexes, college stadiums, and community parks. Mitch has been involved in several high-profile, large-scale turf projects and understands the complexities of turf design and can speak to safety concerns and design trends. His professional passions for sports design meshes well with his personal passions as a lifelong fan, coach, and player.

Tyler Bair, Superintendent of Parks & Forestry, City of Iowa City



Tyler has been the Superintendent of Parks & Forestry in Iowa City since 2020 and recently graduated with a Master of Public Administration degree where he focused on public participation for this capstone research.

Heidi Draisey, Owner/Operator/Instructor & Partner, Spirited Yoga & Wellness



Heidi is the owner and operator of Spirited Yoga & Wellness in Marshalltown. Heidi has partnered with Marshalltown Park & Recreation and other community entities to bring Yoga in the Park programming to the Marshalltown community since 2015! She is a recent Sports and Recreation Management graduate from the University of Iowa and has 15 years' experience in the health & wellness industry with the majority of her career spent at the Marshalltown YMCA-YWCA as the Assistant

Aquatics Director, and before that promotion, she worked as a Health & Wellness Coordinator overseeing medical and evidence-based programing as well as leading the wellness coaching staff. She holds many certifications notably being an American Council of Exercise National Personal Trainer since 2014 and is a YogaFit Certified Instructor since early 2015. Heidi especially enjoys teaching group exercise classes on "land" and water and can teach all modalities, but her favorite is teaching yoga and sharing it with all those who wish to seek its many physical, mental, and spiritual benefits!

Speaker Bios

Geoff Hubbard, Director of Parks and Recreation, City of Marshalltown



Geoff has been in Parks & Recreation for the past 25 years including the last 5 years as the Director in Marshalltown, IA. He was last year's recipient of the Slattery/Trueblood Professional Award. In his time in Marshalltown he has worked with many different outside organizations and people to provide programs for the community including our successful Yoga in the Park program.

Janet Wilwerding, Communications Director, City of Johnston



Janet, a seasoned communications and marketing professional, boasts seven years in Communications at the City of Johnston, Iowa. She is currently the Communications Director. Janet is excellent at crafting messages and community relationship-building skills. Previously, she contributed her expertise to the City of Pleasant Hill for nearly three years. Janet's journey started in advertising and marketing, refining her strategic communication skills at notable agencies and Meredith Dot-Dash. Her academic background includes a Bachelor's in Marketing from Iowa State University and a Master's from Drake University. A July 2023 graduate of the Certified Public Communicator program at Texas Christian University, Janet is dedicated to excellence. Beyond her career, she enjoys family moments, supporting her kids in various activities, and leading 5:15 a.m. fitness classes, showcasing her commitment to both personal and professional growth.

Mark Binglebach, CEO/Founder, Sports Facility Development and Management



For 25+ years, Mark and his team at Sports Facility Development and Management helped communities build and finance dome projects and other athletic structures to meet diverse needs of athletes and teams. From kickoff to training and maintenance, the Sports Facility team will ensure you have the right space and to generate revenue and sustain operations. Mark is also the owner and operator of several domes throughout the greater Minneapolis and St. Paul region.

Speaker Bios

Kami Rankin, Deputy Director, Polk County Conservation

Kami began her employment with Polk County Conservation as the Deputy Director, on November 15, 2021. She has served the organization as the Community Outreach Supervisor since 1999, spending 22 years promoting the facilities, programs, and initiatives associated with Polk County Conservation. One of her key roles has been to reach out to the community to seek feedback and develop partnerships with the media, public, and various public and private organizations.

Kami works closely with the execution of the Polk County Water and Land Legacy bond referendum, large-scale fundraising initiatives, strategic/master planning, and other public facing projects. She oversees operations, budgeting, and human resources for the state's largest County Conservation Board.

Norm Sterzenbach, President, Skate DSM

Norm started skateboarding in the mid 1980s and still skates (somewhat) to this day. Norm was a member of the Lauridsen Skatepark Cabinet which raised funds for the largest skatepark in the Western Hemisphere. He worked specifically to build grassroots and public support for the skatepark.

Norm is the President and Founder of the nonprofit organization Skate DSM. It's primary mission is grow and support the skateboarding community in Des Moines. Skate DSM hosts after-school programs, skate clinics, equipment giveaways, and the Des Moines Streetstyle Open, an annual skateboarding competition that is already garnering national attention and participation. In addition to running Skate DSM, Norm works for GPS Impact, a full service political communications agency.

Joel Van Roekel, Parks and Rec Supervisor Environmental Education, City of Des Moines



Joel worked for Black Hawk County and Warren County before coming to the City of Des Moines Parks and Recreation. His programs strive to make a connection between people and nature using hands on educational activities that are interesting and engaging for all ages. At this session, you will learn more about one program that he has been presenting for most of his career in one form or another

Paul Strome, Parks Superintendent, City of Des Moines



Paul is a 24 year veteran of Des Moines Parks and Recreation. Currently hold the position of Parks Superintendent for the Natural Resources Maintenance Division, using land management practices such as prescribed fire, timber stand improvements, and chemical and mechanical methods of invasive species removal to promote our upper Oak woodlands and native prairie areas.

Speaker Bios

Chris Lee, Host, Parks & Recreation Podcast

Chris taps the principles of ecology to help parks and conservation professionals develop into the leaders that future generations need them to be. Chris has a bachelor's degree in Animal Ecology from Iowa State University . He began his career as a wildlife biologist and now serves as Executive Director of Des Moines County Conservation and holds leadership roles in multiple other conservation and community organizations. He is also a columnist and host of the Parks and Restoration Podcast.

David Peters, Territory Manager, Carrico Aquatic Resources



Dave is the Territory Manager with Carrico Aquatic Resources, helping commercial pools and spas. He is a nationally recognized Pool & Hot Tub Alliance (PHTA) Certified Pool/Spa Operator (R) instructor for more than two decades.