

IPRA Spring Conference

Coralville, Iowa

March 24-27, 2025



staycurjous!

IPRA CONFERENCE 2025

📍 coralville, iowa



PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION

CONFERENCE 2025 – Coralville

March 24-27, 2025

Event / Hotel Information

Hyatt Regency Coralville Hotel & Conference Center

Iowa River Landing

300 East 9th Street
Coralville, IA 52241



Hotel Room Block

\$123 per night + taxes/fees

Double Queen or Single King rooms available

**Parking is included in room rate*

Reservation link - [Click here](#)

Group Code: G-IPRA

Room Block Deadline: March 3, 2025

Rooms are limited and not guaranteed

EVENT PARKING

Iowa River Landing North Parking Ramp

****Included with room block rate**

Located at 300 E. 9th St. between the Hyatt Regency Hotel and Backpocket Brewing

Single Day Parking

Iowa River Landing North Parking Ramp (location listed above) \$1 hourly / \$8 daily

Iowa River Landing South Parking Lot (300 E. 9th St., south of Hyatt) \$1 hourly / \$8 daily

Shout out to our Tiger Team members for helping to organize this event:

City of Coralville: Sherri Proud, Alex Buhmeyer, Amy Erickson, Kyle Moehlis

City of Iowa City: Juli Seydell Johnson, Caylea Housh, Bill Lane

City of North Liberty: Brian Motley, Ashley Bjork, Matt Fielder, Jonathan Moore, Shelly Simpson

HydroApps: Kate Connell

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Conference Registration:

Registration Deadline - Friday, March 7th @ noon

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 Friday, March 7th @ 12:01 PM

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](#)

Contact Information:

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CONFERENCE SWAG

Huge thank you to Outdoor Recreation Products for once again sponsoring our conference swag that will be provided to all conference registrants!

Stop by the registration table to pick up your gifts!



Outdoor Recreation Products

Thank you to all of our event sponsors for helping to make IPRA Spring Conference 2025 a great experience for our attendees! This event would not be what it is without the generosity of these sponsors!

Thank You!

MONDAY—MARCH 24

Calm in the Chaos

1:00-4:00 PM

North Ridge Pavilion, Coralville

As we prepare for the busy and sometimes hectic summer season, we all need tools and reminders to re-center and find calm in our day. We will provide a welcoming and useful approach to stress management that can be implemented in your work environment using breath work, your body and your mind to reset. Refuel with a beneficial snack and toast to your calm in the chaos.

[Event Flyer](#)

[Register](#)

MUSCO Plant Tour

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Meeting at Hyatt Regency

Enjoy a lunch and tour of the plant, looking at manufacturing practices, quality control measures, and watch a demonstration of new and up-and-coming lighting technologies!

**Transportation provided from Hyatt in Coralville, leaving at 11:00 AM*

[Event Flyer](#)

[Register](#)

Single Track Bike & Brew

1:00-4:00 PM

Begin at Hyatt, end at Backpacket Brewing

Bike and brew event that explores the scenic trails while highlighting the Tom Harkin trail network as well as the Clear Creek Stream Mitigation Bank. Bike route will be approximately 3 hours.

[Event Flyer](#)

[Register](#)

Don't miss the IPRA evening social following the Monday educational events!

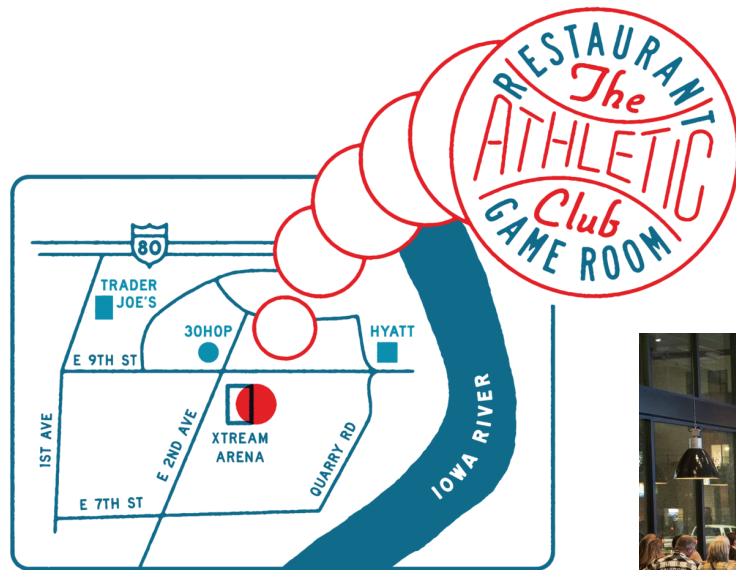
Join us at the Iowa Athletic Club from 6-8 PM!

****See next page for details**

MONDAY EVENING SOCIAL

Iowa Athletic Club

200 E 9th St., Suite 205, Coralville
Walking distance from Hyatt



IOWA CORALVILLE U.S.A.

5:00 - 6:00 PM
YPN Gathering

6:00 - 8:00 PM
Everyone Welcome



Wings, nachos & drink tickets provided!

**Please indicate at time of registration of any dietary restrictions so we can accommodate*

Monday evening social is presented by:

**ACCO Unlimited &
Bolton & Menk**



**BOLTON
& MENK**

Real People. Real Solutions.

TUESDAY—MARCH 25

7:30 AM Registration Table Opens

Presented by:
Boland Recreation



8:00 - 8:30 AM CONFERENCE KICKOFF!

-What to expect and how to make the most of your conference experience-

Join members of the YPN Committee to go over the basics of conference and ask any questions you may have! Great opportunity for conference first-timers or anyone looking to elevate their conference experience! This would also be a great time to meet new people and make connections! (Not limited to YPN individuals)

8:30-9:30 AM Educational Sessions

Session #1 - Design & Communication Essentials for Non-Marketing Professionals

Dave Crow / Athletify, Inc.

Enhance your ability to design and communicate effectively, without a marketing background. This session provides essential skills for creating visually appealing and compelling materials to promote recreational programs. Learn practical techniques for designing impactful flyers, websites, and other marketing materials while crafting clear and engaging messages that resonate with your audience.

Room: Oakdale II CEU 0.1

Session #2 - Aquatics Rapid EAP (Events & Programs)

Ashley Bjork / City of North Liberty

Katie McGrane / City of Ankeny

Join us to learn and discuss a new type of EAP in the world of aquatics. We will present 30 events and programs that you can explore and possibly add to your pool to WOW your community!

Room: Oakdale III CEU 0.1

Session #3 - Coralville's Stream Mitigation Bank: Funding Greenway Parks and Forestry

Adrian Holmes / Bolton & Menk, Inc.

Sherri Proud / City of Coralville

The City of Coralville has created a model for integrating stream mitigation banking within its greenway park system, showing how cities can boost ecological resilience while funding local greenway management. Coralville's strategy shows how mitigation banking can support green space planning and provide financial resources for conservation. Key insights include regulatory compliance, revenue use for ecological and flood resilience, and green infrastructure benefits. Coralville's approach offers a replicable framework for cities aiming to expand urban green spaces, support conservation, and create recreational areas that connect residents with nature.

Room: Oakdale IV CEU 0.1

9:30-9:45 AM Break

Presented by:
Pilot Rock



TUESDAY—MARCH 25

9:45-10:45 AM Educational Sessions

Session #4 - Effectively Evaluate Ideas, Proposals, & Opportunities in Parks and Rec.

James Moore / Athletify, Inc.

In the ever-evolving field of parks and recreation, professionals are constantly presented with new ideas, proposals, and opportunities that promise to enhance community engagement, increase revenue, or improve operational efficiency. But how do you determine which initiatives are worth pursuing? This session will provide participants with practical tools and frameworks to critically assess proposals, prioritize opportunities, and make data-driven decisions that align with their organization's mission and goals.

Room: Oakdale II CEU 0.1

Session #5 - Share Your Parks with ArcGIS StoryMaps

Shawn O'Shea; Shannon Gapp / MSA Professional Services

Modern parks and recreational facilities have features and stories to be shared. In this session, attendees will learn about ArcGIS StoryMaps, and how they can be used to promote community parks, gather public input, raise awareness about engagement opportunities, and share future park and recreational goals, objectives, and strategies.

Room: Oakdale III CEU 0.1

Session #6 - Effective Community Engagement

Frank Parsi / Williams Architects

Dannielle Wilson / Berry Dunn

Juli Sydell Johnson / City of Iowa City

Feedback from your community is essential in guiding your departments programming and planning in the community. The session will explore various creative community engagement strategies, ensuring community feedback to help guide strategic planning.

Room: Oakdale IV CEU 0.1

9:45-10:45 AM

Tour #1 - Xstream Arena

Limited space, please pre-register at registration table

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

Located in the Exhibit Hall

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. Place tickets received into your choice of the prize bags for a chance to win! Exhibitors also have the option for giveaways at their individual booth space.

Food and beverage stations will be located throughout the exhibit hall—grab a plate and spend some time meeting our commercial vendors!



We Make It Happen®

Exhibit Hall Presented by:

MUSCO Lighting

Lunch Presented by:

ACCO Unlimited Corporation



TUESDAY—MARCH 25

2:15 - 3:15 PM Educational Sessions

Session #7 - Building Belonging: Scaling Universal & Inclusive Design in Parks & Recreation

Garret Munch / Shive-Hattery

Molly Wuebker / Uncurbed, LLC

Universal and inclusive design is a transformative approach to design that goes beyond compliance to create spaces where everyone belongs. For Parks and Recreation professionals, the challenge lies in integrating these principles into everyday projects while navigating systemic barriers and ensuring scalability across diverse environments and populations. This session highlights the successes and challenges Shive-Hattery, in partnership with Uncurbed, encountered when using a community-centered and research-driven approach to design the Athene North Shore Recreation Area at East Lake Park in Polk County, Iowa. Participants will explore actionable strategies for scaling universal and inclusive design in their own parks and recreation projects, drawing from real-world successes and lessons learned. By the end of the session, participants will be empowered to champion these practices, fostering greater accessibility and belonging in their communities.

Room: Oakdale II CEU 0.1

Session #8 - Erosion Control Using Polyurethane

Joe Farrier / Concrete PolyFix

This session will explore an alternative approach to soil and backfill erosion and stabilization. It is less invasive, faster, cleaner and provides a better opportunity to actually fix the cause of the erosion. Typical applications are shorelines, dams, culverts, storm intakes, and bridge abutments.

Room: Oakdale III CEU 0.1

Session #9 - Senior Programming Roundtable

Carissa Williams / City of Urbandale

LaTasha DeLoach / Iowa City Senior Center

Join us for an engaging and collaborative roundtable discussion focused on senior programming! This session will bring together professionals dedicated to enhancing the experiences of older adults in our communities. Participants will share innovative ideas for senior programming, discuss effective outreach strategies, and tackle the unique challenges faced in this field.

Room: Oakdale IV

2:15-3:15 PM

Tour #2 - Iowa River Landing, walking tour

Business Streetscape Plans, Stormwater Infrastructure Practices and Landscaping,
Riverfront Park Master Plan

Limited space, please pre-register at registration table

3:15-3:30 PM Break

Presented by:

Shive-Hattery

SHIVEHATTERY
ARCHITECTURE + ENGINEERING

TUESDAY—MARCH 25

3:30-4:30 PM Educational Sessions

Session #10 - A Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Park Planning & Design: The Role Connections to Nature Play in Creating Dynamic Public Spaces

Casey Byers; Staci Williams / Bolton & Menk, Inc.

Connections to nature are increasingly important – for our overall health and well-being and the role it plays in supporting strong, vibrant, and resilient communities. This presentation will highlight case studies throughout the Midwest that foster these connections while also enhancing public spaces, recreational opportunities, and habitat.

Room: Oakdale II CEU 0.1

Session #11 - Mindset Adjustment: Empower Yourself and Your Staff

Sarah E. Hardin / University of Iowa

An individual's "mindset" impacts success in daily tasks and problem-solving as well as perceptions on staff supervision. In this interactive session, we will explore psychologist Carol Dweck's research on mindset and how applying changes in perspective and approach can positively affect staff capabilities, empowerment, and development.

Room: Oakdale III CEU 0.1

Session #12 - Overcoming Challenges in Your Organization & Elevating Your Career

Jared Moore / Athletify, Inc.

Unlock the tools and strategies to overcome professional challenges and elevate your career in parks and recreation. This session provides practical insights into navigating organizational obstacles, building resilience, and achieving peak performance. Learn to identify common challenges and implement effective solutions that strengthen your leadership and decision-making abilities. Through engaging discussions and actionable techniques, participants will develop problem solving skills, enhance their capacity for professional growth, and discover ways to position themselves for career advancement. Whether you're seeking to tackle immediate obstacles or prepare for future opportunities, this session equips you with the mindset and tools to thrive in your role and beyond.

Room: Oakdale IV CEU 0.1

**Join us for the Tuesday evening social held at
PinSeekers from 6:00-8:00 PM!**

*****See next page for details***

TUESDAY EVENING SOCIAL



6:00 - 8:00 PM

You must provide your own transportation



Enjoy an evening of fun golf games, food and catching up with your fellow parks and rec friends!

Not into golf? We will have several table games available to play as well!

Pizza and drink tickets provided

**Please indicate at time of registration of any dietary restrictions so we can accommodate*

Tuesday evening social is presented by:

Carrico Aquatic Resources



WEDNESDAY—MARCH 26

7:30 AM Registration Table Opens

Presented by:

8:30-9:30 AM Educational Sessions

Session #13 - Time Management Tips & Tools Used by the Most Successful People in the World

James Moore / Athletify, Inc.

Want to know how Warren Buffet, Charles Schwab, Richard Branson, and other similar high achievers manage their time? Come find out. Everyone's given the same 24/7 but results differ. Much of the disparity boils down to how time is spent. This session will provide you with time management frameworks and approaches from some of the most successful people on the planet specifically selected for parks and recreation professionals. Rest assured—getting more out of your day and your team can easily happen by mirroring successful systems. Come and find out how!

Room: Oakdale II CEU 0.1

Session #14 - Strategic Planning for Aquatic Safety

Stevie Weeks / Landmark Aquatic

This session will explore the critical role of strategic planning in shaping the future of aquatic programs. Participants will learn how to develop a comprehensive strategic plan that aligns with the overall recreation goals and objectives. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of stakeholder engagement, including community members, staff, and key partners, in the planning process. Attendees will gain practical tools and strategies for setting clear goals, identifying target audiences, and developing innovative aquatic programs that meet the needs of the community. By the end of this session, participants will have a solid understanding of the strategic planning process and be equipped to develop a roadmap for their aquatic programs.

Room: Oakdale III CEU 0.1

Session #15 - Beyond the Playbook: Fresh Ideas for Thriving Recreation Programs

Travis Mai; Beth Downing / City of Coralville

All of us are always looking for the next big idea(s) to introduce to our communities. Join us as we share programs that have been successful within our department as well as across the State of Iowa. Be prepared to share your own ideas as we will do a roundtable for the final minutes of this session.

Room: Oakdale IV CEU 0.1

9:30-9:45 AM Break

Presented by:

MSA Professional Services



WEDNESDAY—MARCH 26

9:45-10:45 AM Educational Sessions

Session #16 - Squirrels Don't Build Dams (and other leadership lessons from the natural world)

Chris Lee / Chris Lee Ventures, LLC

In this engaging breakout session, participants will explore how the principles of nature offer insights into leadership and team dynamics. Using analogies from the natural world such as squirrels, trees, and water, the workshop will highlight the importance of cultivating individual strengths, creating environments where teams thrive, and embracing adaptability. Attendees will leave with actionable strategies to lead with authenticity, foster resilience, and align their teams' efforts with shared energy and purpose.

Room: Oakdale II CEU 0.1

Session #17 - Learning Common AI Tools to Improve Everyday Productivity

Jared Moore / Athletify, Inc.

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: Oakdale III CEU 0.1

Session #18 - ORP vs PPM

Andy Smith / Carrico Aquatic Resources

Is there a difference between ORP and ppm? Participants will discuss the ways to measure disinfection and what residuals can be left behind.

Room: Oakdale IV CEU 0.1

10:45-11:00 AM Break

Presented by:
Boland Recreation



11:00-12:00 PM Educational Sessions

Grants: A Guide to Free Money

Trace Hoekstra / Kitchen Sink Communications

What do grants and free pets have in common? We'll start there. Then, we'll explore how to find the best funding tool for the job and tackle the elements of a basic grant cycle including the work that comes after the check. Finally, we'll talk about simple strategies to improve proposal quality and increase the chance the application will land in the "yes" pile on the funder's desk.

Room: Oakdale II CEU 0.1

WEDNESDAY—MARCH 26

11:00-12:00 PM Educational Sessions continued

Session #20 - Lead DEI Trainings for Part-Time Aquatics Staff

Kate Connell / HydroApps

We will delve into the essentials of leading Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) 101 trainings for their lifeguard, instructor, and aquatic management teams. Through interactive discussions and practical exercises, attendees will learn effective strategies for introducing DEI principles to their teams, fostering open dialogue, and encouraging cultural awareness. By the end of the session, participants will be equipped with actionable insights and resources to lead DEI initiatives that promote a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace in aquatic settings.

Room: Oakdale III CEU 0.1

Session #21 - Transforming a Golf Course for a Few, to a Park for Many

Hank Moyers; PJ Novick / Confluence

This session looks at the reason some courses are struggling and public perception of golf courses and the transition many cities are making with the courses to public parks. This session looks at the process and also discusses potential partnerships. Three regional case studies are looked at and the process they went through and what those facilities now include.

Room: Oakdale IV CEU 0.1

12:00-2:00 PM Lunch & Keynote

Located in Coral Ballroom CD

Join us for lunch while you listen to the powerful words from world-renowned creativity and innovation key note speaker, Nir Bashan. Nir is the best selling author of "The Creator Mindset," which has made the top 100 list of non fiction books of all time. Nir is also the host of McGraw Hills Coffee Break podcast! Following the key note presentation, Nir will offer two Creativity and Innovation Lighting Sessions, at 2:15 and 3:30, where Nir will be available to help you troubleshoot concerns from the parks and rec field and come up with creative and innovative solutions to these challenges!

Lunch Presented by:
Burbach Aquatics

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nirbashan.com

Key Note Speaker
Presented by:
Landscape Structures


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structures®**

WEDNESDAY—MARCH 26

2:15-3:15 PM Educational Sessions

Session #22 - Creativity/Innovation Lightning Session

Nir Bashan / The Creator Mindset

20 minute lightning sessions that will take concepts covered in the keynote and extract them to specific needs that the Parks and Recs community has. What does AI have to do with Pickleball or Rugby? How can I use more positive language to communicate with vendors? Nir will be available to help troubleshoot concerns one-on-one that Iowa parks and recs staff have and help them unlock creative and innovative solutions to some of the most challenging issues happening today!

Room: Oakdale II

Session #23 - 7 Sights & Sounds in the Pump Room to NEVER Ignore

Kyle McCawley; Jeff Bartley / Waters Edge Aquatic Design

That doesn't look or sound right!? Explore your pool's pump room at a deeper level to understand how your equipment works and if it is working properly. This presentation can help you diagnose and solve issues with confidence.

Room: Oakdale III CEU 0.1

Session #24 - Small Community Roundtable

Nathan Osmundson / City of Boone

Join us for an engaging roundtable session tailored for professionals from smaller communities and departments. Participants will have the opportunity to share and discuss the unique challenges they face on a day to day basis. Through collaborative brainstorming, attendees will generate innovative solutions and best practices to overcome these obstacles, fostering a supportive network aimed at enhancing the impact of their work within their communities. Come ready to exchange ideas and leave inspired!

Room: Oakdale IV

2:15-3:15 PM

Tour #3 - Centennial Park (North Liberty)

***Transportation provided**

Limited space, please pre-register at registration table

3:15-3:30 PM Break

Presented by:

Pilot Rock

Pilot Rock[®]
PARK • STREET • CAMP SITE PRODUCTS
RJ Thomas Mfg. Co.

WEDNESDAY—MARCH 26

3:30-4:30 PM Educational Sessions

Session #25 - Creativity/Innovation Lighting Session

Nir Bashan / The Creator Mindset

20 minute lightning sessions that will take concepts covered in the keynote and extract them to specific needs that the Parks and Recs community has. What does AI have to do with Pickleball or Rugby? How can I use more positive language to communicate with vendors? Nir will be available to help troubleshoot concerns one-on-one that Iowa parks and recs staff have and help them unlock creative and innovative solutions to some of the most challenging issues happening today!

Room: Oakdale II

Session #26 - Building Memorable Summer Experiences for Youth Ages 5-15

Beth Downing; Erica Eichhorn; Grace Balison; Travis Mai / City of Coralville

Summer camps are asset to any community but creating a successful program takes careful planning and execution. We'll share our behind the scenes information on how we craft ½ day specialty camps, elementary summer camps & T(w)een/Teen Summer Programming.

Room: Oakdale III CEU 0.1

Session #27 - Designing a Spray Park A to Z

Heidi Stengel / Aquatix by Landscape Structures

Spray parks are a fast-growing amenity to park and recreation departments. This session will present ideas on the process of installing a spray park and the intricate details of design, budgeting, site amenities, water source, codes, bidding, construction and maintenance. Presenters will describe the analytical process of designing for sustaining the environment and explain the maintenance requirements of the surface, water source and features.

Room: Oakdale IV CEU 0.1

**Join us for the Best of the Best Banquet this evening,
followed by a post-banquet social of music and line
dancing with James and Jared Moore!**

**We encourage everyone to attend the banquet! Attire is semi-formal;
however, we don't want this to keep anyone from attending! Wear
what you are comfortable in and join us for an upbeat night to cele-
brate some of the great individuals in parks and recreation.**

Not attending the banquet? Join us for line dancing after!

****See next page for details**

Best of the Best Banquet

6:00 - 8:00 PM

Wednesday, March 26

Located in Coral Ballroom CD



6:00-6:30 PM

Social

6:30-8:00 PM

Dinner & Awards Presentation

Awards Presented:

Administrative Assistant

Permanent Part-Time Team Member

Claude Ahrens Community Service

T. Ray Frame Parks Maintenance

Dr. Carole Hanson New Professional

Richard Slattery / Terry Trueblood Outstanding Professional



Masters of Ceremonies

John Byrnes, *Bettendorf*

Austin Tasler, *Midwest Playscapes*

WEDNESDAY POST-BANQUET SOCIAL

Wednesday Evening

Presented by:

Boland Recreation

8:00 - 9:30 PM

Stick around after the banquet for some line dancing with James and Jared Moore!

The former line dancing instructors will lead participants in an evening of fun-filled dancing!

Don't let the dancing keep you away, enjoy the drinks, music and upbeat atmosphere!



THURSDAY—MARCH 27

7:30 AM Registration Table Opens

Presented by:

8:30 -11:30 AM

Aquatic CEU Workshop

David Peters / Carrico Aquatic Resources

Location: Oakdale IV CEU 0.25

Pre-registration and additional fee required

Register at time of conference registration to receive discounted price

8:30-9:30 AM Educational Sessions

Session #28 - Opioid Overdose Prevention & Naloxone Administration

Heidi Wood; Kelsey Montross / University of Iowa

The United States is experiencing an overdose crisis, with 42% of surveyed US adults having lost at least one person in their life to a drug overdose. Naloxone is a life-saving medicine that can reverse the deadly effects of an opioid overdose. This session will explore the concept of harm reduction, address myths and stigmas surrounding opioid use and overdose, instruct how to recognize and appropriately respond to someone experiencing an opioid overdose, and explain how to increase naloxone supply and knowledge in communities.

Room: Oakdale II CEU 0.1

Session #29 - Navigating the Journey of Trail & Bike Design

Brett Harris / ISG

Aaron Burnett / City of Mason City

This session will explore the journey of Mason City's highly anticipated bike park, a project launched with Destination Iowa funding to create a premier mountain biking experience. Partnering with ISG and Rock Solid Trail Contracting, the City of Mason City used innovative project delivery methods to bring this vision to life. Attendees will learn how the project was split into three bid packages—a traditional hard bid for the trail and shelter facilities, and a design-build approach for the bike park—allowing for maximum creativity and builder expertise. Now under construction, the park is set to become a major destination for extreme sports enthusiasts across Iowa and beyond.

Room: Oakdale III EU 0.1

9:30-9:45 AM Break

Presented by:

THURSDAY—MARCH 27

9:45-10:45 AM Educational Sessions

Session #30 - Get Outdoors—It's Good for Parks & People

Michelle Wiegand / Johnson County Conservation

Outdoor recreation offers our community members physical and mental health benefits while building community support for parks and greenspaces. This session will cover active and passive outdoor recreation activities and will incorporate a hands-on activity that may even get us outdoors, depending on time and weather.

Room: Oakdale II CEU 0.1

Session #31 –The Role of a Recreation Therapist in Community Parks & Recreation

Bri Swope; Kristina Gordon / University of Iowa

Hire a CTRS! Participants will gain an introduction to the field of Therapeutic Recreation and learn the benefits of having a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) on your team. Participants will hear examples of effective programs with CTRS's in community recreation.

Room: Oakdale III CEU 0.1

10:45-11:00 AM Break

Presented by:

11:00-12:00 PM Educational Sessions

Session #32 - Playgrounds as an Ecological Affordance for Early Childhood Motor Learning

Carissa Meis; A'ryn Jackson / Cornell College

Motor competence in early childhood plays a pivotal role in long-term engagement in physical activity and sports, directly influencing health and performance outcomes later in life. This session will explore the findings from our recent study analyzing the ecological affordances of over 100 public playgrounds in Linn County, IA focusing on how playgrounds design can influence motor development across different stages of childhood. We will explain the key insights from our research, including visual data representations, media, and discuss the implication for policy development and future playground design to better support motor competence.

Room: Oakdale II CEU 0.1

Session #33 - Fundraising: Keeping Rec Sports Both Solvent & Relevant in an Increasingly Competitive Market

Matthew Eckhardt / PlayOps, LLC

Serving our communities requires resources; physical, staffing and financial. With every dollar being stretched it's increasingly more important for us to find creative ways to fund our ideas. We've all had that really great idea, a community changing idea that could really make a difference. Don't let a lack of funding spoil what would otherwise serve a great purpose; money is out there, support for the right program is possible.

Room: Oakdale III CEU 0.1

Speaker Bios

Keynote Speaker: Nir Bashan

World-renowned creativity and innovation key note speaker

Best selling author of “The Creator Mindset” (*Top 100 non fiction books of all time*)

Host of McGraw Hill’s Coffee Break podcast

nirbashan.com



Speaker Bios

A'ryn Jackson, *Student/Student Researcher, Cornell College*

Aaron Burnett, *City Administrator, City of Mason City*



Aaron is a knowledgeable City Administrator with nearly 20 years of combined local government and federal experience. He is an International City/County Management Association Credentialed Manager and Master of Public Administration graduate from University of Nebraska Omaha whose blend of experience and education facilitates the effective exercise of governance at all levels. This effective leadership has produced progressive, award-winning projects and policies in a diversity of areas. Additionally, Aaron is the recipient of 2 of the highest recognitions from the Iowa City/County Management Association. (City Manager of the Year, 2017; Program of the Year, 2020)

Adrian Holmes, *Principal Civil Engineer, Bolton & Menk, Inc.*



A municipal group leader whose main focus is public works, Adrian Holmes began his engineering career in 2001 and has worked on projects ranging from transportation improvements to stormwater studies and trail enhancements. As work group leader of Cedar Rapids operations, he leads his staff in the coordination and planning of various civil engineering projects. Adrian serves on the Knowledge Team for the American Public Works Association Water Resources Committee and serves as a board member of Take a Kid Outdoors and the Coralville North Corridor Rotary.

Andy 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.

Speaker Bios

Ashley Bjork, Aquatic Supervisor, City of North Liberty



Ashley has over 20 years of experience in the Aquatics field, having worked in both the private and public sectors. Throughout her career, she has gained hands-on experience in various aquatic positions, finding great fulfillment in coaching and staff development. Teaching swim lessons and helping individuals learn to swim is Ashley's passion, and it's what drives her love for the work she does in aquatics. When she's not in the water, Ashley enjoys reading and spending time outdoors with her husband and two children.

Beth Downing, Recreation Program Supervisor, City of Coralville



A Hawkeye now & forever, Beth graduated from U of I with a degree in Therapeutic Recreation. Since college she has assisted in planning & providing recreation & play opportunities for Coralville Residents for 19 years (part-time & full time collectively).

Brett Harris, Landscape Architect, ISG



Brett Harris is a licensed Landscape Architect with 10 years of experience specializing in outdoor recreation design, including parks, trails, and other recreational spaces. He brings a deep understanding of natural processes and relationships to his projects, focusing on creating spaces that encourage physical activity and engagement with nature. His design approach aims to optimize, enhance, and protect the unique qualities of each site while promoting active, nature-based recreation. His work goes beyond aesthetics, shaping landscapes that foster dynamic outdoor experiences. Brett's work includes the design of the Mason City Bike Park, a major project set for completion in 2025, which will serve as a premier destination for mountain biking enthusiasts in the upper Midwest. Thanks to the partnership between ISG, Rock Solid Trail Contracting, and the City

of Mason City, Brett has played a key role in the park's development, using creative project delivery methods to bring this exciting vision to life.

Bri Swope, Associate Professor of Instruction, University of Iowa



Bri Swope is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) and teaches at the University of Iowa for the Department of Health and Human Physiology. Professor Swope also holds certification as a Child Life Specialist (CCLS) and thrives in community outreach and engagement opportunities. Her areas of interest and expertise include inclusive recreation programming and event planning, travel and outdoor adventures, indoor games and adaptive fitness and leisure engagement.

Speaker Bios

Carissa Meis, *Student/Student Researching, Cornell College*

Carissa Williams, *Senior Recreation Center Supervisor, City of Urbandale*



Carissa Williams is the Senior Recreation Program Supervisor for the City of Urbandale. She has worked in the field of Parks & Recreation for nearly 30 years, since her first job as a swim lesson assistant and pool cashier at the Boone Municipal Swimming Pool. She has been employed by the Cities of Boone, Cedar Rapids, Clive, Ames, Ankeny, and Urbandale. Carissa graduated from Cornell College with a degree in Political Science and Economics & Business. She lives in Urbandale with her husband and 4 daughters. She enjoys attending her kids' activities and volunteering. Her current volunteer roles include serving on the boards of IPRA, Creative Spotlight Scholarship, and Urbandale Community School District.

Casey Byers, *Principal Landscape Architect, Bolton & Menk, Inc.*



Casey Byers is a principal landscape architect at Bolton & Menk who has been helping communities implement community centric projects for nearly 20 years. He specializes in assisting communities find creative solutions to complex park projects, which require a multi-disciplinary approach.

Chris Lee, *Organizational Ecologist, Chris Lee Ventures, LLC.*



Chris Lee is an expert in organizational culture. He is a sought after speaker, leadership consultant, host of the Parks and Restoration Podcast, and a regular columnist for newspapers in Des Moines County, Iowa. He has served as the Executive Director for Des Moines County Conservation since 2013, and is a recognized leader and award-winning business person known for his unique, nature-inspired approach to cultivating healthy organizational ecosystems.

Speaker Bios

Dannielle Wilson, *Engagement Manager, Berry Dunn*



A practitioner and consultant in the recreation industry, Dannielle Wilson brings strong analytical skills and innovative strategic thinking to clients nationwide. She offers a fresh approach and real-world solutions, with a constant focus on revenue management and process improvement. Dannielle's leadership roles in customer service and senior-level management at three park and recreation agencies have shaped her philosophy of customer-centric decision making and creative managing. With Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in Recreation Administration, she is committed to the role of recreation as a healthy mechanism to balance our busy lives and enhance community well-being.

Dave Crow, *Director of Product and Design, Athletify, Inc.*



Dave Crow is a seasoned design professional with over two decades of experience spanning graphic design and software development. Over the past decade, his career has evolved from supporting non-profits and small businesses to working with early-stage startups and multi-billion-dollar tech companies. As part of the founding team of Athletify, Dave brings his extensive experience to his role as Director of Product & Design, shaping the vision and user experience of the platform. Outside of work, Dave is an avid musician, a dedicated father to two daughters involved in sports, and a passionate Utah Jazz fan.

Erica Eichhorn, *Recreation Program Supervisor, City of Coralville*



I started working with the City of Coralville back in college as a youth counselor. After graduating from the University of Iowa with a B.A. in Health and Sports Studies, I did some traveling but never completely stopped working in the field of recreation. When I moved back to the Coralville area I returned to the Coralville Recreation Department as a Recreation Program Supervisor. I am currently in my 16th year with the city. When I am not teaching classes at Barre3 or taking yoga classes, I consider myself a total homebody and spend as much free time as possible with my hubby and 2 boys.

Frank Parsi, *President, Williams Architects*



Frank joined Williams Architects in 2000 and became President in 2024. He has significant architectural experience in recreational projects and is the co-leader of the Firm's Sports, Recreation & Aquatic architecture sectors. Frank received his Bachelor of Architecture in Structures from the University of Illinois at Chicago and is licensed in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Wisconsin. He has extensive knowledge of project delivery from initial design to construction delivery, including state and local codes. As the Sustainable Design Studio Leader, Frank is a LEED AP BD+C. Green Building Council and applies this knowledge to each of the projects he works on.

Speaker Bios

Garret Munch, *Principal/Senior Landscape Architect, Shive*



Garret Munch is a senior landscape architect and principal with Shive-Hattery's Landscape Architecture Studio, bringing over a decade of expertise to his work. Garret is an Iowa native, a graduate of Iowa State University with a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, and currently serves as the President of the Iowa Chapter of ASLA. Garret's primary role is to help clients and teams develop a holistic vision for their projects by leveraging thought leadership and his expertise in 3D visualization. His ability for fostering collaboration and aligning diverse perspectives has made him a key contributor to a wide range of complex and multidisciplinary projects. As the design lead for the Athene North Shore Recreation Area at Easter Lake Park, Garret served as a critical link between the design team and universal design consultants. He hopes to share his experience and insight to how the co-design process can and will improve the overall success of your projects. Drawing from realworld experience, he will talk about how these inclusive design tools worked in this project, demonstrating their profound impact on both the design process and project outcomes.

Grace Balison, *Recreation Program Supervisor, City of Coralville*



Grace began working in recreation in January of 2021 as a part time staff member for the City of Coralville's before and after school program (BASP) and summer camps. In August of 2022, Grace became the Recreation Program Coordinator for Camp Coralville BASP and SPARK Central Summer Camp. She graduated in December of 2022 from Iowa majoring in Education Studies and Human Relations and minoring in Sports and Recreation Management. In August of 2024, Grace became a Recreation Program Supervisor overseeing a BASP and SPARK Central Summer Camp. Grace completed a 95 hr. Children's Yoga Certification and 200 hr. Yoga Teacher Training in 2024. She teaches both children's and adult yoga with the

City of Coralville and at Hothouse Yoga to share her passion for making movement available and fun for all ages and abilities. Outside of Coralville Parks and Rec. and Hothouse Yoga, Grace can be found hanging out with her German Shepherd mix, Maizie and fiancé, Ethan, probably on a road trip exploring a National Park somewhere.

Hank Moyers, *Associate Principal, Confluence*



Hank has practiced landscape architecture throughout the world over the past 22 years. Over the past 12 years, Parks and Recreation design, Master Planning, Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Planning and Aquatics have been a focus of his practice on sites throughout the Midwest and for various City Parks Departments.

Heidi Stengel, *Sales and Design Manager, Aquatix by Landscape Structures*



Heidi Stengel joined Aquatix in early 2021. In her role as a Sales Design Manager, she supports Aquatix front line sales channel and manages the pre-sale design team. She and her team help guide the sales process from start to finish for a successful project. Her goal is to bring your vision to life and in budget. Since joining Aquatix, Heidi has made multiple appearances across North America to provide continuing education seminars on topics related to splash pad design, budgeting, site selection and more. She also regularly provides lunch and learn sessions within our sales channel on topics ranging from the design process to new product releases.

Speaker Bios

Heidi Wood, Pharmacist, UI-ARC



Heidi Wood, PharmD, MAS, BCPS, AAHIVP, is a clinical pharmacy specialist with the University of Iowa Addiction and Recovery Collaborative (UI ARC). As part of UI ARC, she is focused on increasing opioid overdose education and naloxone supply across Iowa, screening and treating substance use disorder-related infections, and reducing stigma surrounding substance use disorders and opioid overdose.

James Moore, CEO & Co-Founder, Athletify, Inc.



James Moore has spent most of his career living in Asia and working in the retail, consulting, and government sectors, where he set up four wholly foreign owned enterprises and was a former Senior Government Consultant at the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Bureau in Hangzhou, China. He was the first American to hold such a position. He is currently a co-founder of Athletify and the We Believe App. He also sits on the board of a global consulting firm in Salt Lake City and owns a real estate company. He holds a BA in Chinese from Brigham Young University, a Ph.D. from Zhejiang University in Entrepreneurship Management, and an MPA from Harvard. James and his wife are the proud parents of five children. He is a sports enthusiast and particularly loves coaching his children.

Jared Moore, President & Co-Founder, Athletify, Inc.



Jared Moore is a serial entrepreneur with over two decades of experience building businesses from concept to successful exit. He has started over a dozen companies with a 90 percent success rate. His last company was an eight-figure exit and he is currently the President and co-founder of Athletify. In his younger years he was one of the best freetail photographers in the country. In his college years he even dabbled in entertainment and made several appearances on national television. He received his undergraduate degree in business from Utah Valley University where he was also a collegiate athlete. In his spare time, Jared enjoys coaching his five children

in multiple sports and surfing.

Jeff Bartley, Principal Engineer, Waters Edge Aquatic Design



Jeff Bartley has over 30 years of experience in the aquatic design and consulting field, providing him the knowledge and skills necessary to lead aquatic projects. Jeff takes great pride in directing all aspects of planning, design, construction administration, and operator training of aquatic facilities. He is committed to designing tailored, energy-efficient, and sustainable facilities that optimize the site and budget, and exceed client expectations and goals.

Speaker Bios

Joe Farrier,

Kate Connell, Sr. Manager, HydroApps



Kate Connell (she/her) is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional and a passionate advocate for equity in aquatics and recreation. She has a track record of implementing inclusive programs, policies, and personnel practices in her prior role as a municipal program supervisor in Iowa City, where she was a graduate of the University of Iowa. Through her work at Equitable Aquatics, Kate has become a sought after national speaker on diversity and leadership and has presented educational sessions at dozens of national and state level association conferences. Kate bridges her experience as a leader in the aquatic industry with her role as the Senior Manager of Sales and Strategic Partnerships to support HydroApps customers. She believes that leveraging tools and techniques to streamline

operations and risk management frees up aquatic professionals to focus on their workplace passions and further their impact.

Katie McGrane, Recreation Supervisor- Aquatics, City of Ankeny



Katie has worked in the aquatics field for 10 years. She has experience working for municipal aquatic centers, University of Northern Iowa Recreation Services, and the YMCA, as well as getting the opportunity to work for the Navy MWR in Yokosuka, Japan. Katie has been with Ankeny Parks & Recreation for almost 3 years and currently oversees two aquatic centers as well as a variety of youth and adult recreation programs, sports leagues, and special events.

Kelsey Montross, Clinical & Outreach Director, UI-ARC



Kelsey Montross, MHA, serves as the Director of Clinical and Outreach Services at the University of Iowa Addiction and Recovery Collaborative (UI ARC). With more than 15 years of experience in the mental health field, Ms. Montross works with UI-ARC to enhance education on Substance Use Disorders and their treatment, while actively advocating for the reduction of stigma surrounding this population.

Speaker Bios

Kristina Gordon, Assistant Professor of Instruction, University of Iowa



Kristina Gordon is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) and teaches at the University of Iowa for the Department of Health and Human Physiology. Professor Gordon also teaches in Iowa's Disability Studies program and is proud to be a leisure and recreation professional. Her experiences include working with older adults, coaching youth sports, facilitating aquatic exercise and providing leisure education to people with and without disabilities.

Kyle McCawley, Aquatic Engineer/Senior Project Manager, Waters Edge Aquatic Design



In 2006, Kyle moved into the aquatic industry as a project manager. This position aligned with Kyle's passion and background as a lifeguard, swim team member and certified coach. In this current role he engages with clients on the design and construction of civic aquatic projects, ranging from splash pads to indoor and outdoor swimming pools across the Midwest. Kyle focuses on providing a range of services including new design, feasibility studies, conceptual planning, renovation upgrades, life cycle cost analysis, community outreach and public engagement.

LaTasha DeLoach, Senior Center Coordinator, Iowa City Senior Center



LaTasha J. DeLoach holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Iowa School of Social Work. In her position as the Director of the City of Iowa City Senior Center where she provides administrative leadership for staff that provide services to decrease social isolation for a diverse resident 50 plus. She ensures there is a place where older adults can continue learning, connecting, staying involved in the community and maintain wellness.

Matt Eckhardt, Owner/Operator, PlayOps, LLC.

Speaker Bios

Michelle Wiegand, *Naturalist, Johnson County Conservation*



Michelle grew up in Iowa City and developed a deep connection to nature as a young child. After school and all summer long, her days were spent outdoors riding bikes, turning over rocks, and exploring Iowa's woodlands. Her career background is varied but her focus has always been communities, families, and youth development. Michelle has a bachelor's and master's degree in social work. After working in more traditional social work roles while integrating outdoor experiences, she realized her heart was calling her to get back to the outdoor world and make that a central part of her career with youth and families. She helped develop a teen leadership and resiliency-based program for under-represented youth in St. Louis, later worked in a leadership capacity for the National Audubon Society where their focus again was on reaching historically marginalized communities and providing adventure programming, career exposure, summer engagement, and public events. She's worked in non-profit leadership, educational institutions, municipal government, including Iowa City Parks and Recreation, St. Louis County government, and now Johnson County Conservation. She has expertise in grant-writing and development, community outreach, environmental and outdoor programming, fostering community collaboration, and has also assisted in developing parks facilities. She is a Certified Interpretive Guide and a Wilderness First Responder. Michelle believes that people and our planet are better off when we build individual connections to the natural world.

Molly Wuebker, *Founder & Owner of Uncurbed & Iowa ADA Liaison for Great Plains ADA Center, Uncurbed, LLC.*



Molly Wuebker is an expert in integrating occupational therapy with design to create accessible, inclusive, and resilient environments. With 14 years of experience, she is the founder of Uncurbed, an accessibility consulting firm built on the belief that design changes benefiting people with disabilities and historically minoritized communities can have a net benefit for everyone.

As a consultant for the Great Plains ADA Center in her role as the Iowa ADA Liaison, Molly provides expert technical assistance and educational programs, always seeking opportunities to exceed minimum standards that empower communities to fully engage in their environments.

Molly holds a Doctorate of Occupational Therapy from Creighton University (2010) and is certified through the ADA Coordinator Training Certificate Program (ACTCP).

Nathan Osmundson, *Recreation Director, City of Boone*



Formerly worked for a County Parks department, spent time as a City Council member, Recreation Coordinator for the largest City in Iowa, and two stints as a Recreation department of ONE. Currently the Recreation Director for the City of Boone, IA. Married to Joni for 18 years and proud father of three daughters, Zoey, Gabby and Camryn.

Speaker Bios

PJ Novick, *Principal, Confluence*



With over 40-years of professional experience, PJ has been responsible for the design and project management of a wide variety of parks and recreation, educational and cultural facilities involving a multi-disciplinary approach to design through collaboration with planners, architects and engineers. He holds a BLA from Kansas State University and a Master of Architecture from the University of Kansas. Over the course of his career, PJ has had the opportunity to work on a plethora of project types, his favorite being large scale athletic and recreation projects that provide recreational opportunities for broad base of users.

Sarah Hardin, *Assistant Professor of Instruction, University of Iowa*



Sarah is an Assistant Professor of Instruction at the University of Iowa. In her three years at UI, she has worked to establish a recreation management concentration within the SRM major and assist students to explore recreation career opportunities. Prior to her faculty appointment, she was a recreation practitioner engaged in leadership experiences within collegiate, community, and nonprofit recreation. Her focus on employee development and passion for the importance of recreation in lifestyle enhancement has been demonstrated through work with collegiate recreational sports and fitness administration, public and nonprofit board membership, and development of curriculum to prepare aspiring recreation professionals.

Shannon Gapp, *Senior Planner, MSA Professional Services*



Shannon is dedicated to creating equitable, healthy, sustainable and resilient communities. As both a project planner and landscape designer, she understands how planning principles inform the built environment. 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. Exposure to both the public and private sector has allowed her to see first-hand the importance of community involvement in planning and design.

Shawn O'Shea, *Client Service Manager, 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). Shawn has 13 years of experience as an urban/regional planner. Shawn holds a master's degree in Community and Regional Planning from Iowa State University.

Speaker Bios

Sherri Proud, *Parks and Recreation Director, City of Coralville*



Sherri Proud has served as the Director of Parks and Recreation since 2005 for the City of Coralville where she leads a team of thirty-five full-time employees across four divisions. Sherri also serves as the lead Project Manager for renovations for City facilities and as Project Liaison for new construction for Parks and Recreation. Improvements under her tenure have included over \$36 million in park and recreation amenities and 272 acres added in park land. Her mantra for staff and herself is to always ask, “How can we help make this happen?” for she believes if you approach every inquiry already mentally ready to say “yes, we can do that”, you are able to build a community ready to tackle any challenge put before it.

Staci Williams, *Strategic Development Director, Bolton & Menk, Inc.*



Staci Williams serves as the Strategic Development Director for Bolton & Menk where she focuses on incorporating connections to recreation and natural resources as part of community development and revitalization. She has over 20 years of experience working with communities around the country to reconnect people and communities to their water resources.

Stevie Weeks, *Outside Sales, Landmark Aquatic*



Stevie attended Lindenwood University, studying Human Service Agency Management. While there, she actively participated in community-focused initiatives through organizations like the Delta Zeta Sorority, Boy Scouts of America Venturing Crew, and Big Brothers Big Sisters. Her professional journey began in the aquatic sector, where she spent over a decade working in both public and private settings. During this time, Stevie honed her skills in aquatic management, program development, and fostering a strong sense of community amongst participants. Driven by a desire to make a broader impact, Stevie transitioned to her current role as Outside Sales Representative with Landmark Aquatic – a position that she coined as “the Ultimate Friend Maker”. She leverages her extensive experience in Parks and Recreation to create inclusive programs and cultivate a deeper understanding of neurodiversity within the community. Stevie is a passionate advocate for building inclusive communities and empowering teams to better serve individuals of all abilities.

Speaker Bios

Trace Hoekstra, *Principal, Kitchen Sink Communications*



Trace Hoekstra and the team at Kitchen Sink Communications deliver grant strategy and proposal development for organizations with budgets ranging from \$250,000 to more than \$60 million. Since 2020, they have secured more than \$115 million in grant funding and state contracts to address community needs including food assistance, affordable housing, refugee services, children's mental health, juvenile justice, conservation, economic development and more.

Travis Mai, *Recreation Program Supervisor, City of Coralville*



Travis has worked for the Coralville Parks and Recreation Department for 24 years. He currently oversees the Wickham before and after school program and runs an elementary age & jr. high summer camp. He also does various programming with youth & adults. Travis has a bachelor's degree from the University of Northern Iowa in Leisure Services. He is happily married with three children and enjoys spending time with family and vacationing.