



2022 CONFERENCE

SOLDOTNA - OCTOBER 12-13, 2022





The importance of CHOICE.

"Inclusive play isn't that every single child is going to be able to do everything on the playground, but that there will be something for everyone. We aren't building a "special needs" playground here, and a "normal kid" playground there – we're making a GREAT playground that everyone connects to and wants to be on."

Jill Moore

Marketing and Inclusion Specialist
Landscape Structures, Inc.



WELCOME TO SOLDOTNA

Dear Conference Attendees,

Founded in 1975, the Alaska Recreation & Park Association (ARPA) empowers park and recreation professionals through educational opportunities that enhance their ability to change lives and impact communities on a daily basis. The annual conference is the heart and soul of this mission as there is something extraordinary that happens when we meet each year. Great minds coming together in one place fuels creative energy and innovation.

The conference theme this year is **On the Trail to Inclusion and Equity in Alaska Recreation**. This week we will explore how we can ensure that all members of our communities are able to enjoy the benefits of our recreational opportunities. Our line-up of presenters and guests are ready to share their knowledge and passion for ensuring that recreation opportunities in Alaska are available to everyone.

The presentations, speakers, sponsors, and activities all work together to help attendees network, learn creative ideas, and get more involved with ARPA. Throughout the conference, ARPA Board members will be available to answer questions, and ensure you feel welcome and included, starting at the conference registration table. I hope that you leave this conference excited to return next year and continue to be a part of this amazing community!!

Sincerely,

Joel Todd
Assistant Director
Soldotna Parks & Recreation

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

2022 ARPA Conference General Schedule

"On the Trail to Inclusion & Equity in Alaska Recreation"

Title Sponsor: Exerplay

Monday, October 10th, 2022

8:00 am - 7:00 pm	Pre- Conference	American Red Cross Lifeguarding Instructor Course (Day1)
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Tuesday, October 11th, 2022

8:00 am - 7:00 pm	Pre- Conference	American Red Cross Lifeguarding Instructor Course (Day 2)
7:30 am - 6:00 pm	Pre- Conference	Inclusive Playground Design Workshop
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	KRBC	Networking at Kenai River Brewing Company

Wednesday, October 12th, 2022

Time		Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
7:30 am - 8:30 am	Registration	Registration & Coffee in Vendor Lounge		
8:30 am - 9:00 am	Welcome	Welcome from conference committee		
9:00 am - 10:15 am	Education Session 1	All Ages, All Abilities Jill Moore Landscape Structures	Know Your Biases Robin Benton Salem State University	Conflict in Workplace Linda Handeland Fairbanks P&R
10:30 am - 11:45 am	Education Session 2	The Alaska Long Trail Xavier Lopez Alaska Trails	Ableism: Changing Perspective Jeff Dick Challenge Alaska	Learn to Curl Sarah Smith CurlAK
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	Keynote Lunch	Keynote Speaker: Tom Norquist "The Science of Play" Lunch Sponsor: Playcraft Systems - Catering: Promethean Cuisine		
1:45 pm - 3:00 pm	Education Session 3	Public Policy Development Kate Thomas Wrangell P&R	Invasive Species Kenai Watershed Forum, City of Homer & Soldotna	Sled Hockey Demo USA Hockey Challenge Alaska
3:15 pm - 4:30 pm	Education Session 4	Motivation to Move Tom Norquist GameTime	Non- Motorized Transportation Matt Steffy - Homer P&R Bjorn Olson	Aquatic Emergency Action Plan - Joe Stefanyak Jeff Ellis & Associates
4:30 pm - 6:00 pm	Conference Rooms	Vendor Lounge Reception Sponsor: Northwest Playground - Catering: Lucy's Deli		
6:00 pm - 8:30 pm	SRSC Ice Arena	All Conference Social Event: More ice adventures on the rink Dinner Catering: Pizza Boys		

Thursday, October 13th, 2022

Time		Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
8:00 am - 9:00 am	Coffee	Coffee in Vendor Lounge		
9:00 am - 10:15 am	Education Session 5	How I Survived the FooFighters Donnie Hayes & Brain Colon Fairbanks P&R	Adaptive Learn to Skate Madalyn & Lauren Soldotna & Juneau	Adaptive Mtn Bikes & Trails Part 1: Discussion Jim Beck & Challenge Alaska
10:30 am - 11:45 am	Education Session 6	SCORP Ricky Gease Alaska State Parks	Outdoor Programing Eric Oba UAA	Adaptive Mtn Bikes & Trails Part 2: Demo on the trails Jim Beck & Challenge Alaska
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch	Lunch Catering: Odies Deli		
1:00 pm - 2:15 pm	Education Session 7	Winter Programing Roundtable Joel Todd	Parks Advisory Board Roundtable Tyler Best	Rink Rats Roundtable Trevor Baldwin
2:30 pm - 4:30 pm	Fieldtrips	Mountain Bike Tsaltshi Trails w/guide	Visit National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center (transportation provided)	Walk Centennial Park Trail w/guide (1.5 miles)
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Silent Auction	Conference Rooms: Silent auction and social hour		
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Awards Banquet & Annual Meeting	Conference Rooms: Awards Banquet & Annual Meeting Sponsor: Great Western Recreation - Catering: Where It's At		

Friday, October 14th, 2022

Time		Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
8:00 am - 6:00 pm	Post Conference	Certified Pool Operator Course		
9:00 am - 10:30 am	Board Meeting	ARPA Board of Directors Meeting		



2022 ALASKA CONFERENCE

SOLDOTNA - OCTOBER 12-13, 2022



Title Sponsor



MONDAY
**OCT
10**

**LIFEGUARDING
INSTRUCTOR COURSE**

**INCLUSIVE
PLAYGROUND
WORKSHOP**

TUESDAY
**OCT
11**



WEDNESDAY
**OCT
12**

**CONFERENCE DAY 1
Keynote Lunch**

**CONFERENCE DAY 2
Awards Banquet**

THURSDAY
**OCT
13**



FRIDAY
**OCT
14**

**CERTIFIED POOL
OPERATOR COURSE**

907-714-1211

www.arpa.myrec.com



Tuesday, Oct. 11th

INCLUSIVE PLAYSPACE

Design Workshop

Playgrounds are a place for play and learning - where kids develop physical and cognitive skills and build social relationships. However, not all playgrounds are welcoming to people of varying abilities. During this continuing education session, you will learn about the changing population of children on the playground, and how to create playground designs that meet their unique needs.



Leah Boltz

Leah co-founded Parks for All, a grassroots initiative to bring inclusive play to Alaska. Anchorage now has 14 inclusive playgrounds with more in the works.



Jill Moore

Jill Moore, an Inclusive Play Specialist from Landscape Structures and former Paralympian athlete, is passionate that every child on every playground gets to have fun.



Mark Kimerer

Mark started Bettisworth North's landscape architecture group in 2010 and has over 25 years of experience in the field.



Play Has No Limit.

GameTime designs inclusive play environments that go beyond accessibility. Backed by independent research and based on guidelines developed by leaders in the field of inclusive design, our play and recreation spaces address the needs of the whole child, and of every child. They also encourage children, adults, and families of all abilities to experience the benefits of play...together.

Since 1929, GameTime has sought to enrich childhood through play and to create play spaces that eliminate barriers to the play experience. Our goal is to help communities design environments that allow all people to participate in play, regardless of age or ability, and to prove that play has no limit.

GREAT WESTERN RECREATION HAS NOW BEEN GAME TIME'S EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATIVES FOR 47 YEARS.



SESSION #1

9:00 AM - 10:15 AM

WEDNESDAY - OCT. 12TH, 2022

ALL AGES, ALL ABILITIES,

ALL THE TIME: UTILIZING UNIVERSAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

ROOM 1

JILL MOORE - LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES

Parks today are responsible to ensure that we're providing not only accessible environments but spaces where users can feel secure, engage to their fullest potential and remain vital community members. In All Ages, participants will discover how to apply the seven principles of universal design to create equitable spaces that encourage social sustainability, and social equity, support all abilities and ages and exist as a strategic investment for a community's economic health, pride and commitment to all.

- Understand current definitions of disability as defined by environmental conditions, and how this factors into creating community social equity and sustainability.
- Explain why incorporating inclusion as a strategy in creating a triple bottom line acts as a solution to the long term success of parks and recreation environments.
- Illustrate each principle of universal design and how they contribute to a park design that goes beyond accessibility and encourages inclusion.

KNOW YOUR BIASES

ROOM 2

PROFESSOR ROBIN BENTON - SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY

We all have biases. It is a natural human characteristic. Biases serve an evolutionary purpose. In this non-judgmental program you will learn how biases are created and reinforced. We will explore several tools to help you identify and navigate your biases. We will refresh our understanding of the differences between fact, generalization and stereotype. Participants will:

- Learn how and why we all have biases
- Be familiar with bias exploration tools
- Differentiate between fact, generalization and stereotype

CONFLICT IN WORKPLACE

ROOM 3

LINDA HANDELAND- FAIRBANKS PARK & RECREATION

We will talk about some of the reasons why conflict in the workplace happens and why we need to address it. Please bring examples of "big" and "small" workplace conflicts that you have experienced. We will use one possible solution method to find solutions for some of these conflicts. Come prepared to discuss and share.

THE ALASKA LONG TRAIL

ROOM 1

XAVIER LOPEZ - ALASKA TRAILS

The Alaska Long Trail is an outdoor recreation project aiming to produce a world-class, multi-use 500-mile route connecting Fairbanks and Seward for use by residents and visitors. The concept is spearheaded by Alaska Trails with strong support from a broad coalition of partners across Alaska. Long Trails like the Appalachian or the Pacific Crest Trail have a proven power to attract people from all over the planet, creating more reasons for visitors to spend time and money in Alaska communities and with Alaska businesses. The presentation will give updates on the status of the trail planning, funding, construction-ready segments, and next steps.

ABLEISM: CHANGING PERSPECTIVE ON ABILITY AND DISABILITY

ROOM 2

JEFF DICK - CHALLENGE ALASKA

Ableism is the discrimination and social prejudice against people with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior. We will explore this subject, as well as its roots, prevalence in society, and how to defeat ableism for the betterment of all people and our communities.

LEARN TO CURL

ICE ARENA

SARAH SMITH - CURLAK

curlAK was dreamed up by Olympic Curler Jessica Schultz on a flight home to Anchorage. curlAK is working to grow the sport of curling through Alaskan communities by creating unique events that encompass people of all abilities and age ranges. Learn how to curl and how to bring curling to your community.

Science of Play



TOM NORQUIST

Tom has been a leader in the play industry for over 30 years. He is known for his boundless energy and heartfelt passion for the lifelong benefits of play and recreation. Tom leaves park and recreation professionals across the globe feeling invigorated about their profession, renewing their sense of importance in a diverse and modern society. Most importantly, Tom inspires audiences to make play a priority in their daily lives, throughout their lifespan.



A PLAYCORE Company



LUNCH SPONSOR



A PLAYCORE Company

WED. OCT 12TH - LUNCH KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Take a dynamic look back into the history of play to connect us to our playful roots, remind us of the critical role play and recreation have on our daily lives, and further deepen our understanding of the value park and recreation professionals bring to communities in these modern times.

PUBLIC POLICY DEVELOPMENT

ROOM 1

KATE THOMAS - WRANGELL PARKS & RECREATION

Kate will engage participants in the process for developing effective policy. The presentation will cover the intention behind internal policies, where to begin, how to implement them and the process for review and improvement going forward.

CONTROLLING INVASIVE SPECIES

ROOM 2

MAURA SCHUMACHER - KENAI WATERSHED FORUM

MATT STEFFY - HOMER PARKS & RECREATION

JENNIFER HESTER - CITY OF SOLDOTNA

Invasive species introduce many challenges to land management. Displacement of desired vegetation, increased maintenance costs, erosion control, toxins for wildlife, and loss on investment are just a few of these challenges. This session will explore the dangers and costs of managing invasive species too late and give you the tools you need to manage everything from flower beds to creek beds, and all the pathways in-between.

SLED HOCKEY DEMO

ICE ARENA

BRANDON HARKER - CHALLENGE ALASKA

Sled hockey is an adaptive form of hockey in which players sit in specially designed sleds that sit on top of two hockey skate blades. Sled hockey follows most of the typical hockey rules but allows players with physical disabilities and mobility issues to participate. Learn about the recreational and competitive opportunities for sled hockey in Alaska including the Alaska Avalanche Sled Hockey Team based in Anchorage

SESSION #4

3:15 PM - 4:30 PM

WEDNESDAY - OCT. 12TH, 2022

MOTIATION TO MOVE

ROOM 1

TOM NORQUIST - GAMETIME

By thoughtfully creating outdoor destinations with health and wellness in mind, communities can dramatically impact their efforts in promoting less sedentary lifestyles across generations. Uncover innovative solutions and explore case examples, evidence-based programs and unique design strategies that inspire people of all ages to live healthier, happier lives through active play and fitness.

- Create an advocacy message in support of your community's need/desire to intentionally address outdoor physical activity for intergenerational use.
- List three intentional evidence-based design best practices to increase physical activity in outdoor play and recreation environments.
- Outline two case examples of communities that intentionally planned, designed, and/or programmed a park destination with fitness in mind.

NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

ROOM 2

MATT STEFFY - HOMER PARKS & RECREATION

BJORN OLSON - HOMER DRAWDOWN

The Homer Drawdown initiative and the City of Homer have combined resources to improve the infrastructure, awareness, and public policy surrounding non-motorized, or "people first," transportation in the Homer area. Through intensive partnerships with multiple agencies, they hope to decrease the carbon footprint, increase transportation options, and develop a synergy between all modes of transportation in the City's new Transportation Plan.

AQUATIC EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

ROOM 3

JOE STEFANYAK - JEFF ELLIS & ASSOCIATES

This session will provide an overview of good risk management practices as they relate to EAPs. This includes discussion on identifying potential incidents, training and equipment needs, EAP fundamentals and Algorithm, documenting the EAP, making EAP work and evaluation of your EAP.

- Attendees will be able to identify potential incidents that may require inclusion in the EAP.
- Attendees will be able to identify what the training and equipment needs are to execute the EAP.
- Attendees will be able to identify proper means by which to evaluate your EAP, both prior to an incident occurring and after an incident has occurred.



ALL CONFERENCE Social Event

WEDNESDAY
6:00-8:30 PM

Dinner: Pizza and salad
from Pizza Boys

Tasty beverages: Kenai
River Brewing Company
Location: Soldotna
Regional Sports Complex



CURLING



BROOMBALL



KEG CURLING



SLED HOCKEY





PLAYCRAFT[®]

S Y S T E M S

A **PLAYCORE** Company

Inclusivity is bigger than the playground, and a critical element of design that ensures a smile on every face. All children, of every shape, size, and ability deserve the right to play.

Playcraft Systems is devoted to providing playground designs that include activities for everyone. Your next playground is an opportunity to provide access for all, something that isn't as common as it sounds. Great inclusive design helps to break down barriers, forge new friendships, and ensure play is fun and memorable.



Margaret Miller - Sales Administration Supervisor

Direct Phone - 541-973-2750

margaret@playcraftsystems.com

HOW I SURVIVED THE FOOFIGHTERS

ROOM 1**DONNIE HAYES - FAIRBANKS PARK & RECREATION**

Ten things we learned from putting on a Foo Fighter's Concert:

In Alaska it is rare to hear, "Hey, want to put on a Foo Fighter's Concert?" This session will discuss how the simple answer of "Heck yes!" turned our town upside down for one night of joy and rock and roll and how we would do it again.

- To encourage departments and staff to stretch beyond their comfort levels
- To share detailed stories of success and heartbreak
- To teach guiding principles for large events that can be applied for any size

LEARN TO SKATE - ADAPTIVE

ROOM 2**MADALYN MCEWEN - SOLDOTNA PARKS & RECREATION****LAUREN ANDERSON - JUNEAU PARKS & RECREATION**

Skating is for everyone, no matter the age or ability. The Skate United and Special Olympics badge programs are designed to engage these individuals in the sport for recreation, activity and enjoyment. Learn how to implement these programs at your rink.

ADAPTIVE MOUNTAIN BIKES & TRAILS PART 1 - DISCUSSION

ROOM 3**JIM BECK - CHALLENGE ALASKA**

This session will overview different types of off-road adaptive mountain bikes (aMTB) and their various capabilities. The session will examine aMTB trail standards as proposed by Kootenay Adaptive Recreation Association in BC Canada. In this session, you will learn about different types of adaptive bikes and why they are used and simple trail standards to increase inclusion.

SESSION #6

10:30 AM - 11:45 AM

THURSDAY - OCT. 13TH, 2022

STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP)

ROOM 1

RICKY GEASE - ALASKA STATE PARKS

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is one concise document that has the potential to guide outdoor recreation development decisions in the state for the next five years. This current SCORP update led by the NPS River, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program and overseen by the AK DNR Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, with assistance from the Alaska Trails Initiative, provides the long overdue opportunity for a legitimate, comprehensive, project-focused, locally driven process for guiding investments and strategies for outdoor recreation.

OUTDOOR PROGRAMMING FOR MOOD REGULATION AND STRESS REDUCTION

ROOM 2

ERIC OBA - UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA- ANCHORAGE

Come join us as we explore the many benefits of natural environments in our lives and take a walk on the green side and increase your knowledge and awareness of potential programs and modalities that can be added to your toolkit as recreation professionals.

- Under the lens of Attention Restoration Theory, identify 2 ways in which recreation and programming can utilize exposure and interaction with natural environments to help restore attention and reduce attention fatigue
- Identify 2 programming ideas for incorporating natural environments in various populations
- Identify 2 ways in which programming using natural environments can help reduce rumination and encourage improvements in adults with depression.

ADAPTIVE MOUNTAIN BIKES & TRAILS PART 2 - DEMO ON THE TRAILS

OUTSIDE

JIM BECK - CHALLENGE ALASKA

This is part two of the adaptive mountain bikes and trails session and will be out on the trails. Attending the first session is encouraged but not required. During this part, participants will test out a variety of adaptive bikes.

WINTER PROGRAMING ROUNDTABLE

ROOM 1

JOEL TODD - SOLDOTNA PARKS & RECREATION

Are you looking for new winter program ideas? Is your programming serving user needs? Do you face administrative and other challenges? If so, this session is for you, but you have to bring an idea or two of your own to share! We'll focus on three areas; new winter program trends, measuring programming success, and the programming delivery challenges of Alaska winters. This is an invaluable opportunity to explore success stories and resolve issues in recreation programming.

PARKS ADVISORY BOARD ROUNDTABLE

ROOM 2

TYLER BEST - KENAI PARKS & RECREATION

Parks and Recreation Advisory Boards are groups of volunteer citizens who work to further park and recreation initiatives in a community and can serve a variety of helpful and necessary roles to help your organization implement your vision. Join the conversation about how to utilize these boards, best practices, common struggles, and local success stories. Bring questions and ideas to share with other communities.

RINK RATS ROUNDTABLE

ROOM 3

TREVOR BALDWIN - SOLDOTNA PARKS & RECREATION

LAUREN ANDERSON - JUNEAU PARKS & RECREATION

Take a short tour of the Soldotna Regional Sports Complex with Lead Maintenance, Trevor Baldwin. During the tour we will discuss the various joys and struggles of managing ice rinks in Alaska. Each participant should bring questions and expertise to share with the group on topics that could include programming, ice making, blade sharpening, energy efficiencies, equipment operation, and any other aspect of operating a successful ice rink.

FIELDTRIPS

2:30 PM - 4:30 PM

THURSDAY - OCT. 13TH, 2022

MOUNTAIN BIKE TSALTESHI TRAILS

FRONT DOORS

TSALTESHI TRAILS ASSOCIATION

Tsaltieshi Trails Association is dedicated to promoting healthy, trail-oriented individual and family activities, including skiing, snowshoeing, biking, running, and walking. With over 25 K (15 miles) of groomed cross-country ski trails in winter and 15K of single-track bike trails in the summer, it is a magical playland. Grab a bike and take a tour with a local guide. The skill level is medium, so prepare for a little sweat.

VISIT NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE VISITOR CENTER

VANS

LEAH ESKELIN - NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

The Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center in Soldotna is an excellent, family-friendly center with exhibits on the lifecycles of salmon, wildlife films in its theater, and naturalist-led outdoor programs on the weekends. Two short loop trails begin at the center and wind into the nearby woods or to a viewing platform on Headquarters Lake. Jump in the van to the visitor center for a tour of the facility and a short walk in the woods.

WALK IN THE PARK

SIDE DOORS

ANDREW CARMICHEAL - SOLDOTNA PARKS & REC

Take a walk in the woods on the Centennial park loop trail with Soldotna Parks Director Andrew Carmichael and his dog Peaches. Not only will you get some exercise on this short 1.5-mile walk but you will also learn about a variety of projects including stream bank restoration, elevated boardwalk, trail construction, campground expansion, and spruce bark beetle mitigation.

2022 ARPA CONFERENCE

FIELD TRIPS

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

THURSDAY

2:30 PM – 4:30 PM

OCTOBER 13TH

All work and no play is not healthy. These field trips are a perfect opportunity to get outside, stretch the legs, and see other parts of Soldotna.



MOUNTAIN BIKE TSALTESHI TRAILS

Tsalteshi Trails Association is dedicated to promoting healthy, trail-oriented individual and family activities, including skiing, snowshoeing, biking, running, and walking. Grab a bike and take a tour with a local guide. The skill level is medium, so prepare for a little sweat.



NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE VISITOR CENTER

This is a family-friendly center with exhibits on the lifecycles of salmon, wildlife films in its theater, and naturalist-led outdoor programs on the weekends. Jump in the van to the visitor center for a tour of the facility and a short walk.



WALK IN THE PARK

Take a walk in the woods on the Centennial park loop trail with Soldotna Parks Director Andrew Carmichael. Learn about a variety of projects including stream bank restoration, elevated boardwalk, trail construction, campground expansion, and spruce bark beetle mitigation.

ARPA CONFERENCE PRESENTERS



JILL MOORE

LANDSCAPE STRUCTURES

Jill Moore works with the LSI team in adding user voice within product development, as well as inclusive design practices. With a specific focus on merging lived experience with universal design principles, Jill promotes and educates on integrating inclusion in play, and bringing people with disabilities into the conversation. As an accredited educational presenter - both in the classroom and the playground, play has become her full-time role. During her lifetime, she has represented Team USA as a multi-sport athlete, bringing perspective on the importance of the formative role of recreation- and how imperative equitable access to play is for all.



ROBIN BENTON

SALEM STATE UNIVERSITY - PROFESSOR OF AQUATIC MANAGEMENT

Robin Benton, Aquatic Management Professor, registered nurse and NREMT, teaches a variety of recreation, rescue, and aquatic courses drawing on an extensive history in emergency response. A nationally recognized speaker, author of industry and peer reviewed publications, Robin includes technical knowledge with practical experience.



LINDA HANDELAND

FAIRBANKS PARK & RECREATION

I began teaching swimming lessons at 15, under the supervision of my mentor, Sally Vogt, for the Maple Grove Parks and Recreation Department in Maple Grove, Mn. I graduated from St Olaf College in 1986 in Northfield, MN with a Major in Chemistry/ Physical Science Education and become a teacher. While homeschooling my 3 kids, I began working at FNSB as a part-time Lifeguard in 2006 and am happy to stay with my first love of aquatics for the rest of my career.



XAVIER LOPEZ

ALASKA TRAILS

Xavier graduated from Wesleyan University with a Bachelor's Degree in Earth & Environmental Sciences with a focus in Planetary Science. Raised in the big city of San Antonio, TX, Xavier never realized his passion for the environment until he took a geology course in his senior year of high school. After graduating college, he moved to Alaska and joined the Alaska Trails crew to help build the new Little O'Malley Trail in Chugach State Park. Offering his skills and passion for GIS and graphic design, he volunteered with Alaska Trails to help map out the conceptual route for the Alaska Long Trail.



JEFF DICK

CHALLENGE ALASKA

Jeff Dick, CTRS, has worked with people with physical disabilities, developmental disabilities, mental illness, chemical dependency, and older adults in various clinical and community settings. Over the last 17 years he has helped create and develop Challenge Alaska's Para Sports Program: a program for youth, adults, and veterans with physical and visual disabilities to promote an active lifestyle through adaptive sports and recreation.

ARPA CONFERENCE PRESENTERS

DONNIE HAYES - CPRP

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH - PARKS & RECREATION DIRECTOR

Donnie Hayes has been involved in Recreation Management for almost two decades. Over the years his love for the sounds of laughing kids, smiling parents, and community fun hasn't waned. He continues to love the joy that comes from providing community members opportunities for growth, excitement, completion, and wholesome fun.



MADALYN MCEWEN

SOLDOTNA PARKS & RECREATION - ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

CSD Certified Skating Director, Gold Rated instructor and Certified Referee, Madalyn is a lifelong Alaska resident born and raised in Anchorage. Madalyn has been teaching skating for over 45 years, has traveled as far away as Hong Kong and as close as Anchorage taking students to competitions. Her dedication and love of children and skating is the fuel that drives her year after year. She has been the Skating Director at the Soldotna Regional Sports Complex for the last 26 years. In the summertime, Madalyn supervises the city's campgrounds.



JIM BECK

Jim Beck has been involved in nonprofit human services and state government in Alaska since 1985. Paralyzed since the age of 21, Jim is an avid adaptive mountain bike (aMTB) rider and uses an offroad handcycle to access Alaska's bountiful trails and recreation areas year-round. Jim is passionate about developing inclusive mountain biking and advocating for adaptive trails that bring the stoke to all cyclists.



RICKY GEASE

DNR - DIVISION OF PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION - DIRECTOR

Ricky Gease is the Director of the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, Department of Natural Resources for the State of Alaska. He has a 30 plus year career in natural and cultural resource management, a Master's Degree in Biology from Stanford University, works in the DNR office of the Atwood Building in Anchorage during the week, and resides in Kenai with his wife Bunny Swan.



ERIC OBA

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA - ANCHORAGE

Eric is a passionate recreational therapist with over 10 years of serving the adolescent behavioral health population. A practitioner at heart, he has recently begun bringing therapeutic recreation courses to students in Alaska at the University of Alaska in Anchorage. Eric received his BS in Recreation Management with an emphasis on Therapeutic Recreation and then a Masters TR. He can now often be found hiking with his dogs or keeping up with the latest research on the health benefits of the outdoors.



ARPA CONFERENCE PRESENTERS



SARAH SMITH

CURLAK

Sarah has been curling since 2015 and in that time has moved from club-level play to competitive-level curling. She has won multiple local spiels (tournaments) but her biggest achievement was earning a silver medal at the 2020 women's club national championship. She has been a board member of the Anchorage Curling Club, ran the juniors curling program in Anchorage, and is now Vice Chair for CurlAK.



KATE THOMAS

WRANGELL PARKS & RECREATION

Kate Thomas started her Alaskan career in 2007, with a degree in Adventure Tourism and Business Operations from the College of the Rockies in British Columbia. Kate has worked as a backcountry canoe, kayak and hiking guide for high-end clients and at-risk youth. She currently resides in Wrangell and serves as the Parks and Recreation Director for the Borough since 2015. Kate's focus is making small Alaska communities a better place to live, love and work along with finding ways to incorporate the best into services for all demographics in Wrangell.



MAURA SCHUMACHER

KENAI WATERSHED FORUM - ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST

Maura is the Invasive Species Program Coordinator for the Kenai Watershed Forum, a non-profit based in Soldotna whose mission is to "work together for healthy watersheds on the Kenai Peninsula" through research, restoration, and education. Maura also serves as the Field Coordinator for the Kenai Peninsula Invasive Species Management Area and is a Board Member of the Alaska Invasive Species Partnership.



JENNIFER HESTER

CITY OF SOLDOTNA - ASSOCIATE PLANNER

Jennifer Hester is the Associate Planner for the City of Soldotna. Previously, she fought against pike and elodea infestations that threatened Kenai Peninsula salmon as the invasive species program manager for the Kenai Watershed Forum. She was also the Integrated Pest Management Extension Agent for the University of Alaska Fairbanks and a Biological Technician for Homer Soil & Water Conservation District.



MATT STEFFY

HOMER PARK & RECREATION - PARK MAINTENANCE COORDINATOR

Matt Steffy is born and raised on the Kenai Peninsula, and has worked in multiple facets of the Parks and Recreation spectrum for 24 years. He specializes in public/private partnerships and the necessity to leverage all cooperative efforts to maximize connections between underutilized resources and unmitigated needs. He currently serves as the Superintendent of Parks for the City of Homer.

ARPA CONFERENCE PRESENTERS

BRANDON HARKER

CHALLENGE ALASKA

Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator at Challenge Alaska. He is primarily focused on Challenge's Veterans programs and programs for individuals living with developmental disabilities. Ten years ago, Brandon transformed a successful internship with Challenge Alaska into a career. According to his co-workers, Brandon's skill as a therapist and the passion he brings to what he does every day is unparalleled.



TOM NORQUIST

GAMETIME

Tom has been a leader in the play industry for over 30 years. Tom currently serves on the boards of the International Playground Contractor's Association (NPCAI), and National Institute for Play (NIFP), and is a founding steering committee member of the U.S. Coalition for Play. He is known for his boundless energy and heartfelt passion for the lifelong benefits of play. Tom leaves parks and recreation professionals feeling invigorated about their profession, and inspires audiences to make play a priority in their daily lives, throughout their lifespan.



BJORN OLSON

HOMER DRAWDOWN

Bjørn Olson was born in an abandoned cabin that his family squatted in the Copper River Valley of Interior Alaska. Bjørn is an adventurer, filmmaker, photographer, storyteller, and climate change activist with a deep reverence for Alaska's unbroken ecology and unique cultures.



JOE STEFANYAK

ELLIS ASSOCIATES - SENIOR DIRECTOR

Joe began his career in the Theme Park/Waterpark industry in 1985, more than 30 years ago, as a 16 year-old high school senior, working for the Kennywood Entertainment Company at Kennywood Park in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Joe's current responsibilities with E&A include working closely with over 750 municipalities, corporate and private waterparks, and water resorts throughout the U.S. and in various countries abroad, in the evaluation and implementation of standard operating procedures, operational aquatic safety audits, evaluation of facility Emergency Action Plans, and related services.



LAUREN ANDERSON

JUNEAU PARKS & RECREATION - TREADWELL MANAGER

Lauren began skating at 5 years old but then hung up her toe picks through her teens. While working toward her Recreation Administration Degree at Bowling Green State University and needing PE Credit, she found her way back onto the ice. After 5 years in the California desert, Lauren moved to Juneau. She dusted off her rusty blades and glided into teaching skating to people of all ages and abilities at the newly built Treadwell Arena. She was hired onto the Treadwell staff as the Recreation Coordinator in 2007 and moved into the Manager position in 2014.



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ANNUAL MEETING & AWARDS BANQUET

ANNUAL MEETING & AWARDS BANQUET

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13TH | 6:00PM - 9:00PM

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

6:00 pm	Silent Auction and Social Hour
7:00 pm	Dinner is served
7:30 pm	Annual Meeting and Awards
8:15 pm	Silent Auction closes

ANNUAL MEETING & PRESENTATION OF 2021 ARPA AWARDS

- I. Call to Order - Welcome of Membership
- II. Approval of the Minutes of last year's Annual Meeting
- III. Action Items
- IV. Reports to Membership
 - A. Treasurer's Report
 - B. Introduction of Committee Chairs
 - C. Membership Committee Report
- V. Installation of Officers
- VI Presentation of Awards
- VII. Proclamations
- VIII. Open Forum for Member Comments
- IX. Adjourn

ARPA AWARDS

★ Professional Award

This is the highest recognition that ARPA can bestow upon a deserving candidate. The person will be carefully chosen. In considering a candidate for the Professional Award, he/she must meet the qualifications as set forth in the criteria for this high award.

★ New Professional Award

These professionals are not necessarily the superintendents or leaders that have been visible in the field but are the “up and coming” leaders. They should possess all of those qualities and talents that will eventually place them in the top leadership, but at this time in their careers, they are climbing.

★ Bob Robertson Service Award

This award is for service to the Alaska Recreation and Park Association by members of the association. These are the people that volunteer to be on committees, to work with their sections, to help with conferences and workshops, and generally are the backbone of the Association. This award was approved by the Board in 1995. It is a Board Award in that the nominees are selected only by the ARPA Board

★ Outstanding Business Partner Award

The purpose of this award is to annually recognize one (1) outstanding business partner that has supported ARPA and its mission. This support can be shown in any manner.

★ Lifetime Achievement Award

A recipient who receives this award shall have made note-worthy and measurable positive contributions to ARPA. Past recipients have made contributions such as procedure manuals, template formatting, led a specific campaign or training, or other tangible results. While many ARPA members are willing and able to contribute monumental services, a recipient of this LAA has volunteered to serve in the most demanding of offices and ARPA work.

★ Distinguished Service Award

This achievement award is given to a deserving individual and/or group whose voluntary contribution of time and effort over the years has improved the quality and quantity of leisure opportunities through park, recreation, and conservation projects on the local, state, regional, or national levels.

★ ARPA Appreciation Award

The rare ARPA Appreciation Award is nominated by an ARPA Board Member who has noted special skills and contributions.

★ Outstanding Organization Award

This award recognizes the agencies, departments, and organizations that make great contributions to their community and to the improvement of recreation in Alaska.

★ Facility Excellence Award

This award recognizes significant new projects, major renovations, or long-term performance as a flagship of recreation. Any facility from any area of recreation, from trails to aquatic centers, is eligible.

2020 AWARD RECIPIENTS

Professional Award

Matt Steffy
City of Homer Parks & Recreation

New Professional Award

Jenny Rutledge
City of Seward Parks & Recreation

Bob Robertson Award

Joan Klappeprich
City of Wasilla Parks & Recreation

Distinguished Service Award

Deb Lowney
Homer

Facility Excellence Award

Skeetawk Ski Area
Hatcher Pass

Outstanding Business Partner

Huddle AK
Anchorage

Outstanding Organization Award

Tsalteshi Trails Association
Soldotna

Certified Pool Operator Course

Cost: \$425 (\$375 early registration)

Date: Friday, Oct. 14th, 2022

Time: 8:00 am to 6:00 pm

Blended format course: 8-10 hours online prior to the conference plus one in-person class that includes the exam.

Instructor: Professor Robin Benton

Pre-registration: www.arpa.myrec.com or call 907-714-1211



2022 ARPA CONFERENCE AQUATIC COURSES

American Red Cross Lifeguarding Instructor Course

Cost: \$425 (\$375 early registration)

Date: Mon & Tues, Oct. 10th & 11th, 2022

Time: 8:00 am to 7:00 pm

The purpose is to train instructor candidates to teach the basic-level American Red Cross Lifeguarding course.

Instructor: Professor Robin Benton & Cindy Aldridge

Pre-registration: www.arpa.myrec.com or call 907-714-1211

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ASSOCIATION INFORMATION

Our Mission

- Providing a forum for interchange of ideas and information among parks, recreation and wildland professionals and supporters;
- Promoting the personal, environmental, social and economic benefits of parks, recreation and wildlands;
- Coordinating, organizing and promoting quality educational opportunities;
- Preparing and providing educational information relating to parks, recreation and wildlands

Leadership Team



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Mike Illg
president@alaskarpa.org



Treasurer
Donnie Hayes
donnie.hayes@fnsb.gov



Vice President
Lauren Anderson
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Member at Large 2
Jenny Rutledge
jrutledge@cityofseward.net



Secretary
Kate Thomas
kthomas@wrangell.com



Member at Large 3
Vacant

ASSOCIATION INFORMATION

Membership

Agency (7 or fewer FTE's) \$95.00

For agencies, organizations or businesses who employ 7 or fewer Full Time Equivalency positions in the Park & Recreation field. This membership includes the agency, organization or business plus all Park & Recreation employees.

Agency (8-20 FTE's) \$245.00

For agencies, organizations or businesses who employ between 21 and 50 Full Time Equivalency positions in the Park & Recreation field. This membership includes the agency, organization or business plus all Park & Recreation employees.

Agency (21-50 FTE's) \$495.00

For agencies, organizations or businesses who employ between 21 and 50 Full Time Equivalency positions in the Park & Recreation field. This membership includes the agency, organization or business plus all Park & Recreation employees.

Agency (51 or more FTE's) \$907.00

For agencies, organizations or businesses who employ more than 51 Full Time Equivalency positions in the Park & Recreation field. This membership includes the agency, organization or business plus all Park & Recreation employees.

Professional Membership (Individual) \$49.00

Persons currently retired from a recreation, leisure or related profession are eligible for a Professional Membership.

Lifetime Membership \$490.00

Persons eligible for Professional or Citizen Membership may become Life Members.

Scholarships

ARPA currently offers 6 scholarships per year (December 1 - November 30) of up to \$500 each in the following categories: 3 individual scholarships to assist with attendance at the ARPA Annual Conference (allowable expenses include travel, registration fees and/or hotel) and 3 individual scholarships to assist with professional development (any certification/education relating to the Parks & Recreation field with preference given to NRPA programs). Scholarship requests are open only to current ARPA members in good standing. Scholarships may be awarded to an individual in each category once every two years.



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