



NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2024

NOVEMBER 9 - 12, 2024

NEMACOLIN
FARMINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA



RECREATION EXPERIENCE COMMUNITY NETWORK

WWW.REC-NETWORK.COM

@RECNETWORKORG

Message from President Brian Bevacqua

WELCOME TO THE 43RD REC NET NATIONAL CONFERENCE!

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the entire membership of the Resort Experience Community Network, REC Net, I am delighted to welcome you to the official 43rd National Conference! It is a privilege to gather with so many dedicated professionals and enthusiasts who share a common passion for our field.

This year's conference, which takes place at beautiful Nemaquin Woodlands Resort promises to be an engaging and enriching experience filled with insightful presentations, interactive workshops, valuable networking opportunities, and of course fun! We are thrilled to host a diverse lineup of speakers who will share their expertise and innovative ideas, addressing the most pressing challenges and opportunities facing our industry today.

As many of you know this association has undergone an extensive rebrand over the last year – making the official transition from RCRA to REC Net this past September. This is uncharted waters – but we know that this rebranding will truly help propel us into the future as a sustainable organization that can continue to focus on education and networking in our industry.

I would like to take a short opportunity to thank several individuals whose hard work, passion, and dedication have gotten us to this moment. First a huge thank you to our President Elect Annie Pilek for your unwavering dedication and planning of this year's conference – without you this event would not be possible. I also want to thank Lisa Jennings, one of our esteemed Directors at Large, for spear heading the rebrand of the association – she kept us on track and got this project across the finish line. Finally, a sincere thank you to the entire board of directors for your tireless efforts over the last year – without each of you we could not have been successful.

As we kick off the conference, I encourage each of you to fully immerse yourselves in the sessions, connect with fellow attendees, and explore the various vendors. This is a unique opportunity to learn from one another, exchange ideas, and strengthen our professional relationships.

Thank you for being here and for your commitment to the REC Net community. Your participation is what makes this conference a success, and I look forward to an inspiring few days ahead!

Warm regards,

Brian Bevacqua



GENERAL INFORMATION

Registration Desk Hours

SATURDAY: 1:00 pm - 7:30 pm (Resort Lobby)

SUNDAY: 8:00 am - 5:30 pm (Marquis Lobby)

MONDAY: 8:00 am - 5:30 pm (Marquis Lobby)

TUESDAY: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm (Marquis Lobby)

Vendors

VENDOR SETUP: Sunday 8:00 am - 12:00 pm (Marquis Lobby)

VENDOR PANEL:

VENDOR EXHIBIT HALL/Vendor Quest: Monday from 8:00 am - 5:30 pm (Marquis Lobby)

VENDOR DEMOS/1:1 MEETINGS: Tuesday 9:15 am - 11:15 am (various locations - see schedule)

VENDOR 1:1 MEETINGS: Tuesday 11:30 am-12:30 pm & 2:45 pm-4:30 pm (at tables)

VENDOR COCKTAIL HOUR: Monday from 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm (Grand Ballroom Lobby)

Career Fair

JOB FAIR SETUP: Sunday from 8:00 am - 12:00 pm (Grand Ballroom)

JOB FAIR PROPERTY INTRODUCTIONS: Sunday from 3:00 pm - 3:15 pm (Marquis Salon 1 & 2)

JOB FAIR: Sunday from 3:15 pm - 5:00 pm (Grand Ballroom)

Interviews

On own time. Schedule a time at conference or for when you get home.

RCRA'S Membership Lunch and REC NET Awards Gala

The Membership Lunch and REC Net Awards Gala are for all REC Net Conference attendees. If you are traveling with a guest who is interested in attending, please register and purchase a ticket at the Registration Desk. The cost is \$65 for the Awards lunch, \$60 for the Membership Breakfast and \$75 for the REC Net Award's Gala.

If you have any dietary requests or restrictions and are attending the Membership Breakfast and/or REC Net Gala, please complete the dietary request form at the Registration Desk.

Resort Packages Live Auction

Choose from FANTASTIC resort packages and more! During the conference, auction packages will be displayed at the REC Net Registration Desk in the Marquis Lobby. There are minimum starting bids for each package that reflect extraordinary values. Bidding begins on Sunday evening for some packages at the President's Social. The FINAL live auction part 2 will take place on Tuesday evening at the REC Net Gala. Student specific packages at lower price points are available – great for Spring Break! Cash and credit cards are accepted for payment.

NOTE: Agencies that are donating vacation getaways for the auction, please drop off certificates at the Registration Desk by noon on Monday.

Lucky Logo Drawing

Participate in a great opportunity to win fabulous prizes! The "Lucky Logo" Drawing will be held on Sunday evening at the Theme Night Party. Tickets may be purchased from the Ways & Means Committee Members. Come dressed in your best Glow attire and be ready for a night of fun!

TICKETS: \$1 each, \$5 for 6, \$10/arm length or \$20/body length – BRING CASH!

NOTE: All members donating baskets for the raffle, please drop off items at the Registration Desk by noon on Sunday.

Dress Code During the Conference

Business casual is suggested for all of the sessions unless otherwise stated in the program.

Conference Badge

Please wear to all sessions.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Brian Bevacqua
President



Kevin Nelson
Past President



Annie Pilek
President Elect



Catrina Vargas
Treasurer



Kelsey Lehnerd
Secretary



Marti Fowler
Director of Marketing & Communications



Lisa Jennings
Director of Member Engagement



Dan Merenick
Director of Professional Recruitment



Brooke Edwards
Director of Vendor Recruitment



NEMACOLIN

SINCE 1987

Dining

BREAKFAST

Fawn & Fable
In-room Dining
Lautrec – Sunday Brunch
The Patisserie

LUNCH

Dining at The Peak
Fawn & Fable
In-room Dining
Lautrec – Sunday Brunch
The Patisserie

DINNER

Dining at The Peak
Fawn & Fable
In-Room Dining
Lautrec
Nightcap – Beginning Sep. 12

Circle Bar & The Study

Daily: 12pm-midnight
The Grand Lodge

Fawn & Fable

Breakfast: Daily 7am-11am
Lunch: Daily 12pm-2:30pm
Dinner: Daily 5pm-9pm
*Reservations required for dinner
Pick-up orders: [724.329.6309](tel:724.329.6309) or ext. 6144

Lautrec Brunch

Sundays: 9am-12pm
\$125 per person, plus tax & gratuity
\$55 per child age 5-11, plus tax & gratuity
Complimentary for children 4 and under
Located in The Chateau
Reservations required

Lobby Bar

Daily: 12pm-7pm
Located at The Chateau

The Patisserie

Sun-Thu: 7am-7pm
Fri-Sat: 7am-9pm

Dining at The Peak

Indoor dining & bar service:
Sun-Thu: 11am-10pm & Fri-Sat: 11am-10pm
Outdoor dining & bar service:
Sun-Thu: 11am-10pm, with bar service beginning at 9am
Fri-Sat: 11am-10pm, with bar service beginning at 9am, and going until 11pm
Optional indoor dinner reservations available

Nightcap

Beginning September 17: Jazz Show – Tue & Wed: 8pm-midnight; no reservations necessary
Intimate Dinner Seating – Thu-Sat: 6pm-9pm; reservations required
Late-Night Entertainment – Thu-Sat: 9pm-midnight; no reservations necessary
Located near the Paradise Pool
Ages 16 and over

PJ's Ice Cream Parlor

Daily for Ice Cream: 12pm-8pm
Daily for Dining: 12pm-6pm

The Royale

Wed-Sat: 5pm-9pm
Located at the Casino
* Available to overnight guests and members 21 and older

Nearby Restaurants & Stores

Bittersweet Cafe

Sat. 8 am-6 pm
Sun. 12 pm-6 pm
Mon. 8 am-6 pm
Tues. CLOSED
205



Farmington-Ohiopyle Rd,
Farmington, PA 15437

www.bittersweetfresh.com/menu

Dollar General

Sat.- Tues 8 am-10 pm
3701 National Pike,
Farmington, PA 15437



Mountain Pies

Sat. 11 am-9 pm
Sun. 11 pm- 8pm
Mon. 11 am-8 pm
Tues. 11 am-8 pm

4633 National Pike,
Markleysburg, PA 15459



Options too!

Fuel Coffee Works

Sat.- Tues 7 am-3 pm
100 Farmington-Ohiopyle Rd,
Farmington, PA 15437



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2024

Dress Code: Day/Casual; Evening/Casual

1:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Registration Desk is Open

Location: Chateau Lobby

Pick up your name badge and learn how to access the conference brochure.

9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Property Spotlight

Location: Resort Grounds

Good for any 3 Activities during conference!
Activity options include: Ropes Course, Zipline, Quick Jump, Rockwall, Jeep Rides and Hardy Girls Gym. *Additional of \$150

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

First Timers Club

Location: The Peak

5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Student Scholarship Meetup

Location: The Peak

5:00 pm - 7:20 pm



DINNER ON OWN

Stop by the Registration Desk to coordinate a location and meet up with other members.

6:30 pm - 7:20 pm

Member Meetup

Location: The Circle Bar

Meet up with members before the conference welcome for a quick catch up!

7:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Welcome Kick Off!

Location: Grand Ballroom

The official Welcome to Nemaacolin Resort and the 2024 REC Net National Conference. President Brian Bevacqua will kick off the conference with an introduction to the REC Net Board, our hosts, and more!

8:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Trivingo!

Hosted by: Majestic Circus

Location: Grand Ballroom

Stick around for TRVINGO! In Trivingo players, or teams, answer trivia questions to mark their Trivingo board. Rather than numbers, each ball in the Trivingo blower depicts one of 24 categories. To mark their card, players must first answer the question correctly. The first team to score a line either vertically, horizontally, or diagonally wins... by shouting TRVINGO of course!



- Symbols of a "person with a book" are specially geared sessions for students.
- Symbols of a "briefcase" are specially geared for job or internship seekers.
- Symbols of a 'bus' indicate you will need to take a shuttle or drive yourself to get to a location. Be sure to utilize Nemaacolin's shuttle service and give yourself enough time to arrive and come back.
- Symbols of 'utensils' indicate a meal on your own. Feel free to stop by the Registration desk to find a sign up for locations on and/or property to meet up with other members. Carpooling will be in place for off property meet ups.
- Bring Cash to the Sunday Night Presidents' Social.
- The theme for the Sunday Night Social is 'Glow Night'.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2024

Dress Code: Day/Business Casual; Evening/ "Glow" theme or Casual!

7:00 am - 8:00 am

Meetup at Gym

Location: Fitness Center access through Woodlands Spa

7:00 am - 8:45 am



Breakfast on Own

Plan ahead, stop by the registration desk on 11.9.24 coordinate and sign up with others.

8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Career Fair Setup

Location: Grand Ballroom

8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Vendor Table/Exhibition Setup

Location: Marquis Lobby

8:00 am - 5:30 pm

Registration Desk is Open

Location: Marquis Lobby

9:00 am - 9:45 am



Behind the Scenes Tour- The Peak

Session #2

Location: The Peak

Explore this incredible Nemaquin facility and learn how it all runs.

9:00 am - 9:45 am

Tips & Tricks for Social Media Content - What's HOT Now!

Session #3

Presenter: Gabriella Maldonado

Location: Marquis Salon 3

Understanding video marketing and how to implement it in your social media strategy. Tips, tricks and what is trending.

9:00 am - 9:45 am

Red Cross CPR Training

Session #4

Presenter: Katherine Caffrey & Dan Merenick

Location: Marquis Salon 4

Become Red Cross certified or renew a current certification. \$35 pp. Sign up by emailing: kcaffrey@reston.org. Class limit 12 people.

10:00 am - 10:45 am



Young Professional Panel

Session # 5

Panelists: Erin Hutton, Megan McCullough, Kerstin Surette, Bryan Wyck

Location: Marquis Salon 3

Feeling nervous about graduation? Not sure what to expect after school? Come listen to our panel of professionals who made the leap in recent years. Bring questions, take notes, and leave ready.

Moderated by Marti Fowler.

10:00 am - 10:45 am



Behind the Scenes Tour- The Peak

Session #6

Location: The Peak

Explore this incredible Nemaquin facility and learn how it all runs.

11:00 am - 11:45 am

How to Host Amazing Events

Session # 7

Presenter: Megan Libby

Location: Marquis Salon 3

Being an effective emcee takes more than good public speaking skills. In this class, you'll be equipped with the know-how to be a professional yet entertaining host and win over any audience. We'll explore the roles of hosting amazing events, discover your signature style, and learn how to deliver memorable experiences for your guests.

11:00 am - 11:45 am

Recreation to Spa: Unlocking Wellness as a Viable Career Path

Session # 8

Presenter: Erinn Hower

Location: Marquis Salon 4

This session is designed for students and professionals in recreation fields who are exploring new career opportunities. Learn how the spa and wellness industry can be a natural extension of your expertise. We'll discuss how your background in recreation can open doors to roles in spa management, wellness coaching, and holistic health. Discover how wellness is a viable and fulfilling path for recreation experts!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2024

Dress Code: Day/Business Casual; Evening/ "Glow Theme" or Casual!

12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Awards Lunch & Keynote -

Simon T. Bailey: Embrace Your Inner Resilience

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

We will start off by introducing our Vendors and then will recognize members for their contributions to the recreation industry and RCRA by awarding the following: Outstanding Professor Award, Outstanding Student, Outstanding Vendor, Premier Recreation Operation Award, and Student Scholarships.

1:00 pm Keynote: Embrace Your Inner Resilience

Presenter: Simon T. Bailey

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

In this fast-paced world, the ability to cultivate resilience has become paramount. Supercharge your career by mastering the art of resilience. Learn to leverage empathy and authenticity to boost performance and enrich your life, regardless of economic conditions.

2:30 pm - 2:45 pm



Property Intros to Job Seekers

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

Job Fair Professionals will present a brief overview of what their property or company has to offer and what they're looking for in a future member of their team.

3:00 pm - 3:45 pm

Roundtable Discussion: The Evolving Landscape of Recreation

Location: Marquis Salon 3

Dive into a dynamic conversation on the future of recreation in our Roundtable Discussion. What are the emerging trends, what are the shifts shaping recreational academics and experiences? This interactive session offers a platform for sharing insights and strategies to navigate the evolving landscape of leisure and recreation.

Moderated by: Dan Merenick

3:15 pm - 5:00 pm



Job Fair

Location: Grand Ballroom

Professionals and students bring your resumes and meet informally with perspective internship and employment opportunity properties.

4:00 pm - 4:45 pm

Vendor Panel

Session # 11

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

Come meet our Vendors and learn more about what they have to offer and make some connections!

Moderated by: Brooke Edwards

5:00 pm - 7:15 pm



Dinner on Own

Location: Stop by the registration desk to meet up with other members.

7:30 pm - 9:30 pm



President's Social-Theme Night! Glow Night

Location: The Peak

Illuminate your evening at our Glow Theme Night! Dress in your brightest and prepare for a night full of glowing excitement! Test your aim with exhilarating axe throwing, show off your skills in a lively game of bowling, and dive into a variety of exciting games. Special thanks to Nemacolin!

Don't forget to come ready to win at the Lucky Logo Auction! Donated swag from our agency members will be raffled off and you could be the lucky winner going home with some great prizes! *Don't forget to bring your CASH!* \$1-20 ticket options are available!

AND! Get ready for our annual Overnight Package Auction. We will be starting this year's auction earlier than usual and featuring few packages for YOU to bid on.

We Need YOU!

Future Speakers, Hosts for Regional Workshops, Committee Members, Vendor & Educator Contacts, or Future Board Members!

Please see a current REC Net Board Member to learn more.

Pro Tip!
Bring cash to the President's Social tonight!

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2024

Dress Code: Day/Business Casual; Evening/Casual

7:00 am - 8:00 am

Meetup at the Gym

Location: Fitness Center access through Woodlands Spa

7:30am - 9:00 am

Breakfast Buffet

Included in your registration

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

8:30 am - 5:30 pm

Registration Desk is Open

Location: Marquis Lobby

8:30 am - 9:00 am

Business Meeting

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

9:15 am -10:15 am

Vendor Quest

Location: Marquis Lobby

An interactive game that will showcase our incredible vendors. The first three participants to complete all challenges win exciting prizes

9:30 am - 10:30 am

Should I Further my Education? How to go from a Director/Manager to Further your Academia Career Path Options

Presenter: Kate Price-Howard

Location: Marquis 4

Are you LOVING your job, but.... are you on top of your game and asking what's next? Have you ever thought about furthering your education? Well, those questions will bring up a lot of questions of what that path may look like. Navigating academia is intimidating if you have been out of college for a while, and there has been some many changes in admissions, course options (hybrid, online, & face-to-face), and programs of study! Join us in the session to discuss various programs of studies which would complement your practitioner experience, how to finance the graduate degree(s), and explore some of the reasons this step would be beneficial to your career path and retirement plan.

10:30 am -11:30 am

Sustainability 101

Presenter: Melanie Evans

Location: Marquis 3

Join us for an insightful session exploring how Nemaocolin Resort is leading the way in sustainability. Discover innovative practices and strategies that blend opulence with eco-consciousness, ensuring a minimal environmental footprint while delivering unparalleled guest experiences. This session is perfect for those looking to marry luxury with responsibility in the resort industry.

10:30 am - 11:30 am



Behind the Scenes Tour: Golf Academy

Location: Golf Academy

Experience an exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of Nemaocolin Resort's Golf Academy. Discover the state-of-the-art facilities, including cutting-edge swing analysis technology and world-class practice areas.

*Remember to give yourself extra time to get to the Golf Academy and back.

10:30 am -12:00 pm

Tabletop Roundtable: Camps, Aquatics, Teens, 55+ older Activities

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

Join us for a dynamic Tabletop Roundtable where we delve into innovative strategies and best practices across diverse activity areas, featuring camps, aquatics, teen programs, and 55+ older activities.

Moderated by: REC Net Board

12:15 pm-1:45pm



Lunch on Own

Location: Stop by the registration desk to meet up with other members!

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2024

Dress Code: Day/Business Casual; Evening/Casual

2:00 pm -2:45 pm

Forging Synergies: Elevating Group Sales through Dynamic Recreation Partnerships

Presenter: Christopher Baran

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

This session explores innovative ways to integrate dynamic recreation options into your offerings, enhance guest satisfaction and drive repeat business. Learn practical strategies for identifying potential partners, crafting unique packages, and leveraging these partnerships to create memorable, value-added experiences for your group clients. Whether it's through outdoor adventures, cultural excursions, or wellness retreats, find out how these collaborations can set a hotel or resort apart and foster long-term success.

2:00 pm -2:45 pm

Working Successfully with Content Creators + Influencers

Presenter: Ellen Matis

Location: Marquis Salon 3

Content creators and influencers are a key part of an effective social media marketing strategy for destination and experience brands in 2024 — but many find themselves wondering where to start? In this session with Ellen Matis, of Hello Social Co., we'll talk about how to find, communicate with, and plan a content strategy with both content creators and influencers.

2:00 pm- 2:45 pm

Pivoting into Weddings & Events

Presenters: Cassie Horrell

Location: Marquis Salon 4

Helping young recreation professionals identify skills used in the recreation field and how to apply them in the Wedding & Events field.

3:00 pm-5:00 pm

Regional Breakouts + Region Rally

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

Part 1: All members welcome and encouraged to attend. Meet up with fellow members in your region. Connect on a deeper level and work together to prepare for Part 2: Region Rally.

Part 2: Regions will compete against each other in RCRA/REC Net Trivia, physical challenges and riddles. Who will be crowned the TOP region?

5:00 pm-6:45 pm



Dinner Meetup

Location: Sign up to meetup with members at the registration desk.

7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Excellence in Programming Presentations

Hosted by: Awards Committee

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

Applicants for REC Net's Excellence in Programming Award will make a case for why their program is most deserving of the award through 'Top Rec' "pitches". A live audience of session attendees will be able to ask the contestants questions and have the opportunity to vote on the program they think deserves the Excellence in Programming Award.

*Presenters, please set up by 6:30 p.m.

8:30 pm-8:45 pm

Heads or Tails

Hosted by: Ways & Means Committee

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

Are you feeling lucky? Play this classic REC Net fundraiser and try your chance as this year's champion.

*Cash recommended to play.

8:45 pm - 9:45 pm

Games, Games, Games

Presenters: Lisa Linden, Scott Bushway, & Joey O'Reilly, & Tyler Ketley

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

Get moving with this hands-on, interactive session where you will be sure to learn and meet someone new.

9:45 pm - 10:15 pm

World Record: Happy Salmon

Location: Marquis Salon 1 & 2

With the help of the game creators of Happy Salmon, REC Net will attempt to set a WORLD RECORD for the largest Happy Salmon Game ever played!

We can't do this without YOU, so stick around after Games, Games, Games to be a part of this magical and exciting event.



TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2024

Dress Code: Day/Business Casual Day; Evening/Semi Formal

7:00 am - 8:00 am

Meetup at the Gym

Location: Fitness Center access through Woodlands Spa

8:00 am - 9:00 am



Breakfast on Own: Sign up to meetup with members at the registration desk.

8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Registration Desk is Open

Location: Marquis Lobby

9:00 am - 9:30 am

Townhall Meetings

Join us for a recap on the 2024 REC Net National Conference. Committee Chairs gather real time feedback and discuss strategic plans for the future of the organization.

Educator Townhall

Location: Marquis Salon 3

Emerging Professional

Location: Marquis Salon 4

Professional Townhall

Location: Marquis Salon 1

Vendor Townhall

Location: Marquis Salon 3

9:45 am - 11:15 am

Vendor Demos & Vendor 1:1 Meetings

Location: Meetings at Vendor Tables

Demos: Let's get hands on with vendor products!

Vendors can use this time for 1:1 Meetings too!- Sign up directly with Vendors to have 1:1 meeting with our REC Net Vendors.

There are afternoon time slots available if a vendor is not doing a demo.

What are the 1:1 Meetings with Vendors?

- This is time where you can ask more in depth questions to the vendors.
- Not ready to book business with them yet but want them to know you are interested, let them know!
- Ready to book, buy, or schedule an event, let them know!

10:15 am - 11:00 am

When you know it's time to leave?

Presenter: Belynda Tharpe

Location: Marquis Salon 3

There are many reasons which can contribute to a desire to leave your current position and pursue a new career. There may be signs that can serve as a guide when determining if you should leave. Understanding these signs and how to prepare to leave can help you move forward in your career path. Join in for an interactive discussion as we dig deep into the seven most common signs that you should consider before making a career switch and once you have decided it's time to leave, you can follow steps how to leave a job to ensure you maintain a professional connection with your employer.

10:15 am-11:15 am

AI 2.0

Presenter: Dr. Kevin Nelson

Location: Marquis Salon 1

This session explores how Artificial Intelligence is revolutionizing the recreation and hospitality industry through cutting-edge technologies. This presentation will highlight innovations in artificial intelligence that enhance customer experiences, streamline operations, and drive personalized service. Discover how advanced AI solutions are being used to optimize booking systems, improve guest interactions, and manage resources more efficiently. We will also discuss how AI can help us in our work and responsibilities.

11:30 am-12:30 pm

The Role of Resorts & Recreation Facilities in Grant Writing

Presenter: Linda Falcone

Location: Marquis Salon 3

There are many grants available to promote recreational, environmental, and tourism projects. This workshop will explore where to search for grants, leveraging assets to yield local benefits and the importance of collaborating with key stakeholders to demonstrate community impact. The workshop will also address key factors that owners and managers should consider when determining whether to pursue grant funding.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2024

Dress Code: Day/Business Casual Day; Evening/Semi Formal

11:30 am-12:30 pm



What Led Me Here?

Presenter: Celine Halt

Location: Marquis Salon 4

Hear from a young professional and former RCRA/REC Net alumni in her school to career journey and gain valuable insights through her challenges and growth.

11:30 am-12:30 pm

Social Media Content Strategy

Presenter: Ellen Matis

Location: Marquis Salon 2

Learn how to use social media to position your property and your entire region as a destination for residents and visitors alike. Using Hello Social Co.'s tried-and-true "Connect Through Community" Approach, you'll this hands-on workshop with a better idea of what to post about, as well as when and on what networks, so that you can reach important goals.

11:30 am - 12:30 pm

Leadership is an Action Word

Presenter: William Salvatore

Location: Marquis Salon 1

Leadership is truly an action word. As leaders we often lose sight of this. This session will encourage all leaders, rookies or veterans, to leave their comfort zone to become better leaders and to raise the level of their team.

11:30 am - 12:30 pm

Vendor 1:1 Meetings

Location: At Vendor Tables

Sign up directly with Vendors to have 1:1 meeting with our REC Net Vendors.

12:30 pm-1:30 pm



Lunch on Own

Location: Sign up to meetup with members at the registration desk.

1:45 pm - 2:30 pm

Driving Economics: The Crucial Influence of Recreation, Hospitality, and Tourism

Presenter: Dr. Amit Sharma

Location: Marquis Salon 2

In this presentation we will explore the symbiotic relationship between the recreation, hospitality, and tourism industries and their influence on regional and global economies. Our analysis will extend beyond traditional perspectives, as we dissect how transformative technological advancements, persistent labor shortages, inflationary challenges, and evolving consumer preferences converge to redefine the economic landscape of these sectors.

1:45 pm - 2:30 pm

Enhancing Guest/Member Experience through Diversity and Inclusion

Presenter: Linda Falcone

Location: Marquis Salon 3

This workshop is designed for customer-facing employees and will address diversity in the service sector. The workshop will identify the benefits of serving a diverse clientele and what it really means to be a welcoming organization. The workshop will also address legal requirements and inclusive practices for programming and participant services that minimize unconscious bias.

1:45 pm-2:30 pm

Excellence in Programming Roundtable

Location: Marquis Salon 4

Inviting all to partake in a roundtable discussion of the REC Net premier recreation operation nominees' new programs and charity work.

Moderated by: The Awards Committee

1:45 pm-2:45 pm

Generational Differences in the workplace: Managing a Multigenerational Workforce: Includes results of a membership survey

Presenter: Dr. Rood, Dr. Joshua Carroll, Dr.

Jeremy Schultz, Dr. Kate Price-Howard, Dr. Phil Dombroski

Location: Marquis Salon 1

Taking the time to understand generational differences can yield many benefits in the workplace. According to recent survey data collected by REC Net members.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2024

Dress Code: Day/Business Casual Day; Evening/Semi Formal

2:45 pm-3:30 pm



Financial Planning 101

Presenter: Brennan Brossman

Location: Marquis Salon 4

In this session we will discuss financial planning in the recreation industry. We will also review foundational financial principles that applies to a young professional in their personal lives as well as they enter the transition from school to the work force.

2:45 pm-3:30 pm

Why Simple Strategies Improve Hiring & Retention

Presenter: Linda Falcone

Location: Marquis Salon 3

There is not always money in the budget to increase salaries or offer bonuses. Research shows that the quality of the relationship between a leader and their followers is positively associated with higher engagement and reduced turnover. This workshop will share ways a leader can create an environment where people want to work and stay.

2:45 pm - 4:30 pm

Vendor 1:1 Meetings

Location: At Vendor Tables

Sign up directly with Vendors to have 1:1 meeting with our REC Net Vendors.

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Free Time

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Pre Gala Mixer & Vendor Cocktail Hour

Location: Grand Ballroom Lobby

Members, come gather before the gala for photos and continue to meet with our amazing REC Net vendors.

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Andy Holdnak Awards Gala

Location: Grand Ballroom

Experience the National Conference in REC Net style at this semi-formal event. Enjoy a wonderful dinner, induction of officers, silent and live auction for multiple exciting vacation getaways, 2024 National Conference showcase and awards presentations to include: Excellence in Programming Award, Making the Difference Award, Debbie Regnone Service Award, President's Award, Property Host Award, and Exiting Board Member Awards.

Auction: This is your chance to buy your next vacation, spring break or family getaway. There will be a Silent Auction to start, and some packages will go live after dinner. Resort Packages start at \$250! You do not have to be present to win. Contact a member of the Ways and Means Committee if you would like the option to bid via phone.

8:00 pm - 10:00 pm

After Gala Dance Party!

Location: Grand Ballroom

Boogie on down and join us for an after-gala celebration with music and dancing courtesy of DJ Gary!



SPEAKER BIOS

Simon T. Bailey



Simon T. Bailey is the world's leading expert in Brilliance. His groundbreaking research, State of Working America Report Thriving in Resilience and Brilliance, solidifies his insights in his 11th book, Resilience@Work: How to Coach Yourself Into a Thriving Future. With Disney Institute as his launchpad, he's left an indelible mark on 2,400 plus organizations in 54 countries, including American Express, Deloitte, Visa, Signet Jewelers, and Taco Bell. He has made a remarkable impact on 120,000 professionals who've experienced his pioneering courses on the LinkedIn Learning platform. He's also been recognized as Success Magazine's Top 25, alongside Brené Brown, Tony Robbins, and Oprah Winfrey, as well as being on leadersHum Top 200 Power List. His viral video, released on Goalcast through META, has over 91 million plus views to date.

Brennan Brossman



I am a Penn State University graduate with a Recreation Management and Commercial Tourism Programming degree. I was involved in RCRA as a student and attended the annual conference in 2011. RCRA has provided opportunities that lead to my college internship and first job out of college. I am currently a Commercial Aquatics Sales Manager for the largest pool & waterpark product and equipment distributor in the world. I have a wonderful wife and 3 amazing kids that help remind me that family should always come first.

Katherine Caffrey



After graduating from Marymount University with a degree in Business Management, Katherine worked in the surf/skate/snow recreation industry. Realizing a career working with children was her passion, she spent 10 years teaching kindergarten, obtaining certifications in mental health for youth/adults and serving on a community service board for changes/increases in youth mental health services. In 2017 Katherine moved back into the recreation industry, becoming the Recreation Manager at Reston Association. She currently oversees youth programs, including 16+ summer camps, allowing her to hire/work with 70+ staff members, as well as touch the lives of thousands of children.

Dr. Joshua Carroll



Dr. Joshua Carroll is a Professor of Recreation, Parks and Tourism at Radford University. His teaching and research focus on sustainable, nature-based tourism and how this can be used as a pathway toward positive community development and ecological integrity. He has worked on many projects with agencies and organizations such as the US National Park Service, US Forest Service, State Parks, various beach communities, and river systems. His work has made valuable contributions in several locations such as New England, California, Colorado, Bahamas, Virginia, and Alaska. Dr. Carroll holds a Ph.D. and M.S. in Human Dimensions of Natural Resources, both from Colorado State University.

Christopher Baran



Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Nemaocolin Resort

Dr. Phileshia Dombroski



With over two decades of experience in recreation management, and a smattering of related academic degrees, Phileshia currently engages students in learning at Winona State University, in Minnesota. Colloquially, she is known to her colleagues and students as Phil or Dr. Phil. Years ago, she started her professional career in camp administration in upstate New York, however, she has since been employed as a resort activities manager, executive director of a community foundation, paddling instructor, challenge course facilitator, and youth sport specialist in Morale Welfare and Recreation for the U.S. Army. In all of her work... engagement and connectivity have been paramount. And, to give the appropriate "shout-outs" to academia, Phil received her Ph.D. from Penn State University in Recreation, Park & Tourism Management; she completed her B.S. at Lock Haven University in Recreation, focusing on outdoor management; and she received her M.S. from Slippery Rock University in Park & Resource Management.

SPEAKER BIOS

Melanie Evans



Melanie Evans is a seasoned leader in animal welfare and environmental stewardship, currently serving as the Director of Animal Life at Nemaocolin Resort. With over a decade of experience spanning shelters, state parks, fish and wildlife, and prestigious zoological institutions, Melanie has consistently championed high standards of animal care, strategic program development, and impactful public engagement.

At Nemaocolin, she leads animal welfare initiatives, conservation efforts, and the development of guest-facing programs that blend luxury with education. Her work includes overseeing a diverse collection of wildlife, building innovative enrichment and training programs, and spearheading major capital projects for new habitats and animal facilities. Melanie is instrumental in guiding Nemaocolin towards achieving the highest industry accreditations, including the Zoological Association of America (ZAA).

Linda Falcone



Linda Falcone is a Penn State University Extension Educator on the Leadership and Community Vitality team. She has extensive experience in community outreach and teaching. Her community outreach experience includes project management, grant writing, strategic planning, and workforce development. Her teaching experience includes leadership, entrepreneurship, marketing, and microcomputers. She also teaches workshops on customer service, grant writing, diversity, workplace ethics, hiring and retention, team building, workplace culture, and workplace readiness skills. Linda holds a B.A. from the University of Pittsburgh in Architectural Studies and Business Administration and a Master's of Business Administration from Kutztown University.

Celine Halt



Celine Halt currently serves as the Manager, Ballpark Entertainment for the Pittsburgh Pirates. As a 2020 Slippery Rock University Graduate, as well as a Student Scholarship recipient from RCRA, Celine has grown into her current role through her learnings and experiences with companies such as Carnival Cruise Line (Fun Squad Intern; 2019) and The Boathouse and Field Club (Recreation Direction; 2021). Celine's current role focuses on the Pirates' in-game entertainment teams, pre-game ceremonies, and content capture of the team. Celine plans to continue her education and strives to open doors for more young leaders to enter the sports and recreation fields.

Dr. Andy Holdnack



Dr. Andy Holdnack, is retired and was the former Assoc. Chair of Regional Programs for the Global Hospitality & Tourism Management Department at the Univ. of West Florida

Cassie Horrell



Cassie Horrell is a seasoned Wedding & Events professional based in Pittsburgh, PA. Over the last decade, she has helped plan over 600 weddings, corporate events & galas for clients all over the USA. She excels in an environment where her creativity can shine and she can help create a memorable experience for her clients. She is currently the Director of Events at the Heinz History Center, the co-owner of Clink '92 Mobile Bar & a tik tok wedding expert, aka @weddingprocass ! She just founded Wedding Pro Cass Planning, LLC in 2023 where she helps couples all over the world plan their weddings virtually!

Erin Hutton



Pennsylvania native Erin Hutton is entering her sixth season at The Boathouse & Field Club on Martha's Vineyard, where she has had the opportunity to wear many hats over the years. She currently serves as the club's Recreation Manager, overseeing the Aquatics and Junior Activities team, and is all about creating a welcoming environment for both club members and staff! Erin is passionate about her role as a mentor to the recreation staff, many of whom are young professionals and embarking on hospitality careers of their own. She finds it rewarding to see their professional growth throughout the season and has been fortunate to have many team members return year after year.

Throughout her time at Slippery Rock University and in her early career post-grad, Erin focused on exploring all the hospitality industry had to offer – from theme parks to ski resorts. Now, Erin applies those diverse experiences and the strong network she has cultivated along the way to inspire her work.

SPEAKER BIOS

Erinn Hower



Erinn is the Assistant Director of Spa and Wellness at Nemaacolin, She has over 10 years of experience in the hospitality industry, with a focuses in spa and wellness, event planning, and hotel management. Erinn is an avid outdoor enthusiast, a wife, mother and gardener. She is passionate about delivering high-quality service standards, creating memorable experiences for her guests, and optimizing the profitability and efficiency of the Woodlands Spa. She also has a Bachelor's of Science in Resort Management from Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania.

Megan Libby



I am a Director of Resort Experience at Westgate Resorts. I have over 15 years of experience in the recreation, entertainment, and leisure industries.

Lisa Linden



Innovative leader and enthusiastic trainer. Strong background in customer service, planning and directing activities and programs, marketing recreational services and supervision. Extensive experience in the cruise, event and hospitality industry. Working with world class companies and properties including: Constance Hotels and Resorts, Hard Rock International, Condé Nast CNX, Atlantis Paradise Island, Atlantis The Palm, Dubai, Viceroy Anguilla, Oceania and Regent Seven Seas Cruises, Holiday Inn Resort Aruba, One & Only Resorts, Norwegian Cruise Line, Resort and Commercial Recreation Association Lisa has a B.S. in Parks and Recreation Administration with emphasis on Commercial Recreation

Ellen Matis



Ellen is the Founder of Hello Social Co., a social media marketing agency that works primarily with destination brands. In her work, she developed a unique approach to social media marketing that is used to amplify the stories of small towns and larger regions across the nation — now called the Connect Through Community Approach. When she's not working, you can find Ellen hiking or camping in the Pennsylvania Wilds with her husband, two daughters, and rescue pup.

Gabriela Maldonado



Gabriela Maldonado is a devoted wife, mom, and professional wedding photographer based in Florida. She specializes in creating a joyful wedding photography experience, tailored for detail-oriented and kindhearted couples. Gabriela is passionate about capturing the unique moments of each wedding, ensuring every photo reflects the love and joy of the special day. In addition to weddings, she enjoys helping small businesses create compelling content for their social media platforms. Her expertise aids businesses in attracting their ideal clients with a strategic approach to their online presence.

Dan Merenick



Dan Merenick, Sr. Program Manager, at Reston Association in Reston, VA from 2015-present. Prior to Reston Association, spent 24 years at a variety of jobs in Recreation, from resorts, private clubs, YMCA's, city & county parks and recreation agencies, and a variety of homeowner associations. RCRA Board of Directors 2006-2008 and in 2009 was awarded the Debbie Regnone Service Award. Dan rejoined the board in 2022 where is currently the Professional Committee Liaison. In 2022, Dan was awarded one of RCRA's highest honors, the Howard Ubel Lifetime Achievement Award. Dan has been a presenter at previous conferences discussing program planning, trends in the industry, risk management and led group panels at both regional and national conferences.

Meghan McCulloch



Meghan is an accomplished professional in the resort, recreation and hospitality industry, currently serving as the Recreation Manager at the Henderson Beach Resort and Spa in sunny Destin, Florida. With a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Slippery Rock University, Meghan graduated in 2018. During her time at university, Meghan gained valuable hands-on experience through internships, including a role as Assistant Activities Coordinator at Grey's Point Camp in Virginia and as a member of the Street Team for the Washington Wild Things Frontier League Baseball team in Washington, Pennsylvania. In response to the evolving landscape of the hospitality industry post-pandemic, Meghan and her fiancé relocated to Destin, where they embraced new opportunities. Starting as a Recreation Supervisor, Meghan quickly demonstrated leadership and a commitment to enhancing guest experiences, which led to her current role as Recreation Manager. In this position, she oversees a variety of operations, including pools, beach operations, bike rentals, fitness classes, watersports, daily family activities and the Kids Club. Her passion for creating memorable experiences and fostering community engagement continues to drive her success in the field.

SPEAKER BIOS

Dr. Kevin Nelson



Dr. Kevin Nelson has been at Western Colorado University since 1999 and teaches in the Tourism & Hospitality Program. Kevin's expertise lies in the management and economics of tourism and commercial recreation. He is currently a professor in the Business School. Kevin received his bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University and his Masters and Ph.D. degrees from Michigan State University. Kevin currently serves as Past-President of the REC Net Board of Directors. Kevin enjoys travel, disc golf, ball golf, and basketball and has officiated high school varsity sports for over 30 years.

Dr. Kate Price-Howard



Dr. Kate Price-Howard is an associate professor for Troy University for the School of Hospitality, Sport and Tourism Management within the Sorrell College of Business. She has been with Troy since 2013 and has more than 35 years of work experience in the hospitality industry. Her work during these years was primarily at resort and property management companies, but also included academia, cruise ships, summer camps, and recreation therapy. She has experientially taught commercial recreation to college juniors and seniors in an internship setting, serving as an agency supervisor for her own company, Go Play, Inc., since 2001, and now as a consultant. She has been a co-author and associate editor of the textbook, *Commercial Recreation and Tourism: An Entrepreneurial Approach* (7th and 8th Edition) published by Sagamore-Venture Publishing. She serves as the Vice-President board member for the SECSA (Southeast, Central & South America) Federation of ICHRIE (International Council for Hospitality, Restaurants, and Institutions Educators), as the Director of Marketing for the Board of Governors of ICHRIE and is a current member of Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association, Resort and Commercial Recreation Association. She continues as an associate editor for the *Journal of Tourism Insights*.

Scott Rood



Scott Rood is a professor and former chair of the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management at Grand Valley State University. Rood is the cofounder, one of the editors, and administrator of the *Journal of Tourism Insights*. He is the Senior Editor of the 8th edition of *Introduction to Commercial Recreation and Tourism – An Entrepreneurial Approach*. He also served as president of the Resort and Commercial Recreation Association.

William Salvatore



Bill Salvatore is the Director of Parks and Recreation in Cheltenham Township, Pa. Prior to his appointment in Cheltenham, Bill served Philadelphia Parks and Recreation in numerous roles over 20+ years of service. Those roles included Recreation Leader, Leadership and Organizational Development Manager, Director of Strategic Partnerships, and Deputy Commissioner of Programming. Bill was crucial in the implementation of the department's first strategic plan. Bill has a passion for leadership development and coaching, often spending time at conferences and clinics. Outside of Parks and Recreation, Bill has been a volunteer basketball coach for 30 years.

Jeremy Schultz



Jeremy Schultz, PhD (presenter, co-author) Dr. Schultz is an assistant professor of Parks & Recreation Management (B.S.) and Experiential & Outdoor Education (M.S.) at Western Carolina University. He completed his PhD at the University of Utah where his research focused on sustainable tourism certification programs, ecotourism, and sustainability in the USDA Forest Service.
Kelly Bricker, PhD (co-author) Dr. Bricker is a professor and the director of Hainan University-Arizona State University Joint International Tourism College or HAITC. She completed her PhD with the Penn State University, specializing in sustainable tourism and protected areas.

Amit Sharma



Amit Sharma is the Edward Friedman and Stuart Mann Professor of Hospitality Management and Associate Director of the School of Hospitality Management, and Director of the Food Decisions Research Laboratory at Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Sharma teaches finance and economics, and his interdisciplinary research focuses on Cost-Benefit Analysis, small business financing and economics of the foodservice system. He is founding editor of *ICHRIE Research Reports*, Past President (2017-18) of International Council of Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (ICHRIE), Past President of the International Association of Hospitality Financial Management Educators (IAHFME) (2020-23), and creator and host of the allinfoodz podcast, featured on iTunes.

SPEAKER BIOS

Kerstin Surrette



Kerstin Surrette is the Assistant Manager of Recreation at Chatham Bars Inn located in Chatham, Massachusetts. She is a 2024 graduate of the University of New Hampshire's Peter T. Paul College of Business and Economics where she received a bachelor's degree in Hospitality Management. Upon graduation, Kerstin has gained valuable experience in a management role and is honored to grow and learn at such a prestigious resort. At Chatham Bars Inn, she is responsible for running the resort's leisure and corporate recreational programming and world-class Kids Crew. With 4 years of leadership and management experience in the recreation industry, Kerstin's main goal is to create a memorable and lasting impact on all guests who come to Chatham Bars Inn.

Belynda Tharpe



Belynda has worked in the recreation/hospitality industry specializing in the private country club and master planned communities' sector as recreation and aquatics director, lifestyle director, general manager, community manager and VP of club operations. Belynda has been a member of RCRA for many years and served on the board of directors as president.

Bryan Wyks



Bryan Wyks is the Activity Coordinator at Salamander Middleburg in Middleburg, Virginia. He started working at Salamander in December 2022 as a Recreation intern after learning of the opportunity while attending RCRA conference as a student. Bryan graduated from Radford University in May 2023 with a Parks and Recreation Degree. In his free time, Bryan enjoys rock climbing and trying new restaurants. At Salamander, Bryan teaches archery, axe throwing, kids camps, leads guided hikes and corporate group activities. His favorite part of his job is interacting with guests and hearing about their life experiences, while bringing smiles to their faces during an activity.

5 TIPS TO MAKE REC Net WORK FOR YOU

#1 NETWORK

Increase your professional connections in the recreation field by attending as many conferences, seminars and roundtables as possible. Use the Member Directory to locate REC Net members in your area and form a monthly roundtable discussion. REC Net's National Conference is a MUST attend networking event, as students, professionals, educators and vendors attend from around the world. Regional Workshops are also emerging as ways to gain knowledge of the latest trends and how to facilitate them effectively.

#2 RECEPTION & AWARDS

REC Net is proud to recognize the outstanding contributions of its members with awards that are presented at the National Conference. Nominate your colleagues, programs or properties for going above and beyond! YOU can make it happen!

#3 RECRUIT EMPLOYEES & STUDENT INTERNS

Contact REC Net to have job listings posted on the REC Net website. This is also a great student tool when looking for an internship. The National Conference hosts the annual REC Net Job Fair & Internship Fair where a majority of our professional members recruit for full-time and internship positions.

#4 GET NOTICED

Write an article and share photos of your property and be showcased in an upcoming newsletter. Consider making this an assignment for student interns, providing great experience and exposure for them. The articles will make a great addition to your personal portfolio and will have a definite impact on your manager.

#5 GET INVOLVED

REC Net is successful because of the dedication its members devote to the Association's future. Sharing new ideas and creativity is accomplished through active participation in the Association's committees. Contact REC Net and see what committee is right for you.

Get Involved with REC Net and become a Committee Member

Ask a Board Member How

- Membership Committee
- Communication Committee
- Ways & Means Committee
- Conference Program Committee
- Vendor Committee
- Site Selection Committee
- Awards Committee
- Internship / Approval Site Committee
- Social Committee

We cannot have a conference without members volunteering!

Thank You REC Net Vendors!



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Thank you

Dear Members,

Thank you so much for attending our National Conference this year. It means the world to us. We hope you continue to learn and grow with us as we enter this new chapter as REC Net. We look forward to hearing your feedback. Safe travels home!

Sincerely
The REC Net Board



See You Next Year at KIAWAH!



Conference Reflection

I ACHIEVED...

THINGS THAT MADE ME HAPPY:

INTENTION FOR 2024:

GRATITUDE LIST

