

RECREATION PROGRAMMING NETWORK PROGRAMMER'S WORKSHOP

Jessie Davis Park • 7775 Malone Street Douglasville, GA 30134

SESSION SCHEDULE WEDNESDAY APRIL 30

8:00 am - 9:00 am

Start your morning at the **GRPA Programmer's Workshop** by checking in between 8:00 AM and 9:00 AM. During this time, you'll pick up your name badge, enjoy light hospitality refreshments and connect with fellow attendees before the day begins. A professional photographer will also be on-site offering **free headshots** during morning check-in and during lunch, so be sure to take advantage of this great perk!

Hospitality Refreshments provided by American Carnival Mart

9:00 am - 10:00 am

Workshop Welcome & Networking Chats

Chris Bass, Director - Douglasville Parks and Recreation, will kick off the GRPA Recreation Programmer's Workshop and welcome everyone to their new complex at Jessie Davis Park! We will also facilitate program-area **networking chats** designed to spark connections, set the tone for the day and meet fellow attendees, share programming ideas, and learn how to make the most of your workshop experience.

Be sure to bring your business cards to swap with your peers!

10:05 am - 11:05

Accessible Services & Occupational Therapies

Room: Gymnasium

Time: 10:05 am - 11:05 am

Learn how the Atlanta Braves are setting the standard for accessibility and inclusion in the world of sports entertainment. This session, led by the Braves' Accessible Services team, will highlight key services and strategies used to create a welcoming environment for all fans—regardless of ability. From accessible seating and captioning boards to specialized programs for guests with sensory needs, discover how thoughtful design and inclusive policies can transform the guest experience.

Session Outcomes:

1. Identify key accessible services and accommodations that enhance inclusivity in large public venues.
2. Understand best practices for implementing ADA-compliant features and inclusive guest services.
3. Explore partnership opportunities with local organizations to expand access and inclusion initiatives in recreation programming.

Speaker(s): Katie Hearn & Tara MacCaugherty

Creating a Playbook for Playtime

Room: Meeting Room 1

Time: 10:05 am - 11:05 am

Discover how to craft engaging and impactful recreation programs with **Creating a Playbook for Playtime!** This session will equip recreation professionals with the tools to assess community needs, design programs that appeal to diverse interests, and implement strategies for successful execution. Learn how to leverage data, surveys, and feedback to enhance offerings and ensure your programs meet the evolving needs of your community. Walk away with practical insights and a personalized playbook for building dynamic, data-driven recreation experiences!

Session Outcomes:

1. Develop skills to assess community needs and design programs that meet diverse interests.
2. Understand the key components of successful recreation program planning and execution.
3. Learning how to use data and surveys to improve programs and determine need.

Speaker(s): Shajra Thrasher

It's My Pleasure - Developing the Art of Customer Service

Room: Meeting Room 2

Time: 10:05 am - 11:05 am

Outstanding customer service doesn't happen by accident—it's the result of a strong, intentional culture. In this engaging session, Seth White, Chief Talent Officer for Chick-fil-A Acworth and Brookstone, will explore how to build and sustain a service-oriented culture within your organization. Drawing on the principles that drive Chick-fil-A's renowned guest experience, Seth will guide attendees through evaluating their current workplace culture, developing meaningful core values, and fostering a team environment where exceptional service becomes second nature.

Session Outcomes:

1. Evaluate their organization's current cultural climate and identify areas for growth.
2. Understand how to intentionally develop a healthy, values-driven workplace culture.
3. Identify and implement core commitments that support a consistent and high-quality service experience.

Speaker(s): Seth White



10 Steps to Your Next Great Event

Room: Senior Room 1

Time: 10:05 am - 11:05 am

What separates a good event from a truly great one? In this insightful session, Katrina Wagoner, Special Event Coordinator for Henry County Parks and Recreation, will guide attendees through 10 essential steps to elevate their events beyond basic success. From navigating unexpected challenges to embracing creative pivots, this session will empower programmers to approach events with flexibility, humor, and a higher standard of excellence. Perfect for both seasoned and new event planners looking to refine their process and redefine "success".

Session Outcomes:

1. Confidently navigate unexpected obstacles and adapt in real time.
2. Embrace flexibility and find humor in "the pivot."
3. Redefine event goals and expectations to reflect a goal of greatness, not only success.

Speaker(s): Katrina Wagoner

Let's Get Cooking! Stirring Expanded Learning into Parks and Recreation Programming

Room: Senior Room 2

Time: 10:05 am - 11:05 am

This interactive session is designed to empower parks & recreation programming staff with innovative strategies to incorporate expanded learning in a fun and engaging way. Throughout the session, participants will embark on a journey exploring creative exercises, collaborative activities, and practical tools that seamlessly integrate expanded learning into the fun already happening in parks & recreation. Expect to be inspired and equipped with new approaches that not only promote expanded learning but also effectively address unfinished learning. This session promises to be a highlight of the workshop, leaving you with actionable takeaways to implement in your programs immediately.

Session Outcomes:

1. Understand the role of parks and recreation staff as out-of-school time educators.
2. Connect parks and recreation programming to Georgia's Standards of Excellence for expanded learning.
3. Design and implement fun, impactful learning opportunities that support youth development and address gaps in learning.

Speaker(s): Patrice Holt

11:10 am - 12:10 pm

Leadership & Main with James Albright

Room: Gymnasium (Large Group Session)

Time: 11:10 am - 12:10 pm

Based on insights from the Leadership and Main blog by James Albright, this session is designed for Georgia's recreation leaders who are working to build vibrant, connected communities through the programs and services their agencies offer. This presentation will explore leadership strategies, creative placemaking, and practical storytelling tools that leaders at all levels can use to elevate their programs, engage local residents, and advocate for the value of recreation at the local level.

Session Outcomes:

1. Learn how small shifts in leadership and communication can lead to big impacts across your department and community.
2. Apply storytelling and communication tools to amplify their program's message and mission.
3. Explore creative approaches to energize local communities.

Speaker(s): James Albright, Neely Motiejunas and Brenton Baggett

12:15 pm - 1:00 pm

Lunch & Professional Headshots

Take a break, grab a bite, and connect with fellow professionals! Take your pick of delicious boxed lunch options from Honey Baked Ham while mingling with peers and recharging for the afternoon sessions. Plus, don't miss your chance to get a **free professional headshot** taken during lunch—perfect for LinkedIn, email signatures, and future presentations.

1:10 pm - 2:10 pm

Glow Big or Go Home: Elevating Events with Light

Room: Gymnasium

Time: 1:10 pm - 2:10 pm

This presentation will explore the exciting possibilities of incorporating glow-in-the-dark elements into events to create unforgettable experiences. Inspired by a successful glow-in-the-dark pickleball mixer, we'll dive into creative ways to use black lights, LED accessories, and fluorescent décor to enhance a variety of activities. From setup logistics to must-have equipment, learn how to bring a vibrant, glowing touch to your events and keep participants engaged long after the lights go out!

Session Outcomes:

1. Understand the essential equipment and materials needed for successful glow-themed events.
2. Explore creative applications of glow-in-the-dark elements across different types of programming.
3. Plan and execute effective event setups, including lighting, layout, and safety logistics.

Speaker(s): Tara Vroman

From Campus to Career: How Hiring Managers Can Effectively Support Gen Z Employees

Room: Meeting Room 1

Time: 1:10 pm - 2:10 pm

This presentation explores the evolving challenges hiring managers face when onboarding and training Generation Z employees. Unlike previous generations, Gen Z workers often require more structured guidance, continuous feedback, and a strong sense of purpose in their roles. The discussion will focus on effective development strategies, mentorship approaches, and how to create a workplace culture that supports the unique expectations and learning styles of Gen Z professionals.

Session Outcomes:

1. Identify key differences in workplace expectations between Generation Z and previous generations.
2. Learn effective training and mentorship strategies tailored to Gen Z employees.
3. Understand how to foster engagement, retention, and productivity among Gen Z workers through adaptive leadership and support.

Speaker(s): Nakia DeBlanc and Daijah Freeman

Thank you to Hospitality Sponsor
American Carnival Mart



AI for Parks & Rec: Tools, Tricks, and Techniques

Room: Meeting Room 2

Time: 1:10 pm - 2:10 pm

AI isn't just for techies - it's got some real potential to make parks and rec professionals lives easier and their communities happier. This session is all about using AI in a way that's smart, ethical, and totally doable. We'll break down the big stuff like keeping data private and fair, but we'll also dive into some cool tools and tricks you might not know exist. Get ready to leave with ideas you can use right away!

Session Outcomes:

1. Make AI Your Ally: Learn how to use AI responsibly without turning your job into a sci-fi movie.
2. Work Smarter, Not Harder: Find out how AI can help you manage programs, connect with your community, and even handle those never-ending to-do lists.
3. Unlock AI's Hidden Powers: Discover fun and unexpected AI tools that'll save you time and make you look like a tech wizard.

Speaker(s): Joe Domaleski

Together, We Paint!

Room: Outdoor Pavilion

Time: 1:10 pm - 2:10 pm

****Max 24 session attendees, email sign-up required****

Join us for a hands-on, colorful workshop where recreation professionals will explore the power of creativity in program development. Participants will receive guided, step-by-step instruction as they paint their own 11x14 canvas! While you paint, we'll dive into a conversation about how utilizing your talents can enhance engagement, foster cross-generational connection, and unlock new ideas for your department. We'll also highlight ACC Leisure Services' highly successful Paint Night program, now in its eighth year, which invites all ages 5 and up to enjoy monthly painting sessions. Learn how this low-cost, high-impact program has become a beloved staple in their community and how you can adapt similar events to suit your own audience.

Session Outcomes:

1. Develop new program ideas by reflecting on their own talents and how those can be transformed into inclusive recreational offerings.
2. Explore strategies to build community through art, using painting as a tool for connection, wellness, and expression.
3. Identify creative ways to engage diverse age groups through arts-based programming that appeals to both children and adults.

Speaker(s): Kelly Thomas

Georgia's Statewide Physical Activity & Nutrition Initiative: Engaging Parks & Recreation

Room: Senior Room 2

Time: 1:10 pm - 2:10 pm

Learn how Georgia's parks and recreation professionals can play a vital role in promoting healthier communities through physical activity and nutrition initiatives. This session will highlight the CDC's 5-year collaborative agreement aimed at advancing statewide health outcomes, and explore how local recreation departments can align with this effort. Attendees will gain insight into practical nutrition strategies, community partnerships, and funding opportunities to support impactful interventions across Georgia.

Session Outcomes:

1. Understand the goals of Georgia's CDC-funded Physical Activity & Nutrition Initiative and how it connects to parks and recreation.
2. Identify nutrition strategies that can be incorporated into recreation programs and facilities to promote healthier lifestyles.
3. Explore opportunities for community collaboration and funding to support local health initiatives.

Speaker(s): Wendy Palmer & Debbie Kibbe

The Great Outdoors: Where Adventure Meets Parks and Rec

Room: Senior Room 1

Time: 1:10 pm - 2:10 pm

This presentation will serve as a platform to share ideas and foster collaboration on incorporating outdoor education and adventures into our programming and park projects. Together, we'll explore creative ways to showcase what we're currently doing in our departments, discuss future goals, and strategize on how to bring those ideas to life. Let's create a space to inspire each other, exchange insights, and build impactful outdoor experiences for our communities!

Session Outcomes:

1. Recognize the value and potential of utilizing parks for outdoor education and recreation.
2. Identify practical ideas for incorporating outdoor programming into existing department offerings.
3. Build connections with peers to collaborate on shared goals and future outdoor initiatives.

Speaker(s): Charlie Chavez

2:20 pm - 3:20 pm

Taekwondo for Special Populations!

Room: Gymnasium

Time: 2:20 pm - 3:20 pm

This hands-on, activity based session will provide recreation professionals with the tools to identify, reach, and effectively serve special population groups within their communities through the practice of Taekwondo. Attendees will learn how to assess who they currently serve, develop outreach strategies to engage underserved groups, and cultivate instructors who are trained and passionate about inclusive martial arts programming.

Session Outcomes:

1. Gain a clearer understanding of the special population groups currently served and identify opportunities for broader inclusion.
2. Explore strategies for expanding existing programs to better reach and serve underserved community members.
3. Develop a plan to grow inclusive instructor teams and strengthen relationships between recreation teams and their communities.

Speaker(s): Omar Welch

Occupational Therapy in Parks and Recreation

Room: Meeting Room 1

Time: 2:20 pm - 3:20 pm

This session will highlight the vital role occupational therapists can play within the parks and recreation field, particularly in enhancing programming for both youth and seniors. Attendees will explore how incorporating occupational therapy principles can support children with conditions such as autism and ADHD through targeted fine and gross motor activities in camps and afterschool programs. The session will also cover how to integrate functional mobility-focused programming into senior centers to better serve geriatric populations.

Session Outcomes:

1. Understand the importance of incorporating pediatric-focused activities that support fine and gross motor development in camps and afterschool programs.
2. Learn about types of pediatric conditions often encountered by programmers such as ADHD and Autism.
3. Learn about including geriatric care programs in senior centers to enhance functional mobility of senior participants.

Speaker(s): Zacchaeus Graham

Don't Reinvent the Wheel: Throw Some Rims On It!

Room: Meeting Room 2

Time: 2:20 pm - 3:20 pm

Sometimes the best programming ideas aren't brand new—they're just refreshed. This session will explore how to breathe new life into existing programs by recognizing when updates are needed, aligning offerings with community needs, and making creative improvements on a budget. Learn how to keep your programs relevant, engaging, and impactful without starting from scratch.

Session Outcomes:

1. Evaluate existing programs to determine when and how updates or changes are needed.
2. Identify strategies to align programs more closely with evolving community needs and interests.
3. Apply creative, cost-effective approaches to enhance or repurpose current programming.

Speaker(s): Mychal Lewis

Golden Agers Going Places!

Room: Senior Room 1

Time: 2:20 pm - 3:20 pm

Ready to take your senior programming to the next level? This session will guide you through the ins and outs of starting and sustaining a successful senior adult travel program. We'll cover different way to offer travel opportunities, key planning considerations, and how travel can enrich your existing senior programs. Whether you're starting small or dreaming big, this session will give you the tools and inspiration to get your "golden agers" going places—literally!

Session Outcomes:

1. Understand the foundational steps required to launch a senior travel program.
2. Explore a variety of travel options suited for senior adult groups.
3. Identify how travel can enhance the overall quality and appeal of senior adult programming.

Speaker(s): Laura Driggers

Douglasville Parks and Recreation Mobile Rec Program

Room: Outdoor Pavilion

Time: 2:20 pm - 3:20 pm

Through interactive play with Douglasville's very own mobile recreation unit, this session will provide participants with a step-by-step guide to successfully launch and manage a mobile recreation initiative, ensuring greater access to recreation for all.

Session Outcomes:

1. Participants will learn how to design engaging, inclusive recreation activities that align with community needs.
2. Participants will learn best practices for scheduling, staffing, equipment management, and site selection.
3. Participants will learn strategies for building relationships with schools, local organizations, and stakeholders to maximize program impact.

Speaker(s): Gabrielle Whitley

3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Pickleball for Health and Wellness: A Fun Path for Adults & Senior Fitness

Room: Gymnasium

Time: 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Pickleball isn't just a trend—it's a powerful tool for promoting lifelong health and wellness, especially among adults and seniors. This session will explore how to introduce and integrate pickleball into wellness-focused programming. We'll break down its physical and mental health benefits, discuss how to teach the game in a recreational fitness setting, and highlight how it encourages social connection and long-term engagement. Whether you're new to the game or looking to expand your offerings, this session will serve up practical ways to make pickleball a part of your wellness strategy.

Session Outcomes:

1. Gain a clearer understanding of the special population groups currently served and identify opportunities for broader inclusion.
2. Explore strategies for expanding existing programs to better reach and serve underserved community members.
3. Develop a plan to grow inclusive instructor teams and strengthen relationships between recreation teams and their communities.

Speaker(s): Schley Devereux

Ready or Not: Embracing Surprises in Recreation Programming

Room: Meeting Room 1

Time: 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

This presentation addresses the unexpected challenges in recreation programming by focusing on hidden risks such as sudden disruptors, technological failures, and environmental changes. This session will provide real-world examples of these challenges and their impact on operations and community engagement. Attendees will learn best practices for addressing these issues, including proactive planning, risk management, and adaptive strategies like alternative programming and flexible scheduling. This presentation will not only benefit recreation programmers but also those who oversee the daily operations of recreation facilities. It will offer valuable insights for facility operators on how to anticipate and address unexpected challenges, ensuring smooth and efficient operations.

Session Outcomes:

1. Attendees will learn how to identify hidden risks in recreation programming, including human-driven, technological, and environmental factors that may disrupt programming operations.
2. Participants will learn strategies to implement proactive risk management that helps identify and address potential challenges before they impact programming.
3. Participants will gain an understanding of the importance of creating adaptable programming that can respond effectively to unexpected challenges and maintain community engagement.

Speaker(s): Hunter Pooser

Bringing Everyone to the Party: Relational Event Coordination

Room: Meeting Room 2

Time: 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Successful events aren't just about logistics—they're about people. In this session, you'll discover how cultivating strong, authentic relationships with stakeholders is the secret to pulling off events that leave a lasting impact. From team-building to crafting engaging marketing strategies, we'll cover the essentials for creating events that truly connect.

Session Outcomes:

1. Participants will learn how to lead with relational leadership to build a strong, motivated team.
2. Participants will learn how to unlock opportunities for collaboration that benefit everyone involved.
3. Participants will learn how to master marketing and communication strategies that resonate and drive engagement.

Speaker(s): Michele Coursey

Internal & External Collaboration

Room: Senior Room 1

Time: 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Discover the benefits of internal team collaboration within Parks and Recreation departments, and how fostering external community collaboration can enhance productivity, creativity, and teamwork. By working together, both within your team and with the broader community, you can create more engaging programs, improve public spaces, and ensure a lasting positive impact on the areas you serve.

Session Outcomes:

1. Participants will learn how effective internal communication, knowing each staff member's strengths and weaknesses, and fostering team synergy can improve operational efficiency, program development, and staff morale.
2. Attendees will discover how building strong relationships with local communities, organizations, and stakeholders fosters trust, enhances program effectiveness, and strengthens long-term partnerships that support the department's goals.
3. Participants will gain practical strategies for leveraging both internal and external collaboration to boost productivity, spark creative solutions for challenges, and enhance the overall quality of parks and recreation services through solid teamwork and strong community ties.

Speaker(s): Madison Krilla

Starting a Therapeutic Department the EASY WAY

Room: Senior Room 2

Time: 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Starting a therapeutic recreation (TR) program may sound daunting, but it doesn't have to be! In this session, we'll discuss the reasons why TR programs are so important for communities and walk through simple, practical steps to get a program off the ground. With the right team and strategy, you can build a program that makes a big impact without feeling overwhelming. We'll also cover resources available to help train staff and support your programming efforts.

Session Outcomes:

1. Understand why starting a therapeutic recreation program benefits the community.
2. Follow a basic guide for launching a TR program with manageable steps.
3. Identify resources to help train staff and assist with program development and delivery.

Speaker(s): Lori Harris and Terry Nash

Thank you to our hosts and sponsors!



Hospitality Refreshments provided
by **American Carnival Mart**

