



MRPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021:

FINDING SOLUTIONS TO CONNECT, MOTIVATE, AND REINVENT

Join Us for the 54th Annual Conference!

Virtual Conference March 15-19, 2021 • ONLINE REGISTRATION: www.merpa.org

Featured Keynote:
*"Community Resilience
and Recovery"*

Kristine Stratton
NRPA President & CEO

Monday, March 15th
11:00AM-12:00PM

Featured Endnote:
*"The Impact of COVID-19
on the Future of Parks and
Recreation"*

Allison Colman
Elvis Cordova
Roxanne Sutton
NRPA Panelists

Friday, March 19th
10:00AM-11:00AM



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Annual Conference 2021: #MRPAFindingSolutions



@MaineRecreationandPark



GREETINGS AND WELCOME TO THE 2021 MRPA ANNUAL CONFERENCE!



What a year it has been! There is nothing better than to take the time to regroup, reenergize, and reinvent yourselves as professionals in a very essential vocation. Normally, this conference is the largest attended MRPA event of the year. For this year, I encourage you to take time to attend the virtual Annual Conference to experience the wealth of knowledge and ideas brought to this event offered in a far-reaching way than ever achieved before.

Your commitment to attending this conference shows your dedication to your chosen field and allows for numerous learning and networking opportunities so we may all participate in **"Finding Solutions to Connect, Motivate, and Reinvent"** together.

The MRPA Conference committee members spent many hours putting together a great list of educational sessions for you. As a benefit for Maine, this comprehensive event provides a special opportunity for coaches, programmers, managers, directors, and industry representatives from all around Maine, New England, and the country to exchange experience, gain new knowledge, establish contacts, and reconnect with peers.

During this online event we will also recognize people within our profession for their efforts and passion for our field. We encourage you to celebrate those professionals selected at this year's awards reception.

One of the most important aspects of our conference is the level of professional development opportunities available.

Whether it's focused on diversity and inclusion, re-opening plans in uncertain times, program ideas, parks projects, taking care of your wellness, combatting isolationism, preventing and addressing substance misuse, creating a camp culture, and more, you'll find what you and your staff are looking for at this conference.

We know you will enjoy the MRPA Annual Conference. Enjoy the people who make up MRPA and those who support us. We hope you come to as many sessions as possible. You will only leave the conference bigger and better than you were yesterday.

~MRPA President Karyn MacNeill, CPRP, Yarmouth Community Services Director

Conference Schedule at a Glance

Monday, March 15 <i>Keynote & Awards</i>	Tuesday, March 16 <i>Morning Sessions</i>	Wednesday, March 17 <i>Morning Sessions</i>	Wednesday, March 17 <i>Afternoon Sessions</i>	Thursday, March 18 <i>MRPA Meeting & Sessions</i>	Friday, March 19 <i>Endnote</i>
Keynote Address: 11:00AM Community Resilience and Recovery Kristine Stratton, NRPA CEO & President	Session: 10:00-11:00AM Preventing & Addressing Substance Misuse, Liz Blackwell-Moore Session: 10:00-11:00AM Engaging Collaborative Municipal Partnerships, Ryan Sommer & Denise Clavette	Session: 11:30-12:30PM Wellness While We Wait, Abby DiPasquale Session: 11:30-12:30PM Becoming an Age- Friendly Community, Lori Parham	Session: 1:00-2:00PM Creating your Camp Culture, Jed and Roz Buck Session: 1:00-2:00PM Identities and Privileges, Amanda Manning	Annual MRPA Business Meeting: 10:00-11:00AM Open to All to Attend! Session: 1:00-2:00PM Grow More Leaders, Jed and Roz Buck	Endnote Address: 10:00-11:00AM The Impact of COVID-19 on the Future of Parks and Recreation NRPA Panel: Allison Colman, Elvis Cordova, and Roxanne Sutton
Virtual Annual Awards Ceremony: 6:30PM	Session: 10:00-11:00AM Changing the Game in Youth Sports, John O'Sullivan	Session: 11:30-12:30PM Getting the Most Out of Your Natural Grass Fields, Ryan Bjorn	Session: 1:00-2:00PM Vetting & Training Youth Coaches, John LaMalva	Session: 1:00-2:00PM 5 Key Elements of Social Emotional Learning, Kellie Bailey	

THANK YOU TO OUR SPRING CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS!



Chair: Nicole Welch, Buxton Recreation Director

Vendor Chair: Tyler Stewart, OOB Parks & Recreation Programmer

Committee Members:

Erika Dube, Saco Parks & Recreation Deputy Director
Andrew Kaherl, York Parks & Recreation Coordinator

Amelia Meier, Saco Parks & Recreation Community Outreach Coordinator
Deb Smith, MRPA Executive Director

Awards Committee Chair: Lisa Thompson, Wescustogo Hall & Community Center Director





KEYNOTE: Monday, March 15, 2021 · 11:00AM-12:00PM



Community Resilience and Recovery **Kristine Stratton, NRPA President & CEO**

The work of park and recreation professionals, throughout our country, has shifted in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, posing numerous unique challenges to the field. Join us and our Keynote speaker, Kristine Stratton, CEO and President of the National Recreation and Park Association, as she speaks to insights and stories of community resilience and recovery from this past year. Listen as she conveys NRPA legislative priorities designed to elevate this profession. Learn about the work based on NRPA's Three Pillars: Health and

Wellness, Equity, and Conservation, and how the momentum of these efforts became the foundation of a movement to unify and uplift our nation through the parks and recreation.

ENDNOTE: Friday March 19, 2021 · 10:00-11:00AM

The Impact of COVID-19 on the Future of Parks and Recreation

Allison Colman, NRPA Director of Health

Elvis Cordova, NRPA Vice President of Public Policy & Advocacy

Roxanne Sutton, NRPA Director of Communications



2020 further demonstrated that the field of parks and recreation is vital to advancing equity, resiliency and community health and well-being. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, park and recreation professionals have taken on new roles and applied new innovations to their work. From supporting emergency response efforts to creating new, innovative programs, park and recreation professionals have met this moment and worked diligently to protect, support, strengthen and heal their communities during these challenging times. As we look toward a post-pandemic future, how will the field of parks and recreation be changed? Where should park and recreation professionals focus their efforts to ensure all people can thrive? How can we collectively drive needed support and resources to ensure all people have access to quality parks and recreation? Join staff from the National Recreation and Park Association as we examine the essential role of parks and recreation in a post-pandemic future, explore guiding principles to keep top of mind while planning for a thoughtful return to a new normal, and share resources to help park and recreation professionals make the case.



SESSIONS: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 · 10:00-11:00AM



Preventing & Addressing Substance Misuse: What Recreation & Parks Departments Can Do *Liz Blackwell-Moore, Public Health Consultant, New England Prevention Transfer Technology Center*

Substance Use Disorder is a problem that impacts every community across the country. Towns and Recreation and Parks Departments have a unique role to play in preventing and addressing substance misuse. In this workshop, participants will learn what experiences and environments put the developing brain of young people at greater risk for addiction and what research-based strategies could be used within youth recreation programs to help build healthy brains and prevent substance misuse. Participants will also consider strategies to address adult substance misuse, especially in parks and recreation centers. Participants will have time for discussion with scenarios to deepen their understanding and ability to use the information, and will also receive a toolkit for guiding changes within their own department.

Engaging Collaborative Municipal Partnerships

City of Saco Panel: Denise Clavette, Planning and Economic Development Director and Ryan Sommer, Director of Parks & Recreation

Traditional sources of revenue have you scratching your head? Have you exhausted available grants, sponsorships, operational and capital budgets, and fundraising for projects? Join us to learn how municipal Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) can bridge the gap to fund trails, connectivity, streetscapes, amenities, tourism and more. Find out more about how Saco funded over \$150,000 of projects, including trail development, improvements, and a pedestrian bridge in one year, with projections to do much more in the upcoming years! Get motivated to move your communities into exploring this funding opportunity!



Changing the Game in Youth Sports *John O'Sullivan, Founder of Changing the Game Project*

The world of youth sports is in a state of constant flux, especially during the age of COVID. These constant changes sometimes cause us to seek to reinvent the wheel. Yet in today's session, John O'Sullivan, Founder of the Changing the Game Project, suggests that the best way to promote engagement, enjoyment and participation in our youth sports programming is to focus not on the things that are different, but on three key areas that do not change: why kids play what they want from coaches, and engaging parents.

SESSIONS: Wednesday, March 17—Morning Options 11:30AM-12:30PM

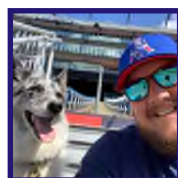


Wellness While We Wait *Abigail S. DiPasquale, MPH, MCHES, Health Promotion Coordinator for Wellness Works at the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust*

COVID-19 has turned our worlds upside down and left many of us trying to figure out how to survive and thrive in the midst of constant chaos. For some, the time at home and under restrictions has been an opportunity to discover ways to improve their health, but for others this time at home has added to their stress and health woes! While we are waiting for COVID to end (hopefully soon) and a return to our normal ways of living, maybe we can take a minute to figure out what is working for us and what isn't to identify ways to ensure our health and wellness even after the pandemic subsides. Abby will work with you to discover simple ways to get back to feeling good, living well and thinking better in uncertain times.

Becoming an Age-Friendly Community *Lori Parham, State Director, AARP*

How is your department aiding in livability and engagement for the aging population? Get ready to learn about opportunities to engage people over 50 in creating or maintaining vibrant outdoor and public spaces! Municipalities across the state are helping to drive AARP's Network of Age-Friendly States & Communities, and parks and recreation is playing a vital role in the execution of these essential programs. Session attendees will dive into one of 8 domains of livability that the AARP work focuses on, as well get the inside information about some of the programs Maine communities have been able to implement.



Getting the Most Out of Your Natural Grass Fields *Ryan Bjorn, Field Superintendent at Gillette Stadium*

This presentation will cover three main keys that assist in providing high-quality surfaces while withstanding ever-increasing traffic demands. While looking at cultural practices, plant health and traffic management, we will discuss different types of aeration, using nitrogen in moderation and finally techniques to help manage the traffic on fields.





SESSIONS: Wednesday, March 17, 2021—Afternoon Options 1:00-2:00PM



Creating Your Camp Culture

Jed and Roz Buck, Roz and Jed Training and Consulting

Every company has a culture, and according to Warren Buffett, “You cannot pay too much attention to company culture.” With the fast pace of camp life, we often ignore our culture as we focus on our strategy and execution. This hands-on, highly interactive session will explore the importance of your camp’s culture and how you can grow your culture (if you like it) or change and develop it (if you don’t like it).



Identities and Privileges: What They Are, What They’re Not, and Why It Matters for Maine Communities

Amanda Manning, Operations Management and Intercultural Trainer for Maine Intercultural Communications Consultants, LLC

Do you find yourself asking the question, “What does “culture” even mean?” In this session we will explore some core intercultural concepts; culture, the cultural identity of an individual, and intersectionality to answer that question. Together we will explore these concepts and how it can shape the way each of us weaves together the unique cultures in which we participate – as individuals, as members of families and social groups, and as members of the local and larger recreation and parks community. Each participant will leave this session with a broader understanding of the concept of culture as well as their own unique cultural self.



Vetting and Training Youth Coaches: The Bar has been Raised

John LaMalva, Founder at Alpha Sports

The rate of youth sports “incidents” (including negative behaviors, injuries, and various forms of abuse) has continued to rise, and these issues have garnered national attention. Recent national and state initiatives to improve coach vetting and training have resulted in mandates for specific action in an increasing number of youth sports organizations. While several segments of the youth sports market have made dramatic improvements in vetting and preparing youth coaches, in general programs offered by recreation departments have made less progress. Participants in this session will have an opportunity to learn how the landscape has changed, how national and state legislation (including the Safe Sport Act) affects them, and what actions they can take now to address the growing risk they face in offering youth sports programs. Participants will be given a framework to help them assess their risk and identify potential actions to improve their local programs. Time will be allocated to a group discussion of the risks, challenges, and best practices involved in youth coaching.

SESSIONS: Thursday, March 18, 2021



Virtual Annual MRPA Business Meeting • 10:00-11:00AM

Hosted by MRPA President Karyn MacNeill

Join us for our first ever virtual business meeting! Hear about upcoming MRPA plans, elections for our Board Members, and vote on the MRPA budget. All MRPA members are invited and eligible to attend. It’s easy this year for you to attend from the comfort of your office or home!

Afternoon Educational Sessions • 1:00-2:00PM



Grow More Leaders

Jed and Roz Buck, Roz and Jed Training and Consulting

We all know that no leader can do everything without assistance from a strong team. One of our most important roles as leaders is to shape and empower the next generation of leaders. This interactive session focuses on experiential and participant-centered activities that will give us tools to use in training young, emerging leaders within our organizations as well as strengthening our personal leadership skills.



5 Key Elements of Social Emotional Learning for Children of All Ages

Kellie Bailey, Maine Department of Education Social Emotional Learning/Restorative Practice Specialist

Please join Maine Department of Education Social Emotional Learning Specialist Kellie Doyle Bailey as she provides a unique brain-based overview of the importance of growing Adult Emotional Intelligence and the purposeful teaching of the 5 Key Elements of SEL to children of all ages. Kellie will break down the premise of all behaviors tell us something about what a child is experiencing and how we can use SEL and Mindfulness tools/strategies to help children birth to 18 develop self awareness, self regulation, social awareness, build strong connections/relationships with adults and peers and ultimately make responsible decisions. Participants will develop a core knowledge of SEL and Mindfulness and will walk away with strategies and tools to assist with co-regulation of youth.





VIRTUAL ANNUAL AWARDS RECEPTION: Monday, March 15 · 6:30PM

Join us for our first ever virtual awards ceremony as we recognize and celebrate our colleagues, volunteers and facilities that have done outstanding work in our profession, have given back to their community, and continue to create a world that emphasizes the importance of community, kindness and well-being.

We will celebrate and recognize the deserving 2021 award recipients for their commitment and efforts to our profession. Be part of your state's professional organization and learn about the amazing work happening in Maine! The virtual awards reception will recognize the following awards:

“William V. Haskell” Distinguished Professional Award
“Dr. Bill Eckart” Young Professional Award
Outstanding Parks Professional Award
Citizen Volunteer of the Year
Facilities of Merit

LOOKING BACK: CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2020 AWARD RECIPIENTS!



Featuring the 2020 MRPA Award Recipients:

- ◆ “William V. Haskell” Distinguished Professional Award: Hillary Hallett, Recreation Director, Easton Recreation Department
- ◆ “Dr. Bill Eckart” Young Professional Award: Gary Colello, Director, Bridgton Recreation Department
- ◆ Outstanding Parks Professional Award: John “Linky” Erskine, Park Operations Manager and City Arborist, South Portland Parks, Recreation & Waterfront
- ◆ Citizen Volunteer of the Year Award (not pictured): Ron St. Pierre and David Mansfield, Bangor

Featuring the 2020 MRPA Award Recipients for Facilities of Merit, listed below in order by photo:

Bangor Municipal Golf Course

Wescustogo Hall and Community Center, North Yarmouth

Kennebunkport Parks and Recreation Community Center



Past Award Recipients from 2019



Featuring the 2019 MRPA Award Recipients, listed below in order by photo:

- ◆ Facility of Merit Award: Belfast Pickleball Courts
- ◆ Citizen Volunteer of the Year Award: Lawrence Kovacs, Bath Parks and Recreation
- ◆ “Dr. Bill Eckart” Young Professional Award: Erika Dube, Saco Parks and Recreation
- ◆ Outstanding Parks Professional Award: Jay Astle, Brunswick Parks and Recreation
- ◆ “William V. Haskell” Distinguished Professional Award: Lisa Thompson, Wescustogo Hall and Community Center





A MESSAGE FROM MRPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DEB SMITH



Guide to Attending the MRPA Virtual Spring Conference

During this challenging time, it has become more critical than ever to continue to stay connected to our profession and to plan for continued professional growth and development. In our continuing mission to serve our members, MRPA is pleased to offer our 2021 annual conference as a virtual event! The MRPA conference planning committee has created an all-star series of presenters for this event.

Q: What is the cost for the virtual conference? The individual registration fee is \$50.00/person and the agency fee for 5 or more employees from the same department is \$200.00. Your registration fee allows you to attend a session for each time slot each day.

Q: How do I find out about the conference schedule? All of the conference session details and the registration links can be found on the MRPA web site: www.merpa.org

Q: Once I am registered, how do I attend sessions? The conference sessions will be hosted on ZOOM. *On Friday, March 12th, everyone who has registered for the conference will be sent a document that will include the individual session ZOOM links.* You may join any session on any day of the conference.

Q. Can I register one person in my department and share the zoom links with other employees or have all my staff watch sessions together? The answer is NO. We hope that you will support MRPA and register all employees who want to attend.

Q: Can I view sessions after the conference? All sessions will be recorded and will be made available on the MRPA website for members who register and pay for the conference. *This will allow you an opportunity to view every session of the conference.* Access to the recorded sessions will be done via a member passcode that will be distributed following the conference.

Q. Is there an awards ceremony? We are excited to be hosting our annual award ceremony live via ZOOM. We hope that you will make time to fit the award ceremony into your schedule on Monday, March 15 at 6:30 pm and join us in recognizing the well-deserved winners.

JOIN US! We will miss the opportunity to meet in person at the Samoset. The energy that exists during conference is very difficult to emulate virtually. But we know this conference will be a valuable resource to parks and recreation professionals in Maine as we move forward with reopening programs. *We will continue to find solutions to connect, motivate, and reinvent.*

Thank You to our 2021 Sponsors!



Session Sponsors:





Conference Goals Worksheet

Choose your Personal Session Schedule:

Monday, March 15, 2021

Keynote 11:00AM-12:00PM

- ☐ Community Resilience and Recovery—.1 CEU

Virtual Annual Awards Ceremony 6:30PM

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

All sessions 10:00-11:00AM

- ☐ Preventing and Addressing Substance Misuse—.1 CEU
☐ Engaging Collaborative Municipal Partnerships—.1 CEU
☐ Changing the Game in Youth Sports—.1 CEU

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Morning sessions 11:30AM-12:30PM

- ☐ Wellness While We Wait—.1 CEU
☐ Becoming an Age-Friendly Community—.1 CEU
☐ Getting the Most Out of Your Natural Grass Fields—.1 CEU

Afternoon sessions 1:00-2:00PM

- ☐ Creating your Camp Culture—.1 CEU
☐ Identities and Privileges—.1 CEU
☐ Vetting and Training Youth Coaches—.1 CEU

Thursday, March 18, 2021

Morning meeting 10:00-11:00AM

- ☐ MRPA Annual Business Meeting

Afternoon sessions: 1:00-2:00PM

- ☐ Grow More Leaders—.1 CEU
☐ 5 Key Elements of Social Emotional Learning—.1 CEU

Friday, March 19, 2021

Endnote 10:00-11:00AM

- ☐ The Impact of COVID-19 on the Future of Parks & Recreation—.1 CEU

CEU's: Each professional development session will have .1 CEU's available for sessions attended on the original date. CEU's are not available for recorded sessions.

Notes:

What is something new that I learned?

What is something that I can bring back to my department and share with my team?

What is one goal that I can implement today?

What is one goal that I will work on long-term?

How will I approach program planning in 2021?

What do I want to remember to follow up on?

What was inspiring at this conference?

I would be interested in becoming involved with MRPA in the following ways:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fall Workshop Planning Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Conference Planning Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Networking Groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Sports Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Parks Initiatives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Shot Basketball | <input type="checkbox"/> Bill Bonnyman Golf Tournament | <input type="checkbox"/> Pine Tree State Track and Field |



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