



NDRPA Offering New Selection of Partner Webinars

NDRPA is excited to host another series of partner webinars with the Florida Recreation and Park Association (FRPA). Each webinar is worth 0.1 CEUs.

Registration is required and the deadline to register is one week prior to each scheduled webinar. The cost to attend is \$20 for each webinar for NDRPA members and \$25 for nonmembers.

Check out the schedule below and [register today!](#)

All webinars are scheduled noon – 1:30 p.m. CT

JANUARY

January 21, 2026 – Challenges of the Little Guy

Presenter: Issa Thornell, director, Village of Biscayne Park Parks and Recreation

This session is for the little guys. We will discuss six points on how to succeed BIG in a small municipality. You will hear ideas and bring your ideas to share as well.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Discuss common challenges small municipalities face.
- Discuss six points to help overcome those challenges.
- Summarize discussion and brainstorm.

About Issa: *Issa Thornell is the Parks and Recreation director for the Village of Biscayne Park in Miami-Dade County, Florida. With more than 25 years in parks and recreation, Thornell takes great pride in advocating for the importance of parks and recreation and the undeniable role it plays in community's large and small.*

January 29, 2026 – Leading Like Gumby: Flexible, Adaptable Leadership for Parks and Rec Teams

Presenter: Chamreece Diggs, Special Programs Superintendent, Greensboro, NC Parks and Recreation

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Describe flexible leadership and explain its value in the Parks and Recreation context.
- Demonstrate strategies for recognizing and adapting to diverse work styles and personalities.
- Discuss principles of emotional intelligence to build trust and connection with staff.

- Build a personal "Gumby Leadership Toolkit" with resources learned and shared from peers.

About Chamreece: *Chamreece Diggs is a proud graduate of NCA&TSU with a degree in Recreation Administration and earned her MBA from UNCG. A Certified Parks and Recreation Professional, with 15 years of experience, Chamreece is the Special Programs Superintendent with Greensboro Parks and Recreation. She supervises Adaptive and Inclusive Recreation, Active Adults, Greensboro Youth Council, and Aquatics. Chamreece believes in enriching the field of parks and recreation through innovation, exploration, and collaboration. She prides herself on being equity focused, people oriented, progressive, and a creative critical thinker.*

FEBRUARY

February 4, 2026 – Navigating Success as a Young Leader

Presenter: Devon Poulos, aquatics manager, North Port Parks and Recreation

Stepping into a leadership role at a young age presents unique opportunities – and challenges. This session is designed for emerging leaders looking to build their confidence, credibility, and influence in the workplace. Whether you're new to leadership or aspiring to step into a higher role, this session will equip you with the tools needed to thrive as a young leader and make a lasting impact.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Identify key challenges faced by young leaders in professional environments and develop strategies to overcome them.
- Explore techniques for managing intergenerational teams and navigating workplace dynamics with confidence.
- Enhance communication and interpersonal skills to build trust, influence, and credibility as a young leader.

About Devon: *Devon Poulos has more than a decade of experience in the recreation field, having worked with local YMCA organizations and county-level government agencies. Since joining the city of North Port in November 2018, he has held several key roles, including recreation program coordinator, head lifeguard, assistant aquatics supervisor, and aquatics manager. Devon has earned multiple professional certifications, including the aquatic facility operator in 2019, lifeguard instructor trainer in 2022, and certified park and recreation executive in 2023. He holds a bachelor's degree from Florida International University and is currently pursuing a master's from Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU). Devon completed The Emerging Leaders Institute in 2021 and graduated from the Abrahams Jones Academy for Leadership Excellence in 2023. He played a vital role in helping the city of North Port achieve its initial CAPRA accreditation in 2019 and contributed to the successful reaccreditation in 2024.*

Febu 18, 2026 – Dealing with Difficult People in Youth Sports

Presenter: Chris Stevenson, founder, The Empower Group

Managing challenging situations in youth sports is key to ensuring a positive experience. This interactive session teaches effective communication, crucial conversations, and strategies for handling difficult people, helping create a better environment for coaches, athletes, and parents.

Attendees will gain valuable skills to manage the athletic triangle successfully.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Analyze challenges in the coach-athlete-parent dynamic to understand difficult interactions in youth sports.
- Demonstrate communication strategies for setting expectations with athletes, parents, and coaches to ensure positivity.
- Apply techniques for crucial conversations, using conflict resolution to de-escalate and foster cooperation.

About Chris: *Chris Stevenson is an accomplished speaker with a global footprint and has presented dynamic sessions in more than a dozen countries and half of the 50 states. As a former Power Ranger stuntman and founder of The Empower Group, Chris draws from 20 years of experience owning and operating successful health clubs, consistently achieving industry-leading net promoter scores. His expertise lies in leadership, communication, employee engagement, and customer service, making him a sought-after authority in various industries, such as parks and recreation, fitness business, indoor rock climbing, and more. Beyond his business acumen, Chris has served as a board and committee member and published author, contributing to his holistic perspective on industry dynamics. Chris has the unique ability to connect with people instantaneously and to present applicable lectures that resonate with every audience.*

March 10, 2026 – Why Reinvent the Wheel?

Presenters: LaToya Artis, recreation manager, Ocala Recreation and Parks; Jacob Baker, recreation manager, Ocala Recreation and Parks

This session is designed to assist recreation professionals in increasing community engagement through programs tailored to their community. We will walk through a sample program evaluation that will demonstrate ways to determine if a program is a good fit for a community and organization. Understanding the specific needs of our community alongside an agency's vision will help foster community connection and contribute to the overall well-being of residents.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Learn how to evaluate and design programs.
- Identify the needs and desires of their communities.
- Discuss program specificity and purpose.

About LaToya: *LaToya L. Artis is a recreation manager with the city of Ocala, Florida, responsible for the oversight of indoor programming for youth, adults, seniors, therapeutic recreation, outreach, and the department's transportation. LaToya fell in love with recreation 29 years ago as a recreation summer camp counselor in Linden, New Jersey, during her college years. In 1999, LaToya graduated with her B.S. in physical and health education with a minor in sports management from Methodist College. After working for five years in the local school system, LaToya decided to seek employment working from home to raise her three children. In 2015, she started working with Fayetteville Cumberland Parks and Recreation as therapeutic recreation supervisor. LaToya moved to Florida in 2019 and started working with Ocala Recreation and Parks as therapeutic and senior recreation supervisor, quickly advancing into her current position as recreation manager. LaToya is a line dance instructor and certified Xtreme hip hop aerobics instructor.*

About Jacob: *Formerly in education and childcare, Jacob Baker fell in love with recreation in 2012 after starting what he thought was a temporary job at a municipal aquatic center. He has worked in every area of recreation, including aquatics, athletics, community events and outreach. Currently, Jacob is a recreation manager for the city of Ocala supervising the operations of the Mary Sue Rich Community Center. As someone who's directly benefitting from a culturally rich and multifaceted background, he's aware of the challenges and opportunities faced by parks and recreation professionals, as well as their clients.*