



## BRAD ANDERSON

Brad Anderson has a B.A. in education and has been actively involved in the field of aquatics since 1985. He earned his AFO instructor credentials in 2005 and has presented various topics at World Waterpark Association Symposiums and various state associations. His variety of aquatic expertise includes:

mechanical, technical, staffing, customer service and safety. Anderson is an AFO Instructor Trainer and holds instructor credentials in AFO, CPO, NPWNPL Lifeguard, PADI SCUBA and Emergency Care & Safety Institute Life-Saving. He is currently the owner of Anderson Aquatics Consulting and Training Services; he has trained thousands of aquatic professionals in water chemistry, risk management, water treatment, operational management, aquatic facility design and maintenance. Anderson is also the Aquatic Facility/Program Supervisor for the City of Englewood and operates Pirates Cove Waterpark, a 5.2 acre facility where he was instrumental in all phases from concept, design, construction and operations. His professional insights and experience on site management, fiscal savings and character diseases keep the audience focused.



## DAVID AVRIN, CSP

One of the most in-demand business marketing and customer experience speakers in the world today, David Avrin, CSP, has shared his content-rich, entertaining, hard-hitting and memorable presentations to enthusiastic audiences across North America and around the world. Recent presentation locations include:

Singapore, Bangkok, Melbourne, Brisbane, Antwerp, Buenos Aires, Sri Lanka, Manila, Glasgow, Rotterdam, Barcelona, Monte Carlo, London, Johannesburg and Dubai. Avrin shows business owners and leaders, sales professionals, HR audiences and entrepreneurs how to ferret-out, recognize, craft and promote compelling competitive advantages. A former CEO group-leader and business marketing firm owner, Avrin's business insights have been featured on hundreds of broadcast media outlets and thousands of online and print publications around the world. He is also the author of three books including the acclaimed: *It's Not Who You Know, It's Who Knows You!* and his new book, *Visibility Marketing – The No-Holds-Barred Truth About What It Takes to Grab Attention, Build Your Brand and Win New Business.*



## RUDIE D. BALDWIN, ESQUIRE

Rudie D. Baldwin is a founding partner of Amaro | Baldwin LLP. He has earned the reputation of being a hard-working litigator and a winning trial attorney. Baldwin is a sincere and effective advocate who primarily represents clients in the amusement, entertainment and action-sport industries. During his

career, Baldwin has represented a wide range of clients in product defect, personal injury, breach of contract, workers' compensation and construction defect matters. Baldwin has represented clients ranging from Six Flags Magic Mountain, Raging Waters, Boomers, SpeedZone, The Observatory, LSI Road Striping, Harbor Distributing and Flow Snowboards. Baldwin received his Juris Doctorate degree from Southwestern University School of Law in 2006, completing his degree in two years by participating in the rigorous SCALE program. The first 9 years of his practice was spent as a Senior Associate of Prindle, Amaro, Goetz, Hillyard, Barnes & Reinholtz LLP. In his spare time, Baldwin is an avid surfer and musician. He has played notable venues such as House of Blues, The Viper Room and Key Club. His band was named one of the "Hot 100 Unsigned Live Bands of 2014" in *Music Connection Magazine*.

# SPEAKERS



## ALEXANDRA BARILLA

Alexandra Barilla is the Guest Service Manager for Cowabunga Bay Water Park in Las Vegas, Nevada. Barilla was born and raised in Las Vegas ("Go Knights!") and graduated from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas with degrees in recreation and leisure services and journalism. She started her career in the amusement industry as a Recreation Management Intern for the Walt Disney World® Resort in Orlando, Florida. Throughout the next few years, Barilla worked as a Recreation Manager for Disney's Fort Wilderness Resort and Campground, Disney's Wilderness Lodge and Disney's Contemporary Resort while overseeing pool and lake operations, arcades and children's activity centers. Upon returning home to Las Vegas in 2014, Barilla became Cowabunga Bay's Guest Service Manager, where she is responsible for the daily operation of the Front Office (guest services, ticket sales and the front gate). She also hires and processes new-hire paperwork and facilitates employee schedules and payroll. One of her favorite responsibilities has been to develop and maintain her Cowabunga Traders Store, which has evolved to include logo souvenir and waterpark essential items. Barilla has partnered with local and industry professionals to acquire trends and best practices to meet her guests' needs, while preparing and maintaining inventory for Cowabunga Bay's 270,000 guests each year.



## CLAY BARNES

Clay Barnes is the Associate Director, Loss Control, for the Speciality Insurance Group. He has more than 30 years' experience in the waterpark, sports & entertainment industries, beginning with his American Red Cross lifeguard certification at age 16. He has been a certified lifeguard, instructor or instructor trainer in American Red

Cross, Ellis & Associates or NASCO since the age of 16. As such, Barnes has worked for Walt Disney World's Typhoon Lagoon, River Country and Blizzard Beach, American Specialty Insurance and Risk Services and Waterville USA. During his professional career, he has worked as a lifeguard, manager, consultant, auditor, insurance inspector and assistant general manager, gaining experience in the operations, regulatory and risk management aspects of the waterpark industry. During his time as the Vice President of Risk Management at American Specialty, he authored the Slide Attendant Training Program, was on the task group that authored the original ASTM 2376 Standard Practice for Classification, Design, Manufacture, Construction and Operation of Water Slide Systems, obtained an associate's in risk management degree and held numerous state inspector, NAARSO and AIMS certifications. Barnes served as the Assistant General Manager at Waterville USA located in Gulf Shores, Alabama, for 11 years prior to accepting his current position in 2018.



## JIM BASALA

Jim Basala has more than 40 years of experience in the development and management of public sector parks and recreation facilities, including the management of historic structures, living history interpretation, traditional recreation programs, development and preservation of natural areas, the innovative Bellaboo's Play

and Discovery Center and Deep River Waterpark, which draws its attendance from the Greater Chicagoland area. As site manager for the development and construction of the waterpark in Merrillville, Indiana, he oversaw the project from conception to completion and through several expansions. The park was recognized as the outstanding park development project by the Indiana Park and Recreation Association in 1995. Basala, now the CEO of the 7000-acre Lake County Parks and Recreation Department where he began his career, credits his variety of experiences in helping build a broad view of the park system. A proud graduate of Purdue University School of

Forestry, Basala wonders to this day how he got involved in waterpark operations but has enjoyed every minute. Basala served in leadership roles on the WWA Board of Directors including Secretary, Vice Chair, Chair and Past President; and in 2017 he received the WWA's Al Turner Memorial Commitment to Excellence Award.



### **JON BEHRENS**

Jon Behrens has served as the Assistant City Manager for Special Projects in Canyon, Texas for the past four years. Prior to the ACM position, he served 11 years as a Canyon City Commissioner and the Director of Residential Living at West Texas A&M University for 14 years. Behrens was a member, as a Commissioner, of the original committee appointed to study the aquatic needs for Canyon; and by the time the project was completed, he was a city employee and tasked with managing the project. He and his family have lived in Canyon for 20 years and have been involved in soccer and track at all levels in the Canyon community.



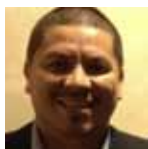
### **PETER BEIREIS**

Peter Beireis has been involved in aquatics since 1979 and has been a major influencer serving in many leadership roles including President Series for the CPRS Aquatic Section, as well as two stints as President/Steering Committee Chair for the Bay Area Public Pool Operator Association. He continues to be active in the aquatics industry and has presented numerous topics over the years focusing on operation and training elements. He was awarded the Lifesaving Award for the Professional Rescuer by the American Red Cross in 2013. He continues to work full time as well as run his own private aquatic consulting business focusing on improving operations and training for clients.



### **JESSE BENAVIDEZ**

A 17-year veteran in the aquatics industry, Jesse Benavidez has experience in municipal, competitive and waterpark venues. He began his career as a lifeguard, quickly rising in the ranks as a LGI and WSI. After completing training as a mechanic for the U.S. Army Reserves, Benavidez was selected as the Aquatics Coordinator for the City of Texas City, where he opened a new natatorium, and managed four additional pools. From there, Benavidez went on to be the Assistant Coordinator at the Conroe ISD Natatorium, where he also assisted in its opening. He managed the maintenance for the facility, leasing programs and swim meet operations. After 7 years with CISD Natatorium, he was selected as the Director of Facilities for Typhoon Texas in Katy, Texas. He was first assigned as an Aquatic Consultant, assisting in the construction of the aquatic sections of the waterpark. His duties now include overall facility maintenance management, chief pool operator and duty manager.



### **ALEX BERNAL**

Alex Bernal is a 40-year resident of Las Vegas and is very much invested in his community. He attended Jim Bridger Junior High and Rancho High School in Las Vegas, Nevada, and studied urban violence at the University for Peace in Costa Rica. His career in community service began as an adolescent residential substance abuse treatment provider, intake coordinator and program developer for high-risk youth at Monte Vista Hospital in 1997. Bernal has also worked for Clark County Social Services, serving as a Mediation Specialist with the Culture of Peace Project, as well as developing and implementing community-based conflict resolution training programs to

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at-risk populations. Bernal has been the Back on Track Coordinator with the Clark County Department of Parks & Recreation since 2003. During his tenure, he has been responsible for coordinating and supervising numerous outreach efforts within a department dedicated to community safety and rehabilitation in Southern Nevada. These efforts include programs such as Back on Track, Late Nite Solutions, Stay on Track, Community Service Programming and Curriculum Development. In honor of his service to Las Vegas' youth and families, Bernal has been recognized as Clark County Employee of the Month, has received the Community Spirit Award from Channel 8 News and was featured in the inaugural edition of the publication, *Las Vegas Latino Leaders*.



## **ADAM BLACKMORE, CPRP**

Adam Blackmore, CPRP, is the Recreation Superintendent with the City of Henderson Department of Public Works, Parks & Recreation in Henderson, Nevada. In this role he oversees all Recreation Division operations including aquatic operations of 10 facilities, outdoor recreation, city special events, youth and adult programming, senior services and recreation center operations for 8 centers. The position manages more than 60 full-time employees and 500-1,000 part-time staff depending on the season. He also serves as the Past-President of the Nevada Recreation and Park Society and sits on the Southern Nevada Children's Drowning Prevention Coalition Board of Directors. Blackmore has been in the recreation industry for 12 years working in both the public and private sectors, respectively. He has held certifications as a lifeguard-training instructor, CPR & First Aid instructor and AFO. Current certifications include National Recreation & Park Association Certified Parks & Recreation Executive and National Swimming Pool Foundation Certified Pool Operator. Previously, he held the positions of Director of Water Resort Operations with CoCo Key Water Resorts and Assistant Aquatics Manager for Plainfield, Indiana Parks and Recreation. Blackmore received his master of arts degree in sports management from Indiana State University and holds a bachelor of science degree in recreation administration from Missouri Western State University. He has presented at multiple World Waterpark Association symposiums, the National Recreation & Park Association congress, the Association of Aquatics Professionals conference and the Nevada Recreation and Park Society annual conference.



## **CONNIE BLOWE**

Connie Blowe has been a Cast Member with the Walt Disney World Company for more than 30 years. After graduating from the University of Florida, she began her Walt Disney World career as a Sales Hostess in the Magic Kingdom. Since then, she has held various roles throughout WDW Parks, Resorts and Downtown Disney specializing in retail management. She is currently the Proprietor of Food & Beverage and Merchandise at Disney's Typhoon Lagoon Water Park.



## **NICHOLE BOHNER**

Nichole Bohner is Aquatics Program Manager for the City of Round Rock Parks and Recreation Department. Her current position has allowed a melding of her skillsets in both the aquatics and marketing fields. She currently oversees the newly remodeled Rock'N River Water Park, while also leading creative direction for the division's branding. She holds a bachelor of fine arts degree in graphic design from Bowling Green State University. As a freelance designer, she has worked on marketing accounts for multiple national corporate brands. After years working in the marketing field, Bohner was pulled back into aquatics where she holds her roots. In her aquatics life, Bohner's skills were honed while programming and supervising the pools, beaches and learn-to-swim programs for the cities of Bowling Green, Ohio, Incline Village, Nev., the

Tahoe Donner Association in Truckee, Calif., and most recently, with the City of Austin, Texas at Barton Springs Pool, a beloved and highly visited city landmark. She has served multiple pool and beachfront operations throughout the nation and holds a great passion for all things water and water safety related.



### **BOB BRADLEY**

Bob Bradley is the owner of Aquatic Consulting & Educational Services (ACES), based in Raleigh, N.C. With more than three decades of experience as advisor on aquatic facility operation, recreation risk management and safety training, Bradley was instrumental in the development of what is now the National

Recreation & Park Association's Aquatic Facility Operator certification program. Bradley was the founding president, treasurer and served for more than a decade as a board member of the Drowning Prevention Coalition of Central Arizona. Bradley was also the founding officer and board member of the National Drowning Prevention Alliance and the founding president of the NRPA's National Aquatic Branch and was the chairman of the national board of directors for the Aquatic Facility Operator program. He has worked with resident camps, YMCAs, municipalities, universities, public and private aquatic leisure facilities and resorts. Bradley was the executive director of the Arizona chapter and the southwestern region of the Association of Pool & Spa Professionals (formerly the National Spa & Pool Association), where he conducted the certified pool and spa technician training program. He is also a member of Total Aquatic Management's aquatic consulting team. Bradley has written numerous professional articles and contributed to training manuals on lifeguarding, water safety and aquatic operation. Bradley holds degrees in liberal arts and recreation administration. He has been one of the most active water safety awareness advocates in the country, reaching hundreds of thousands of adults and children through public and private programs.



### **JOSEPH L. BROWNLEE, ESQUIRE**

Joseph L. Brownlee, a veteran Arizona courtroom attorney since 1972, is Of Counsel at Moyes Sellers & Hendricks, Ltd. in Phoenix, Arizona. As Past-President of the International Amusement and Leisure Defense Association's (IALDA) Board of Directors from 2003-2005 and Board Member since 1995, his law

practice is dedicated to the representation of waterparks, amusement parks, carnivals, fairs, family entertainment centers, batting cages, go-kart tracks, roller skating rinks and other amusement and leisure attractions throughout Arizona. Brownlee has been a national public speaker and faculty member at World Waterpark Association (WWA), International Association of Amusement Park and Attractions (IAAPA), Amusement Industry Manufacturers & Suppliers International (AIMS), Fun Expo of the International Association for the Leisure & Entertainment Industry (IALEI), Bowling Proprietors Association of America (BPAA) and Roller Skating Association (RSA). As such, he is a frequent lecturer in the amusement industry areas of risk management, safety, maintenance, operations and legal defense, and has tried numerous jury trials in Arizona state and federal trial and appellate courts. Brownlee graduated from the Indiana University School of Law in Bloomington, Indiana and was admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court in 1980. In Arizona, he is general legal counsel for the Arizona Showmen's Association.

# SPEAKERS



## CODY BUTCHER

Cody Butcher has been operating and maintaining indoor aquatics facilities for private and public organizations for nearly 20 years. During his career, his focus evolved from the operations of a single facility to providing corporate leadership for the entire family of Great Wolf Resort waterparks spread across North

America. Butcher joined the Neuman Group in January 2018 bringing with him a vast knowledge of waterpark facilities from an operational perspective. He understands the importance of providing a safe and entertaining environment that exceeds guests' expectations while also addressing the challenges of efficiency and profitability in the corporate world. Butcher is retired from more than 21 years of service in the United States Army and Army National Guard where he served in the maintenance field. His ability to take complex and detailed information and transfer his knowledge to others is a reason he is Certified Pool/Spa Operator Instructor. He welcomes the opportunity to learn and then convey that knowledge to others and is a frequent presenter at WWA conferences.



## SCOTT CAROTHERS

Scott Carothers has worked at Wild Island Family Adventure Park, located at the base of Lake Tahoe and the Sierras in Sparks, Nevada, for the past 30 years. He has held many different positions at the park and is currently the General Manager. Carothers has been actively involved in the industry serving on the IAAPA waterpark

committee, co-director and faculty of IASS and has spoken at WWA and many other conventions and seminars in the past. He holds a bachelor of arts degree in business communications from the University of Nevada, Reno and is married to Amy (Zurk) Carothers. Together they have a beautiful 14-year-old daughter named Tyler, 3 dogs, 3 chickens, 1 turtle and a 16 hand quarter horse named Tucker. Carothers enjoys competitive cycling and triathlons and has completed 4 full Ironman triathlons including the Ironman Long Course World Championships in Kona, Hawaii.



## JULIE CATONA

Julie Catona, Social Media & Digital Strategist for 3i Advertising/PR, has developed successful social media campaigns that have won awards on behalf of clients. More importantly, these campaigns have grown each client's social media fans and followers as well as built upon their opt-in databases and helped increase

their revenues. Catona has more than 8 years of digital media marketing experience and enjoys the excitement of the ever-changing social media and digital platforms. She also likes keeping clients in the forefront of the latest marketing developments. In her spare time, Catona enjoys spending time with her pets, doing Bikram Yoga, going to the beach, experimenting in stop-motion animation, painting & sculpting.



## JOHN CHILD

John Child has more than 40 years experience in the attractions industry, 30 years of which have taken place in the waterpark sector working in all positions from lifeguard to his present position as Managing Director at Sandcastle Waterpark. He has been a major part of the driving force behind the evolution of Sandcastle

Waterpark from a leisure pool to its current status as the UK's largest indoor waterpark. In addition to the introduction of many new attractions at the waterpark, it has also been Child's vision to ensure the highest levels of guest service and Inclusion for All, including becoming a fully accessible venue that is at the vanguard of the tourism industry worldwide. To achieve this,

Child and his team have developed close relationships with local charities and community groups, the success of which has driven a 300 percent plus increase in visits from guests with disabilities and additional needs in the last 5 years alone. Child believes all organizations can become even more inclusive with their offering to their customers, helped by the employment of a diverse and well trained workforce, with disabled employees as an integral part of the workforce.



### **LOUIS CIRIGLIANO, JR.**

In 2005, Lou Cirigliano, Jr. took over the operations of Breakwater Beach Waterpark. In 2009, Breakwater Beach was the recipient of the WWA's Kelly Ogle Memorial Safety Award. In 2010, 2011 and 2012, Breakwater Beach was chosen as one of the best family attractions in Ocean County, New Jersey by readers of the *Asbury Park Press*. Breakwater Beach was also voted favorite family attraction in 2011 by readers of NJ.com in an online poll. Cirigliano proudly served on the WWA Board of Directors from 2011 until 2013 and was the treasurer from 2012-2013. He was promoted to Director of Operations of Casino Pier and Breakwater Beach on October 1, 2012 and was quickly put to the test after tragedy struck due to Superstorm Sandy. Cirigliano resigned from the board to concentrate on the recovery efforts as Casino Pier was the "face of the storm" on the Eastern seaboard. Their roller-coaster, "The Jet Star," fell into the Atlantic Ocean with 5 other major rides, with most of their pier and boardwalk damaged beyond repair. In 2014, 2015 and 2016, his properties (Casino Pier and Breakwater Beach) won favorite outdoor amusement in Ocean County from the readers of the *Asbury Park Press*. Cirigliano has been an instructor on the WWA University: Ready, Set, Go! A Guide to Getting Started Workshop panel for several years, sharing his waterpark experiences and inspiring new waterpark operators. No stranger to public speaking, he has participated in many WWA educational programs as a presenter as well, and is a member of the WWA Government Relations Committee. Cirigliano was honored with an Executive Board Award from WWA in 2016. Cirigliano is a proud graduate of Rutgers's University in 1986, and currently lives in Middletown, New Jersey with his daughters Taylor & Allie.



### **JAMIE COLUCCI**

Jamie Colucci is a man of many talents and interests spanning from a degree in architecture, a commercial drone license and rotorcraft pilot, expert mechanic, Nascar Truck Series owner, photographer, web designer and pool operator. He has more than three decades in commercial photography, cinematography and most importantly, real life, in-the-trenches business experience. Colucci brought all of those talents to the City of Summit, New Jersey first as a volunteer and then as the Presiding Officer of the Department of Community Programs Advisory Board. He fell in love with aquatics with his volunteer photography work at Summit's award winning facility. When a position as Project Manager became available with the Department of Community Programs, he brought all of this life experience to this full time position. As Project Manager, Colucci's role has expanded to include the management of the Summit Family Aquatic Center, construction projects for parks and recreation and all things communications. Colucci has a secret life as a six foot land shark known as Shark Diddy who has become an internationally known celebrity among waterpark mascots. Somewhat new to WWA, Colucci has already produced two How to Videos for WWA on drone photography. Colucci brings all this experience to his first presentation at the World Waterpark Association with "Picture This - From Cell Phones to Drones."



# SPEAKERS

## GONZALO H. CORDOVA

Gonzalo H. Cordova graduated with a B.S. in criminal justice from the University of Texas at El Paso in 1979. He also holds an M.A. in organizational management from the University of Phoenix. He initiated his law enforcement in 1981 with the Ruidoso, New Mexico Police Department. There he performed the duties of patrolman, investigator and instructor. Cordova was also commander of the Lincoln County Narcotics Task Force. In 1994, Cordova was appointed as Commander of the Border Operations Task Force. There he was responsible for the organization of a multi-jurisdictional narcotics task force that included participation from federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and was responsible for conducting long term narcotics investigations and interdiction operations in the extreme southwestern border area of New Mexico. Cordova holds basic, intermediate, advanced, command and executive law enforcement certifications from the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy. In 2005, Cordova was appointed as Protective Security Advisor for the Las Vegas, Nevada District. He is part of a cadre of 68 protective security advisors employed by the United States Department of Homeland Security's National Protection and Programs Directorate—Office of Infrastructure Protection—Protective Security Coordination Division. One of his primary responsibilities is to provide assistance and support to state and local government agencies and the private sector in their critical infrastructure protection efforts.



## JOANN CORTÉZ

Joann Cortéz is the Communications Director and spokesperson for Hyland Hills Water World in Federal Heights, Colorado, where she has worked since 1998. The park represents the nation's largest publically owned waterpark and is the largest revenue generator in the repertoire of facilities owned and operated by Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District. As a special district, Hyland Hills also owns and operates dozens of parks and ball fields, community centers, an indoor sports arena, golf courses, a miniature golf venue, a gymnastics center and an ice arena that are owned in partnership with an adjacent city. Cortéz currently serves on WWA's Marketing & Communications Committee, for which she was Chair for two years.



## NICHOLAS CUEVAS

Nick Cuevas has worked in the aquatic's industry for the past 15 years. He has worked both in private and public aquatic operations during his career and has called the City of Newark home for the past five years as an Aquatic Coordinator overseeing operations at the Silliman Activity & Family Aquatic Center. Additionally, Cuevas has been involved in the local community by spending the past six years in a board level position for the Bay Area Public Pool Operators Association where he just finished his term as President. He has a degree in business administration with an emphasis in social media marketing and technology. Cuevas is also a certified American Red Cross Instructor Trainer in Lifeguarding and Water Safety and has a passion for travel and family.



## ROGER CURRIE

Roger Currie has more than 40 years' experience in the aquatic leisure industry. Currently, he fronts Water Technology's projects in Europe and Euro Asia, also supporting the specialist design build projects delivered by Neuman Aqua Ltd., focusing on new-build developments and the rapidly growing expansion/retrofit sector. He served a 20-year career with Biwater Ltd, gaining experience in construction, operations and manufacturing within the worldwide water leisure industry before leaving to set up the aquatic leisure consultancy



company, Royson Ltd in 1996. In 2005, he established his role with Aqua Leisure International, combining it with the formation of Neuman Aqua Ltd. in 2011. He is a regular speaker at international conventions and at previous WWA Symposia, a writer of industry articles and has sat on a number of Industry standards advisory boards. Currie served on the World Waterpark Association's Board of Directors from 2004-10, and was inducted into the WWA Hall of Fame in 2016. He is a member of the Institute of Swimming Pool Engineers and the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity.



### **STEPHANIE DARIMONT**

Stephanie Darimont is currently the Aquatic Specialist for the American Red Cross for South and Central Texas as well as an Instructor Trainer for Lifeguarding and Water Safety. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of North Texas in recreation and leisure studies program management. She has worked in various aquatic supervisory and programming roles in Frisco, Plano, McKinney and, most recently, Georgetown, Texas. While in Georgetown, the city was recognized for multiple awards at lifeguard competitions, TRAPS Regional Programming award, Texas Public Pool Council Agency of the Year Award and the *Aquatics International* - Best of Aquatics 2014 for training. Darimont is currently the President of the Texas Public Pool Council. She has spoken at the Central Texas Lifeguard Management Academy, as well as for various organizations including: Regional TRAPS, NIRSA Regional, NIRSA Triventure, NIRSA, Texas Public Pool Council and the Association of Aquatic Professionals.



### **DESI DEAN**

Desi Dean is the Group Sales Manager for Cowabunga Bay Water Park in Las Vegas, Nevada. In her current position, she is responsible for booking and facilitating group events, private events, special events and promotions and corporate discount programs. Dean graduated from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas with degree in hospitality management. She has worked in various facets of the hospitality and tourism industry including hotels, weddings, food and beverage and attractions. Dean began working for Cowabunga Bay in their inaugural season and has held various positions leading up to her role as Group Sales Manager.



### **GEORGE DEINES**

George Deines is a Studio Director for Counsilman-Hunsaker, specializing in aquatic facility feasibility studies. He holds degrees from the University of North Texas and Dallas Theological Seminary. He is Chair of the World Waterpark Association's Safety Committee, a past recipient of the Kelly Ogle Memorial Safety Award and former president of the North Texas Aquatics Association.



### **MARK DUKES**

Mark Dukes joined The Walt Disney Company in 1996 as the General Manager of merchandise for Disney's Hollywood Studios (formerly Disney-MGM Studios) at Walt Disney World® Resort. For the next 12 years, he served as General Manager of merchandise at several locations including Magic Kingdom® Park, Disney Cruise Line®, Walt Disney World® Resort Hotels and Disney Springs® (formerly Downtown Disney). In 2008, Dukes moved to ESPN Wide World of Sports (formerly Disney's Wide World of Sports) as the General Manager. In this role, he had oversight for all operations at the sports complex,

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as well as running Disney and Walt Disney World® Golf operations. After several years with ESPN Wide World of Sports, Dukes returned to Disney Springs, becoming the Director of Business Relations in 2014. During his time as Director, he was the communications and operations liaison for all existing and future third-party tenants as the property went through its largest expansion in history. In late 2015, Dukes transitioned to his current position, General Manager of Disney's Water Parks and Disney's Miniature Golf. This role includes responsibilities for Disney's Typhoon Lagoon Water Park, Disney's Blizzard Beach Water Park, Disney's Winter Summerland Miniature Golf and Disney's Fantasia Gardens Miniature Golf, as well as Mickey's Retreat, the Cast Member-exclusive recreation area located a few miles from Walt Disney World® Resort. Prior to joining The Walt Disney Company, Dukes worked for Foot Locker, Inc., for 15 years. He started as a store manager and progressed to the position of Southeast Regional Vice President, where he was responsible for 200 stores, producing \$250 million in sales. Dukes currently serves on the board of directors for Experience Kissimmee and Boys & Girls Club of Central Florida.



## **JAMES F. DUNN**

When Jim Dunn started out working in the family business building pools in high school, one wonders if he ever envisioned himself, 25 years later, as being one of the aquatic industry's leading designers and builders. His passion and enthusiasm for creating innovative products and solutions to enhance his client's business

has resulted in a breakthrough in-depth approach that Dunn and the ADG team apply to all aspects of project management and development. A registered architect with more than 25 years' experience specializing in aquatics, Dunn oversees all design projects at ADG and his portfolio includes many of the most prestigious waterparks in the country. His work has received numerous awards over the years including an *Aquatics International's* Dream Designs award, a WWA Executive Board Award and special recognitions from IAAPA and ARDA. In 2011, Dunn was named to *Aquatics International's* "Power 25," a prestigious list of industry influencers working to establish a standard Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC).



## **CHRIS DUXBURY**

Chris Duxbury is the Group Sales Coordinator at NRH<sub>2</sub>O Family Water Park. In his role, he oversees all group operations including groups, birthdays, park exclusive rentals, discounted ticket programs and reserved seating. He started working at NRH<sub>2</sub>O when he was 16 as a group sales team member. Through his years of

waterpark experience, he earned a partial Emerging Leaders scholarship award from the WWA in 2016.



## **CHANDRA EDWARDS-COTTINGHAM**

Chandra Edwards-Cottingham is the General Manager and President of Wet 'N' Wild Waterworld in Anthony, Texas. Her father, Berry Edwards, started Wet 'N' Wild Waterworld in 1979, and Edwards-Cottingham soon began working in the business. After several years hiatus, during which she obtained her B.A. from Bryn

Mawr College, lived and worked in Switzerland and traveled extensively in India, she returned to Wet 'N' Wild Waterworld in 1995. She has been the General Manager since 1999. Her experience in the industry has focused on revenue, operations, public relations, safety and liability defense. Edwards-Cottingham has been an active member of the World Waterpark Association since 1998. In 2011, she began Wet 'N' Wild Waterworld's involvement with the Drowning Prevention Coalition of El Paso, and hosted the the World's Largest Swimming Lesson, now an annual event at the park. For the past six

years, Wet 'N' Wild Waterworld has hosted the Christian Castle Lifeguard Olympics, a city-wide competition that showcases lifeguarding skills and water safety. In 2016, the park won the Community Outreach Award from *Aquatics International* for its work in water safety, education and local food bank initiatives. In 2018, Edwards-Cottingham was honored by the El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce with their Paradigm Award for a local business woman of distinction. During the "off"-season, she enjoys the extra free time with her husband & daughter and is pursuing an MFA in creative writing at UT-El Paso.



### **PETER A. FINGERHUT**

Peter A. Fingerhut is Vice President of Marketing and Sales for Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, Zoombezi Bay, Safari Golf Club and the Wilds. Fingerhut's passion for business management and marketing has guided his 35 year career. In the thirteen years that he has been with the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, the zoo's attendance has grown more than 40 percent and memberships have grown more than 50 percent. In 2009, the zoo was rated the #1 zoo in the nation by *USA Travel Guide*. Fingerhut has completely redesigned the website, restructured the Group Sales Department and completely restructured the advertising department, including bringing on a world class advertising agency. While doing all this, he has increased sponsorships by more than 20 percent and cut expenses with memberships by more than 20 percent. Prior to his time at the zoo, Fingerhut worked for the Six Flags Corporation where he spent more than 20 years growing from a seasonal coordinator of promotions to General Manager. Outside of his work, Fingerhut currently serves on the board of directors for the Dublin Convention and Visitor's Department. He is an active member of AZA and a member of the American Marketing Association, in which he was voted the "Marketer of the Year" in 2008. Fingerhut serves as the Vice Chair for WWA's Marketing & Communications Committee. Fingerhut attended the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri and received his bachelor's of science degree in recreation and park management. He is married with three children and enjoys a good round of golf.



### **YVONNE FISCHBACH**

Yvonne Fischbach serves as the Executive Director of the Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District, which serves approximately 120,000 residents in the southwest corner of Adams County. She has held the position of the Executive Director since 2013 but has been employed by the district since 1986 including roles as accountant, Finance Director and Deputy Director. In her capacity as Executive Director, she oversees the entire district operation, which includes its four main enterprise facilities: Water World, the Greg Mastriona Golf Courses at Hyland Hills, Adventure Golf and Raceway and the Ice Centre at the Promenade. In addition, the district operates other recreational facilities and programs including swimming pools, tennis courts, community centers, an indoor soccer center, a skate park, parks, sports complexes and more than 400 acres of parks and open space. Fischbach serves on the boards of the Colorado Special District's Property and Liability Pool and the Westminster Rotary Club. She is also a member of the National Recreation and Park Association, the Special District Association of Colorado, the Colorado Park and Recreation Association, the Government Finance Officers Association, the World Waterpark Association and the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions. Fischbach holds a bachelor of science degree in accounting from Metropolitan State University in Denver.

# SPEAKERS



## PAUL FOLTZ

Paul Foltz is an Aquatics Supervisor with the City of Henderson Department of Public Works, Parks & Recreation in Henderson, Nevada. In this role, he oversees operations of 10 aquatic facilities including programming, special events, training, recruitment, facility maintenance and budgets. The position manages 3 full-time employees and between 150-300 part-time staff depending on the season. He also served as a Member at Large on the Nevada Recreation and Park Society and is currently serving on the Public Sector Committee for the World Waterpark Association. Foltz has been in the recreation industry for 9 years and holds certifications as a lifeguard-training instructor, CPR & First Aid instructor and CPO. Foltz received his bachelor's degree in public administration from the University of Nevada Las Vegas and is currently pursuing a master's of public administration degree from the University of Southern California.



## BLAKE FORD

Blake Ford is the Director of Aquatics for Great Wolf Lodge New England. Prior to joining Great Wolf, Ford was the Waterpark General Manager for the Water Park of America in Bloomington, Minnesota. Previously, Ford was the Director of Aquatics and Safety Coordinator for Blue Harbor Resort in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. He worked there since the property changed ownership in 2011. He has been in aquatics since 2005 and has worked around the country. He is an Ellis & Associates Instructor and previously held instructor certification through American Red Cross. He is the Chair of WWA's Waterpark Resort Committee. He enjoys playing most sports and never misses a chance to play volleyball. If he has a chance to relax, you can find him on the couch watching a movie.



## MIKE FOWLER

Mike Fowler is the Commercial Marketing and Sales Manager for Pentair Aquatic Systems in Sanford, North Carolina. He has been with Pentair since 1992, starting his career in the technical services department at Purex Pool Products. Fowler has held many managerial roles within the company, including marketing, accounting and products.



## LINDY FRYE

Lindy Frye, a California native, has a degree in marketing and more than 10 years of entertainment and tourism experience working for well-known brands including Blue Man Group, Chippendales and Caesars Entertainment. Since 2014, she has been the Marketing Manager for Wet'n'Wild Las Vegas with an attendance in excess of 275,000 visitors per year. She is responsible for the management of all marketing and public relations efforts with a focus on maximizing ticket sales as well as promotions, partnerships and meeting with community partners to plan great awareness activities. Frye has implemented many innovative park events such as Grad Nite, High School Neon Night, Family Foam Parties, Saturday DJ Sessions and Children's Story Time, which are just a few examples of how she ensures guests of all ages are welcome at the waterpark. Frye's coined slogan, "Making Positive Waves," is a continuous theme at the park, and encourages staff members and guests alike to make a positive impact daily by being kind. Outside of the office, Frye enjoys spending time with her husband and two sons, as well as with her girlfriends playing bingo, and can often be found behind the mic at karaoke nights around the valley.



### **GAYLEE W. GILLIM, ESQUIRE**

Gaylee W. Gillim is general counsel and an owner of Kentucky Kingdom, LLLP, which reopened Kentucky Kingdom and Hurricane Bay in 2014. Gillim was also general counsel and an owner of Kentucky Kingdom - The Thrill Park from 1990 until its sale to Premier Parks Inc in 1997. Prior to her involvement with Kentucky

Kingdom, LLLP, Gillim was general counsel and an owner of Magic Springs Development Co., L.L.C., which opened Magic Springs & Crystal Falls in Hot Springs, Arkansas in 2000. After eight seasons, Magic Springs was sold to PARC Management in July 2008. Gillim graduated from Duke University in 1975 (B.A. summa cum laude) and earned a J.D. from St. John's University in 1978. She is admitted to practice in both New York and Kentucky. Gillim has been a member of International Amusement and Leisure Defense Association's (IALDA) Board of Directors since 1995 and currently serves as Secretary of the organization. Gillim served two terms on the WWA's Board of Directors.



### **MIKE GRABOWSKI**

Mike Grabowski is a Chicago native with 21 years of construction experience in masonry, carpentry, electric, plumbing and landscaping. In addition to being a contractor, Grabowski has worked in the steel industry for 13 years, the plastics industry for 12 years and the chemical field for 10 years. He is highly certified

in all of these fields, and has most recently been working in the Research and Development Department for Weld-On, focusing on bonding agents for irrigation and green products both in the U.S. and Europe. His favorite expression is, "experience is the best education," and he has lived his life accordingly. In addition to his active professional career, Grabowski has been a public speaker for many forums in many venues, including performing a training on "The Water Zone" which broadcasts live on NBC's affiliate stations 1050 AM, 102.3 FM & 106.5 FM along with live video at both UStream and [www.kcaaradio.com](http://www.kcaaradio.com). Grabowski trains well over 1,000 people a year at private companies, aquariums, zoos and large public venues. He teaches others in the industry to become qualified solvent cement bonders of PVC/CPVC pipe and fitting according to the ASME B31.3 and ATSM D-2855 standards.



### **KEN HANDLER**

Ken Handler has created his company, Global Management Amusement Professionals (GMAP), from the ground floor. He has been consulting for more than a decade working with his clients to drive millions of dollars to their bottom line. He has developed, opened and consulted with close to

100 resorts throughout the United States and internationally. Handler has operated and managed many of California's finest waterparks and theme parks for more than 25 years. As a nationally recognized revenue consultant, he continues to mentor and provide assistance to a number of well-known facilities. Handler received notable acknowledgments from the World Waterpark Association, including being instrumental in earning his park numerous Wave Review marketing awards for commercials, radio ads, print media and promotional events. Handler continues to be a highly sought after professional in the aquatics and waterpark industry. In addition to receiving national recognition for his marketing efforts and success as an operator and general manager, his park was the first ever winner of the National Title of the Ellis & Associates Lifeguard Competition. Throughout the years, Handler has provided enjoyable experiences for millions of guests at many locations. Creating an enjoyable experience for guests and efficient and cost effective operating procedures is one of his

# SPEAKERS

specialties. His experience, creativity and strong work ethic have been the foundation for providing successful consulting and management for municipalities and industry leading entertainment locations.



## SASHA HARTLOFF

Sasha Hartloff began working in the action sports industry in 1996, following graduation from UC Santa Barbara with a B.A. in law and society. After getting her start as a Sales Coordinator at Quiksilver and finding a passion for sales, Hartloff has had the opportunity to work in various sales management positions over

the past 20+ years, including National Sales Manager for Swim and Active at O'Neill, Key Account Manager for the Women's Division at Hurley and Regional Sales Manager of Women's Apparel at Fox Racing. Hartloff returned to the Quiksilver family in 2017 and is currently the Director of Specialty Sales for Roxy, managing 15 territory reps and overseeing sales for the core distribution channel. Outside of the office, Hartloff is a career mentor at Newport Harbor High School in Newport Beach, Calif. She enjoys spending time with her husband and four-year-old twin boys and can often be found at the pool or the beach.



## JEFF HAVLIK

Jeff Havlik is a Vice President at PGAV Destinations, an international design firm that specializes in waterparks and theme parks, zoos and aquaria, cultural destinations, hotels and resorts and brand destinations. Havlik specializes in the master planning of parks and attractions, creative writing and storytelling that sets the basis for

thematic design and guest experience, and the analytical side of design that ensures capacity and operational efficiency. This balance of being creative, logical, fanciful and analytical has led him to be "the tether to reality for the cacophony of creative people at PGAV, providing a foundation and framework of analysis, programming and planning that they use to build magical places." Havlik is a registered architect and has been at PGAV for 33 years.



## STEPHANIE HEE-JOHNSTON

Stephanie Hee-Johnston started working for NRH<sub>2</sub>O Family Water Park at the age of 19 as the Marketing Intern. She began her full time career at NRH<sub>2</sub>O as the Group Sales Representative. In 2009, she was promoted to the Marketing Specialist and is now the Marketing & Admissions Coordinator where she oversees the

sale of tickets and passes, special events and social media. Hee-Johnston also serves as the Chair for the Marketing & Communications Committee for the World Waterpark Association. Prior to joining NRH<sub>2</sub>O Family Water Park full time, Hee-Johnston worked in Group Sales at SEGA GameWorks in Grapevine, Texas. She has a bachelor's of business administration degree in marketing from the University of Texas at Austin.



## MICHAEL HOLTZMAN

Michael Holtzman received his B.S. in restaurant management from California Polytechnic University in Pomona, California, and now has more than 37 years of restaurant industry experience. Holtzman is President of Profitable Food Facilities, a company specializing in captive market restaurant locations including hotels,

golf resorts, private clubs, theme parks, ski resorts, aquatic centers, wellness centers and day spas. His focus has been on improving the sales, quality and profitability of food service operations. Holtzman is a hands-on operator with experience in all aspects of food service. Because of his vast experience in the industry, Holtzman can produce a custom kitchen design that provides

optimal efficiency for any type of facility. Additionally, PFF provides consulting services to assess the profitability in all areas of food and beverage operations, provides recommendations and assists in the implementation of the new plan. With overwhelmingly successful results, Holtzman has worked with more than 450 facilities in 48 states, Canada, England, Asia and the Middle East. In addition to running PFF, Holtzman is an accomplished and very popular guest speaker. Over the past 25 years, he has been asked to speak at more than 265 regional and national conferences including the PGA of America (PGA), The Club Managers Association (CMAA), the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA), the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA), the World Waterpark Association (WWA), the Athletic Business Conference, the International Health Racquet & Sports Association (IHRSA), the Canadian Society of Club Managers (CSCM), the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), California Parks Recreational Society (CPRS), the Asian Golf Conference (APGS) and the National Indian Gaming Association.



### **LEE HOVIS**

Lee Hovis is the Director of Recreation and Operation for the Tolomato Community Development District. He is responsible for the operation of all Nocatee amenities and programs including a civic center, fitness center, waterpark, competitive Swim Club, multiple pools and parks as well as the community's

cable television station and informational radio station. He has served as a member of the WWA's Board of Directors and served as the Chair from 2002-2005. Hovis has been working in the waterpark industry since 1984 and serves on the WWA's Safety Committee and teaches the National Swimming Pool Foundation's Certified Pool Operator Courses for the association. He serves on the APSP-9 committee for waterpark safety standards, works with the International Code Council on Swimming Pool codes and is an Instructor Trainer for the American Red Cross. Prior to joining the district, Hovis has held top management positions with Adventure Landing, Roaring Springs Waterpark, Water Country USA, Emerald Pointe Waterpark and Summer Waves Waterpark. WWA inducted Hovis into the Hall of Fame in 2011. When not working on waterpark issues, Hovis enjoys watching football and spending time with his family.



### **JEFFREY W. JOHNSON, ESQUIRE**

Jeffrey W. Johnson is the founder of the Johnson Law Group. Johnson is rated AV by Martindale and has extensive litigation and jury trial experience in the areas of general tort liability and commercial litigation matters. He has been defending wrongful death, personal injury, premises liability and product liability

for the retail and amusement industry since 1987. Johnson is admitted to practice before the Florida Bar. He is the President Elect of the Florida Defense Lawyers Association (FDLA), a member of the Defense Research Institute (DRI), Council for Litigation Management (CLM) and a member of the Board of Directors of the International Amusement & Leisure Defense Association (IALDA). He has spoken at meetings and conferences throughout the United States. He received his bachelor's of arts degree from Tulane University and his Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Miami School of Law. He is admitted to practice in all trial and appellate courts in the State of Florida, as well as the U.S. District Court (Southern and Middle Districts of Florida).



# SPEAKERS



## CJ JORDAN

CJ Jordan has been working within the cultural attractions space for the past 5 years. Prior to coming to Morey Consulting, he partnered with organizations to help establish effective digital marketing solutions and create ways for organizations to better engage with their audiences. As Director of Sales and Marketing with Morey Consulting, he now works with attractions to identify key areas where they can become more efficient and effective to increase their overall revenue and market capture. He received his degree in insurance finance from the University of Alabama. He is based out of Birmingham, Alabama.



## ROBERT KAPPEL

Bob Kappel is the Aquatics and Life Support System Regional Sales Manager for Central and Western U.S. for ProMinent Fluid Controls. His background consists of 24 years' experience in the design, manufacture, installation and service of commercial and industrial water treatment, filtration and disinfection systems including ozone, chlorine dioxide, chlorine, ultraviolet, analyzers and controllers, RO, UF, anion and cation exchange, variable frequency drives and controls. His record of accomplishment includes 20+ years of facilities, sales and department management, product development, product launches and market development. Kappel is an author of numerous articles featured in national trade magazines and many presentations across the U.S. at national, regional and local conferences. His extensive background includes tenure with Siemens Water Technologies, Hanksraft H2O Products and Engineered Treatment Systems. Other activities include serving as a member of the WQA Regional and State Regulatory Affairs committee, past co-chair of the Wisconsin HFS 172 code revision committee, AFO instructor-trainer and Executive Board Chairperson for the PPOA.



## DUSTIN KAUFFMAN

Dustin Kauffman is the Aquatics Sales Manager of ProMinent Fluid Controls. For more than 50 years, ProMinent has been the global leader in the design and manufacturing of dosing pumps, chemical controllers, ultraviolet systems, ozone systems, chlorine generators and chlorine dioxide generators. Kauffman has been directly involved in the commercial aquatics industry for 6+ years. Kauffman has been with ProMinent for 7+ years and has had extensive exposure to metering pump systems, including controllers, used in drinker water and waste water applications. He has been published in the WWA magazine and looks to contribute further to all aquatics oriented publications. Kauffman is a certified NSPF Instructor. He has spoken at multiple national conferences including the Association of Aquatic Professionals show, the World Aquatic Health Conference, and the World Waterpark Association show.



## JIM KUNAU

Jim Kunau is a 20+ year veteran of the theme and waterpark industry. Currently, he is the Senior Manager of Guest Experiences for Port Royal Ocean Resort in Port Aransas, Texas. This resort sustained considerable damage during Hurricane Harvey and is still undergoing repairs at this time. Prior to his position at Port Royal Ocean Resort, Kunau was the General Manager for Schlitterbahn Riverpark Corpus Christi. Before joining Schlitterbahn, he was the General Manager at Hurricane Alley Waterpark in Corpus Christi, Texas. Kunau also spent time working for Six Flags. During his tenure with Six Flags, he worked in various

park-level management positions including Water Park and Marketing Director. He completed his Six Flags career as Corporate Director of Entertainment and Marketing.



### **BOB LANDIS**

Bob Landis is the Vice President and Co-Founder of BoMar Soft Playgrounds, International. For nearly 20 years, BoMar has been designing and fabricating soft play characters for public areas including waterparks, malls, airports, zoos and science centers.

Landis has been an integral part of the management of fabrication and has prepared maintenance manuals and submittals for all BoMar Soft foam products. In addition to fabrication, BoMar completes repairs for waterparks all over the world. Prior to launching BoMar, Landis worked in the Scenic Arts department of SeaWorld of Florida for 14 years. His department was part of the entertainment department that built and maintained show props used in all shows. He started as an artist before being promoted to Manager of the department and was then responsible for 10-20 employees. He prepared maintenance manuals and checklists for each show, managed the removal of all old shows and installation of new shows. He also worked on theming projects within other areas of the park. Landis believes that maintaining your products will give it longer life and cost less money in the long run.



### **CATHY LAWSON**

Cathy Lawson got her start in municipal aquatic programs and served in various roles including lifeguard, swim instructor, water safety instructor trainer and pool manager. Lawson moved to waterparks in 2009 as Operations Manager for Wet'n'Wild Phoenix, and has served as the Director of Operations for both

Wet 'n' Wild Phoenix and Las Vegas. She is currently the General Manager at Wet'n'Wild Las Vegas. She is also an Instructor Trainer for Jeff Ellis & Associates and has served on faculty for their International Aquatics Safety School. Lawson graduated from Northern Arizona University with a B.S. in English education and taught high school English for fifteen years.



### **JUDITH LEBLEIN JOSEPHS, CPRA, RA**

Judith Leblein Josephs, CPRA, RA, has been a featured speaker at conferences and training seminars across the United States for many years. After 20 years in the public sector, Leblein Josephs was with the firm of Water Technology, Inc., for 12 years as a Marketing and Operations Consultant. She has served

as an Operations Coach for facilities of all sizes. She is now the President of Judith Leblein Josephs Enterprises LLC, and has clients across the country, including the City of Providence, Rhode Island, Austin, Texas, and all of the aquatic venues for the Salvation Army Eastern Territory. Leblein Josephs always knew that she would someday return to the public sector. She was recruited by the City of Summit, New Jersey, in 2007 to serve as their Director of Community Programs. No stranger to Summit, she had a role on the design team for their renovated community pool, now known as the Summit Family Aquatic Center. She has worked her magic on this 45 year old facility that now boasts that it is "The City's Hottest Place to Cool Off!" Known internationally as a speaker and author, Leblein Joseph's specialty in marketing, promotions, television and radio production has proven quite valuable to all of her clients. Leblein Josephs' novel approach to marketing has won her numerous state, national and international awards. She has repeatedly won the WWA's Best Speaker award, and was inducted into the WWA Hall of Fame in 2003. She has also received WWA's Al Turner Memorial Commitment to Excellence Award and WWA's Executive Board

# SPEAKERS

Award. She served as host for the WWA General Session for numerous years, along with many celebrities including Mickey, Minnie, Goofy and Donald Duck. She has hosted the Ready, Set, Go! Workshop for WWA University for more than 20 years. She has a trophy case filled with Wave Review Award plaques to prove her concepts do work! Leblein Josephs has added author to her resume with the publication of her first book entitled *Aquatic Center Marketing*, published by Human Kinetics Publishing. She had a career both in front of and behind the television camera, and her work was seen throughout her home state of New Jersey over the past 20+ years. She has also had a career on the radio and was a talk jock on Central Jersey 1450 WCTC for more than ten years. She has hosted numerous award and professional events as well. Leblein Josephs has a knack for making learning a memorable and enjoyable event.



## MICKEY LEWIS

Mickey Lewis is currently the Corporate Director of Sales and Marketing for Splash Kingdom Family Waterparks. Splash Kingdom Family Waterparks have experienced tremendous growth to 5 waterparks currently in operation. Lewis has served in a marketing capacity in 4 different industries (beverage, restoration, holiday and waterpark) and uses this broad experience to create a unique marketing approach to the waterpark industry. Potential sponsors are attracted to Splash Kingdom Family Waterparks through a comprehensive marketing plan including in-park radio, social media, texting platform and bundled sales events at sponsor outlet.



## MELISSA LOCKWOOD, CPRE

Melissa Lockwood, CPRE, is the Operations Director at Yas Waterworld Abu Dhabi where she leads a team of more than 180 colleagues in the park's 365 day operation. She moved to Abu Dhabi in 2012 to join the pre-opening team of Yas Waterworld. Since then she's also spent time working at Yas Waterworld's sister park, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, in both Operations & Guest Services. Before relocating to Abu Dhabi, Lockwood held management positions for municipalities in Texas and Missouri in parks and recreation. She began her career as a lifeguard in 1998 and worked in several different roles at aquatic facilities and ice arenas throughout high school and college. She also spent two summers on the road for Ellis & Associates as a National Staff Auditor where she visited more than 100 client facilities throughout the United States. Lockwood is an Ellis & Associates Instructor Trainer, a Certified Parks and Recreation Executive, an IAAPA Certified Attractions Leader, a Certified Pool Operator and a Professional Pool & Spa Operator. She has delivered educational sessions at conferences for the Missouri Park and Recreation Association, the Texas Recreation and Park Society, the Texas Public Pool Council, the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, International Aquatic Safety School - East and the World Waterpark Association, as well as published articles for *Aquatics International*. Lockwood holds a bachelor of science degree in parks, recreation and tourism from the University of Missouri and a master's of science degree in recreation and leisure studies from the University of North Texas.



## STEVE LOOSE

Steve Loose began his career at Hyland Hills as Athletic Supervisor in March 1974. There, his duties included work on the construction crew assembling Colorado's first-ever waterslide during the summer of 1979 at Hyland Hills Water World. In 1980, Loose was named marketing director for Water World, leading all marketing and advertising efforts for the park. In 1984, Loose was promoted to

General Manager, a position he held for more than 32 years. Through the years, Loose served on many WWA panel discussions and interacted with scores of members at WWA symposium sessions. For his many industry contributions, Loose was recognized by WWA with the Al Turner Commitment to Excellence Award in 1996. He joined the WWA Board of Directors in 2012, serving as both Treasurer and Vice Chair during his 4 years on the board. Loose was inducted into the World Waterpark Association Hall of Fame in 2016.



### **LOUIS LOPEZ, ESQUIRE**

Louis Lopez is an experienced trial attorney who has successfully tried numerous jury trials, bench trials and arbitrations. His practice focuses on complex commercial and tort litigation, including business disputes, insurance coverage, insurance bad faith, real property disputes, real estate purchase contracts, title insurance, broker defense, commercial and residential landlord tenant matters, retail lease disputes and other general tort and commercial litigation matters. Lopez has a wide practice in the representation of waterparks, amusement parks, carnivals, fairs, family entertainment centers, roller skating rinks and other amusement and leisure attractions throughout Arizona. He is also a member of International Amusement and Leisure Defense Association.



### **ALAN MAHONY**

Alan Mahony is an Australian who has been instrumental in the development and growth of the waterpark industry in China and throughout Asia. As the General Manager of China's first waterpark back in 1996, Mahony was also involved with the development and management of Chimelong Water Park and the Beijing Watercube Waterpark as well as waterparks in Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and Taiwan before working with potential IP brands introduction into the China market with Pinnacle International. He is now the VP of Aquaventure Waterpark, Atlantis Resort Sanya, Hainan, China. Mahony is a former member of the WWA's Board of Directors.



### **BOB MARTIN**

Bob Martin is the General Manager at Island Waterpark in Fresno, California. He just finished his second season as the General Manager. He guided the park through its 20th Anniversary season in 2018. The 2018 season was the most successful in the park's history. Martin was the General Manager of Wild Water Adventure Park in Clovis, Calif. from 2004 through the end of 2016. During his 13 years at Wild Water Adventure Park, he focused on group sales, revenue and in-park spending. He developed a nationally recognized cabana program that never stopped growing in quantity and revenue. In 2018, Island Waterpark doubled its rental program. Martin spent the first half of his career coaching, scouting and managing professional football & hockey teams, as well as scouting college football for the NFL, CFL and Arena Football Leagues. Martin enjoys spending time with his wife of 35 years, Blanche, and their family, golfing and attending sporting events.



### **JOSHUA MARTINEZ**

Joshua Martinez is the Director of Aquatics for Great Wolf Resort Illinois. Martinez is a waterpark professional who started at Wet'n'Wild Phoenix in 2009, and has worked across the country with startup operations and operation rebuilds. He was involved with startup projects including Wet'n'Wild Phoenix in 2009, and

# SPEAKERS

Camelback Lodge & Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark in 2015. Martinez also served as Director of Aquatics at Wilderness at the Smokies. Martinez is a member of WWA's Government Relations Committee.



## **GREG MASTRIONA**

As Executive Director of Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District, Greg Mastriona was the prime force in creating Hyland Hills Water World in 1979 and he continued to guide the waterpark for more than 30 years. In addition, Mastriona served on the World Waterpark Association's Board of Directors for ten years, with two of those years as its president. He has been recognized with the WWA Leadership and President's Awards, and in 2000, he became one of the first inductees of the WWA's Hall of Fame. In 2012, Mastriona received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the WWA. Mastriona continues to serve as an active WWA member, providing consulting and serving as Chairman of the annual WWA Golf tournament. He has received numerous Colorado awards including, the Colorado Special District Association's Outstanding District Manager Award and Colorado Park and Recreation Association Manager of the Year and Fellow Awards.



## **SASHA MATEER**

Sasha Mateer began her career with Deep River Waterpark and the Lake County Parks Department in 2000 as a lifeguard to work her way through college. After graduating from DePaul University in 2003 with a degree in biology, Mateer was eventually moved into the position of Water Safety Supervisor. While acting as Water Safety Supervisor, Mateer estimates that she has trained hundreds, if not thousands, of lifeguards over the years. In 2007, she was promoted to Operations Manager where she was directly responsible for admissions, guest services and all retail aspects at Deep River Waterpark. After spending 7 seasons as the Operations Manager, Mateer transitioned into the role of General Manager of Deep River Waterpark in February of 2014. Since then, Mateer has been promoted to the Superintendent of Recreation and Special Facilities for the Lake County Parks Department, a position she has held since September 2016. In this role, she has taken on additional duties other than the waterpark that include Bellaboo's Play and Discover Center, a banquet facility and several traditional park sites. Mateer has held certifications as an Ellis & Associates Lifeguard Instructor, American Red Cross Lifeguard Instructor and an Aquatic Facility Operator and Certified Pool Operator. Mateer has spoken on several panels for the World Waterpark Association and was also given the opportunity to speak on a panel for the Indiana Park and Recreation Association. She is currently the Chair of the WWA's Education Committee and has also served as the Vice Chair and Secretary of that committee. Mateer is the recipient of the 2010 Employee of the Year Award from the Lake County Parks and Recreation Department and most recently received the 2013 Executive Board Award from the World Waterpark Association.



## **SHELLY MCCORMICK**

Shelly McCormick is the General Manager of Splash Dayz Waterpark & Conference Center in the City of White Settlement, Texas. She brings more than two decades of amusement park experience to the position, having worked at Splash Town, Six Flags Astroworld, Six Flags Over Texas, Hurricane Harbor and Hawaiian Falls. McCormick's success in the industry comes not only from her commitment to excellence on the job, but also from her willingness to go beyond the amusement park and become an integral part of the community. She serves as a board of director member for the local YMCA, a board of director

member for the White Settlement Independent School District Education Foundation, a board of director member for the White Settlement Chamber of Commerce and as an ambassador for the Tri-Chamber of Commerce and the Northwest Tarrant Chamber of Commerce. With all of these tasks and responsibilities to handle, McCormick says that her most rewarding responsibility is being the mother of her identical twin 18-year-old daughters.



### **MIKE MCDONALD**

Michael (Mike) McDonald is currently the Operations Manager for Golfland Entertainment Centers Inc., better known as Golfland SunSplash, in Roseville, California. He started as a seasonal lifeguard in the summer of 2002. Working through the ranks of lead lifeguard, supervisor and trainer, he quickly became the Director of Aquatics for Golfland SunSplash in the summer of 2004. Working for a year-round family entertainment center has given him the opportunity to attend the WWA show for the last 14 years. McDonald is a decision maker for number of different departments at Golfland SunSplash including: arcades, mini-golf, lazer-tag, go-karts, food & beverage and, of course, the waterpark. McDonald is currently a Lifeguard Instructor Trainer with Jeff Ellis & Associates, and has served proudly as a faculty member for the International Aquatics Safety School for the last 5 years.



### **ADAM MCINTYRE**

As a Creative Director and a licensed architect, Adam McIntyre leads a gold-star team of artists with an immeasurable myraid of experience. Under McIntyre's leadership, he and his team direct a broad range of fabrication and installation techniques from CNC cutting, welding, sculpture, murals and innovative carpentry. He is one of four partners currently in transition to own Weber Group over the next several years, and is their leading creative mind and master story-teller with decades of experience in the entertainment industry. McIntyre also oversees all design initiatives for the development and installation of Crayola Experiences nationwide. He's thoroughly experienced in every stage of the intricate and multi-faceted design process, from storyboards and conceptual art to detailing and specifications for some of the industry's most notable clients including Merlin Entertainments, Great Wolf Resorts, Nickelodeon, LEGO, Paramount and Herschend Family Entertainment. His recent accomplishments include leading the award-winning exhibit design of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Outdoor Adventure Center. This three-story facility of interactive exhibits focuses on all aspects of outdoor Michigan including: indoor waterways, a forest to explore, educational multi-media and a variety of digital and analog interactives.



### **MARK MOORE**

Mark Moore is the Chief Operating Officer of the LSAR Group and the General Manager of Gulf Islands Waterpark. Moore is heavily involved with the World Waterpark Association. He is the Past Chair of the Board of Directors, and former Chair of the Technology Committee and the Waterpark Resort Committee. In the past, he has also served as the General Manager/Vice President of Splash Universe Resorts and the General Manager of Splash Lagoon Waterpark Resort. With his broad range of experience from building and opening new parks to reenergizing existing parks, he often presents at the WWA Show and has published several articles in leading industry publications. Moore began his career in aquatics as a lifeguard in 1987 and has worked in the waterpark industry since 1996. Having worked

# SPEAKERS

in collegiate swimming and the indoor and outdoor waterpark business, he has gained a unique perspective of the industry. Utilizing a consultative management style and selling method, Moore has been successful in developing talent through the decision-making process by presenting innovative ideas and recommendations. By motivating his sales teams to generate business and growing product demand, Moore has been successful at generating long term profitable business relationships and partnerships. His experience has enabled him to develop growth strategies for maximizing the revenue of resorts, waterparks and various other businesses. By developing the correct mix of special events, marketing and pricing, Moore has consistently demonstrated an understanding of what it takes to maximize the yield of resorts, waterparks and consumer-based businesses.



## **JIM MOSELEY**

Jim Moseley is the Director of Marketing and Communications at CMC-Neptune. In addition to overseeing all marketing for Neptune Custom Music Solutions, including Splash Radio and Neptune Navigate, he also is responsible for creating and executing the 2018 marketing campaign for Splash Kingdom

Waterparks.



## **KARA MOSS, CPRP**

Kara Moss, CPRP, has been in various roles in the aquatic field for the last 14 years. Moss currently is the Aquatic Facility Manager with Gurnee Park District located in Gurnee, Illinois, where she manages 3 aquatic facilities, successful swim school program and more than 100 part-time staff. She also is involved

with Illinois Parks and Recreation leading the Aquatic Division within the Facility Management Section, which focuses on education and awareness for aquatic professionals around the state.



## **NICHOLAS NEUMAN**

Nicholas Neuman is responsible for Project Development for WTI, waterpark planners, designers and engineers, headquartered in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin. His primary role is to develop and expand the commercial, entertainment and design/build sectors of the business. Neuman is focused on customer

relationships in addition to the development of the entertainment division's staff, processes and value to the client. His experience in project concept development, as well as project management and on-site aquatic construction is critical in his role. He has led design charrettes for large scale international commercial and destinations waterparks and brings to the table creative solutions to real challenges.



## **BRIAN NOEL**

Brian Noel has served as Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Canyon for the past 8 years. He came to the City of Canyon from the turf industry after a 16-year sales career with the Toro Company and 12 prior years in golf course management. Noel was instrumental in the waterpark conception prior

to it becoming a reality. He was hands on during the entire planning and construction phases of the project plus continues to work closely on a daily basis with the waterpark staff and community the park serves. Additionally, he holds several accreditations including Certified Professional Turf Manager



and Certified Pool Operator. Noel and his family of six have proudly called Canyon home for 26 years. He is a graduate of West Texas State University with a B.A. in business.



### **CHRIS NORMAN**

Chris Norman is an Instructor Trainer for Innovative Attraction Management, LLC/StarGuard ELITE, and the Operations Manager at Cowabunga Bay in Las Vegas, Nevada. He began his career in aquatics in 2008 as a lifeguard at The Wave Waterpark in Vista, California.

He continued lifeguarding and moving up through leadership at both The Wave Waterpark and Six Flags Great America & Hurricane Harbor while he completed his bachelor's degree in hospitality and tourism management from Purdue University. Upon graduation, Norman worked as a National Staff Auditor for Jeff Ellis & Associates, where he audited more than 100 different facilities both in the U.S. and abroad. Looking for a more permanent home, Norman spent 2 years at Silverwood Theme Park and Boulder Beach Water Park in Athol, Idaho, where he served as the Manager of Aquatics and Safety Programs. In 2016, Norman accepted a position as the Aquatics Manager at Cowabunga Bay in Las Vegas, Nevada, and currently resides there. When the park is closed, Norman travels the world conducting training and audits for the IAM StarGuard ELITE Program. The ability to train and mentor lifeguards, for many of whom it is their first job, keeps Norman excited to come to work each and every day.



### **TIM O'DONNELL**

Tim O'Donnell is the program manager for the WWA Insurance Program by Haas & Wilkerson Insurance. A graduate of the University of Kansas, O'Donnell joined Haas & Wilkerson in 2008. In 2012, he was tasked with leading the sales efforts of the WWA Insurance Program. Launched by the WWA in 2009,

this program has brought industry leading coverage forms, loss prevention efforts and state-of-the-art claims handling to the industry and will continue to push the envelope to better serve WWA members.



### **MICHAEL OOSTMAN**

Michael Oostman has more than 26 years of consulting experience in the aquatic industry. From 1998-2004, he was the aquatic safety consultant to Walt Disney World®, in Orlando Florida. In 2004, he started Oostman Aquatic Safety Consulting (OOASC) to provide a resource to the aquatic, legal and insurance industries.

To date Oostman has conducted more than 850 drowning investigations, which provides valuable insight into causation as well as providing practical solutions and remedies. In addition to his forensic investigation work, Oostman works in the legal community as an expert witness and provides educational and curriculum based training to the aquatics community.



### **RAFAEL OVELAR**

Rafael Ovelar is currently the Assistant Director of Aquatics for Great Wolf Lodge in Garden Grove, California. He originally started his career with Great Wolf Lodge as an Aquatics Manager at the property located in Fitchburg, Mass. Prior to that he was the Assistant Director of Aquatics at CoCo Key Water

Resort that was in Fitchburg, Mass. He has 10 years in the aquatics/hotel industry and has a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Fitchburg State

# SPEAKERS

University. Ovelar has been an instructor for Ellis & Associates for 8 years. He is actively involved in fitness and Spartan events (Obstacle Course Racing) and in his free time, enjoys working on his art.



## **BOB OWENS**

Bob Owens is the General Manager at Hyland Hills Water World and he has been with the park since 1984. Water World is the largest publically owned waterpark in the United States and is located in Denver, Colorado. Prior to becoming General Manager in 2018, Owens

had overseen guest services, revenue and IT programs for the park since 1993.



## **CHRIS OZIMEK**

Chris Ozimek is the General Manager for Crayola Experience in Orlando, Florida. His career spans 24 seasons as a leader in marketing and group sales at five theme parks, ten waterparks and five resorts. Parks include Cedar Point & Soak City, Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom, Worlds of Fun & Oceans of Fun, Six Flags

America & Hurricane Harbor, Dollywood and Dollywood's Splash Country, all five Schlitterbahn Waterparks and now a popular Orlando family attraction. Ozimek serves as Secretary on WWA's Marketing & Communications Committee.



## **GEORGE PANTON**

George Panton is currently Marketing and Product Development Manager for Water Safety Products, Inc., a Florida corporation and international supplier of lifeguard uniforms and lifeguard safety equipment since 1989. Panton's introduction to the aquatic industry began with a position as Beach Lifeguard for Brevard

County Ocean Rescue in 2003 which continued for five summers. This experience included the First Responder course and USLA open water lifeguard training. During his college years, Panton enjoyed in-store retail and regional sales for such brands as Oakley eyewear. He graduated in 2010 from the University of Denver with a B.A. in marketing and art. Shortly after graduation, Panton took a position leading the pre-opening Souvenir Photography program at the world's largest indoor theme park, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, UAE. In 2012, he was promoted to be the first official merchandise manager for the pre-opening team at Yas Waterworld Abu Dhabi. There, he concentrated on interactive retail experiences, including the world's first SplashQuest game and waterpark pearl dive experience. Since returning to the U.S. in 2013, Panton has visited more than 50 waterparks on behalf of Water Safety Products. As marketing and development manager, his responsibilities have included sales, organizing advertising efforts and assisting with the development of award-winning products. He has also continued his personal growth in the aquatics industry by attending trainings such as Disney Institute, as well as four years of lifeguard training and certification with both Ellis & Associates and NASCO.



## **R. WAYNE PIERCE, ESQUIRE**

R. Wayne Pierce is the "adventure lawyer." Pierce is the only lawyer elected to the World Waterpark Association's Hall of Fame, a recognition of his accomplishments as a "pioneer or innovator who played an integral role in the development of the water leisure industry and the WWA." He has also been elected to

the Outdoor Amusement Business Association's Hall of Fame, and serves as general counsel for the International Association of Trampoline Parks. He served on the WWA's Board of Directors and chaired its Strategic

Planning Committee from 2003-2010, and is a contributing author to the WWA's *Development & Expansion Guide*. He is currently serving on the WWA's Board of Directors a second time. He was selected for *Aquatic International's* "Power 25" as one of the most powerful professionals in the entire waterpark field and the only lawyer who represents operators. He is the only lawyer to receive the World Waterpark Association's Best Speaker Award in 1995 and the coveted Kelly Ogle Memorial Safety Award in 1997. He served as legal counsel for—and a principal force behind—some of industry's most critical initiatives, including the Waterpark Best Practices Council, the Waterpark Safety Forum, the Children's Drowning Prevention Council and the World Waterpark Association's insurance program.



### **JEN POST**

Jen Post is the Aquatic Supervisor and Program Specialist with the City of University Park in the heart of Dallas, Texas. Post has 18+ years working in the aquatics industry and has led facilities in the municipal, private and education sectors. Post has a passion for all things aquatic and marketing. When she's not working, she enjoys backpacking and hiking with her husband and son, and is an avid photographer.



### **KEVIN POST**

Kevin Post leads Counsilman-Hunsaker's Operations team. With nearly 20 years of experience in the aquatic industry, Post has served a variety of client types including public and private waterparks, municipalities, universities, YMCAs and school districts. Post focuses his efforts on helping clients prepare for the development and capital investment of a new or existing aquatic facilities. Post speaks at national conferences and major universities, educating the industry on sustainable business practices for pools, new technologies for aquatic facilities and the science behind risk management. He is a contributing author to WWA's *Development & Expansion Guide* and *The Complete Swimming Pool Guide*. Post also serves on the Educational Committee for the National Swimming Pool Foundation, training new instructors and providing content for new educational products.



### **MARISOL RAMIREZ**

Marisol Ramirez is the Director of Group Sales and Events at Schlitterbahn Riverpark & Resort in Corpus Christi, Texas. In her current position, she oversees and develops sales programs including special events, venue rentals, group sales, birthday parties and discount ticket programs. Ramirez is a proud member of WWA's Marketing & Communications Committee. She began her waterpark career as the Sales and Marketing Manager at Hurricane Alley Waterpark in 2014. During her tenure there, she was awarded two WWA Wave Review awards for Best Social Media Campaign. During her down time, she dedicates her time to her community by volunteering through Leadership Corpus Christi, The Young Business Professionals and The Rising Tide Society.



### **LISA B. RAU**

A former investigative television news reporter, Lisa B. Rau is Director of Publicity and Public Relations for Herschend Family Entertainment Corporation, Silver Dollar City Attractions, Branson, Missouri. With 25 years of leading publicity efforts, Rau specializes in general publicity, product launch and crisis management of the media. She has guided nationally- and internationally-awarded

# SPEAKERS

publicity efforts and has created hundreds of media-partner promotions to include radio, TV, Internet and print. Rau has been awarded several industry-leading Brass Ring Awards, granted by the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions. As a television journalist, she received five Associated Press awards. She has taught seminars for state agencies, businesses, chambers of commerce and the World Waterpark Association. She can be reached at [lr.au@silverdollarcy.com](mailto:lr.au@silverdollarcy.com).



## MIKE REILLY

Out of high school, Mike Reilly turned pro as a professional surfer and has stayed in the surf industry most of his life. He's worked as a retail associate and is now VP Of Sales for Quiksilver, a maker of apparel, footwear and accessories. In his current role, he manages 16 sales reps and focuses on consulting customers to make the right buying decisions for their stores. Reilly graduated from Long Beach State with a major in communications and a minor in marketing. He then attended the University of Redlands to get his MBA. Reilly has 4 children and loves to surf and golf.



## LANCE REYNOLDS

Lance Reynolds is a Restaurant Operations Consultant (ROC) from Phoenix, Arizona. He formerly owned & operated 4 restaurants, a catering company & a commissary. He also founded Food Biz Today, a school for hospitality owners and managers to learn to integrate systems to increase and maintain profitability in their operations. Food Biz Today had 7 schools in 3 states when Reynolds decided to sell his company and come to work for US Foods as the Arizona ROC in 2013. Since joining US Foods, he has worked with leadership and his peers to help create systems and identify tools to help the independent restaurant. He has also spearheaded a number of initiatives including a customer facing workshop series. Reynolds prides himself on developing and mentoring other ROCs while doing everything he can to learn as much as he can from his peers along the way. His long-term goals include helping expand and further develop the ROC role and becoming an author and motivational speaker for the hospitality industry.



## ROBIN RITZ

Robin Ritz is creative visionary and Owner at InCord, where she has been a driving force in sales and management for more than ten years. A bilingual graduate of Central Connecticut State University, she also studied abroad in Leon, Spain and earned her B.A. in international studies in 1998. Ritz began her journey at InCord in 1996 doing various administrative jobs and established herself full time in 2008 as the Amusement Division Sales Manager. Over the next eight years, she helped drive the growth of the division by reaching into new markets and providing excellent customer service. By 2016, Ritz realized even more untapped market potential by grouping the Amusement division with the Sports, Theatre and Specialty divisions together into InCord Play; the new side of InCord comprised of divisions dedicated to netting solutions relating to fun, adventure and play. She led InCord Play as the Lead Ambassador of Fun, also completing training as a Certified Playground Safety Inspector to help guide InCord Play's design and product implementation. Drawing from her past experiences abroad and prior work as a Human Resources Director, she empowers multicultural departments to share constructive ideas and work together to succeed. Ritz also shares her teachings as a certified Kaizen-Muse Creativity Coach to help employees overcome their challenges and reach their goals through small steps, embracing new ideas and perspectives.



### **THATCHER ROBERTSON**

Thatcher Robertson is the Corporate Director of Waterparks for Kalahari Resorts & Convention Center. He started at Kalahari more than 8 years ago serving initially as the Waterpark Director at the Wisconsin Dells property and later the Ohio property. Robertson was promoted to Corporate Director of all 3 (and future) sites and is responsible for all aspects of operation. He has an MBA and more than 30 years of aquatics and lifeguarding experience. Prior to joining Kalahari, he was the Area Pools/Waterpark Supervisor for the City of Miami, Florida, and was the South Florida Area Manager for American Red Cross.



### **STEVE RODGERS**

Steve Rodgers is the General Manager for Golfand SunSplash in Roseville, California, a position he's held since 2000. He got his start in the waterpark industry in 1977 while working at Manteca Waterslide park and campground, a waterpark that featured some of the first fiberglass waterslides. From 1979 to 1989, Rodgers was the General Manager for Wild Water Adventure Park in Clovis, Calif., before moving on to Hawaiian Waters Adventure Park (now called Wet'n'Wild Hawaii) in Oahu, Hawaii. Rodgers was one of the earliest operators asked by WWA's founder, Al Turner, to support a new waterpark association. In the WWA's early days, Rodgers served as treasurer for the Board. He later rejoined the Board and served for 6 years from 2008-2014. In 2001, he was inducted into the WWA's Hall Of Fame.



### **WENDY ROSALES**

Wendy Rosales is currently the Director of Aquatics for Great Wolf Lodge in Garden Grove, California. Prior to that she was Aquatics Coordinator of DropZone Waterpark, part of the Riverside County Park and Open-Space District. With more than 17 years in the aquatics/amusement industry, she has worked at both private and public aquatic facilities including Knott's Soak City Buena Park, Splash Island Waterpark and DropZone Waterpark. She has overseen a variety of areas from aquatics to revenue generating operations. Rosales has a master's of business administration degree from Azusa Pacific University. She holds certifications as an Instructor Trainer with Ellis & Associates, Lifeguard Instructor with the American Red Cross, WSI, AFO, CPO and ServSafe.



### **NICHOLAS J. SALLER**

Nicholas J. Saller serves as a strategic advisor to companies looking for relief from injury risk and who desire programming to support healthier team members. He believes that real, sustainable injury risk reduction is achieved by creating and adopting a proactive organizational mindset that everyone wants to come to and go home from work, healthy. Over the last 11 years, he has had the fortune to support multiple companies in building injury prevention & management programs focused on creating a proactive mindset and combining it with the best systems in order to create better outcomes. Saller is the founder of PHIT: Proactive Health Intense Training programming for individuals and corporations desiring complete, proactive health and wellness. He also serves as COO of DSI Work Solutions, Inc., and is the creator of the Job Function Matching® Data Dashboard, which demonstrates the real-world, comprehensible outcomes of injury prevention and management programs. He is a board-certified, licensed physical therapist and has presented on real-world injury trends at the DSI National

# SPEAKERS

Conference, as well as served as a guest lecturer for the National Academy of Sports Medicine continuing education program. Saller holds a master's in physical therapy from the University of Missouri.



## **KENT SANDERS, MBA, SCLA, ARM**

Kent Sanders, MBA, SCLA, ARM, is the Executive Vice President of H&W Risk Management/Haas & Wilkerson Insurance. Sanders has spent his entire professional career working in the commercial insurance field. He joined Haas & Wilkerson Agency in 2000 to establish H&W Risk Management, a claims and risk management

division dedicated to serving the amusement industry's unique needs. H&W Risk Management is now recognized as the pre-eminent claims service and risk management providers in the indoor and outdoor amusement industry. The H&W staff of senior claims representatives include the only NAARSO, AIMS & AFO-certified insurance claims adjusters in the nation. Sanders regularly presents on various safety and amusement industry topics at seminars and trade shows across the country.



## **DAVID J. SANGREE, MAI, CPA, ISHC**

David J. Sangree, MAI, CPA, ISHC, is President and Founder of Hotel & Leisure Advisors, LLC a national hospitality consulting firm. He is a graduate of Cornell University School of Hotel Administration and is a member of the Appraisal Institute, the International Society of Hospitality Consultants and is a Certified

Public Accountant. Sangree's expertise is in analysis of hotels, resorts, indoor waterpark resorts, waterparks, amusement parks, conference centers, ski resorts, casinos and golf courses. He performs market and financial feasibility studies, impact analysis, appraisals, financial analysis, operational reviews and site selection for hospitality and leisure properties. He has performed studies on more than 2,000 existing and proposed hotels and leisure properties in more than 50 states and provinces. He has performed more than 600 studies of indoor and outdoor waterparks since 1999, and he maintains databases of statistical information concerning performance figures of all types of indoor and outdoor waterparks and resorts with waterparks. Sangree was named one of *Aquatics International's* "Power 25" in 2008 and received the Executive Board Award from the World Waterpark Association in 2016. Both awards profiled Sangree as one of the first consultants serving the waterpark resort industry and credited him with shaping some of the latest industry trends through his expertise and experience in the waterpark resort market. Sangree has appeared on Good Morning America and CNBC on special reports concerning resorts and waterparks and has written numerous articles for a wide range of publications.



## **MARK SCHARENBROICH, CSP, CPAE**

Mark Scharenbroich's, CSP, CPAE, comedy path started when he founded a comedy troupe, called Mom's Apple Pie that performed at high schools and colleges. When the group disbanded, Scharenbroich went solo, combining his comedy with leadership training and messages about making connections. His speaking career kicked

into gear when Scharenbroich was featured in the Jostens film, *The Greatest Days of Your Life... (so far)*, which has been shown to more than 10,000 high schools worldwide. Scharenbroich became known for being able to grab the attention of 2,500 students in a gymnasium in 30 seconds or less. His ability to connect with students, and keep them glued to the presentation with humor and life-changing messages, earned him a reputation for being the top speaker in education. The demand for Scharenbroich as a speaker skyrocketed and he left his marketing position at Jostens in 1984. He and his wife, Susan, founded Scharenbroich & Associates, a motivational speaking and leadership

training video production company. Scharenbroich quickly became known as a leading connections expert in developing leaders and transforming the culture of an organization. He is an award-winning keynote speaker, winner of an Emmy Award as writer/producer for an ABC TV special and recipient of several international film awards. As students grew up and moved into positions at Fortune 500 companies, they remembered the influence Mark Scharenbroich (the Shake 'N' Bake guy) had on their lives during high school. They continue to want to bring that same impact to their companies. In 2003, Scharenbroich was inducted into the National Speaker's Association prestigious Hall of Fame. Less than 5 percent of the professional speakers worldwide have been awarded this honor. In 1977, Scharenbroich married his bride, Susan, who today manages Scharenbroich & Associates. They have three grown children, Matt, Mike and a daughter named Kate, 2 daughters-in-law named Kate, a grand baby (not named Kate), an English bulldog and five beehives. In 2010, they established NiceBikeHonorsVeterans.org to honor the memory of Scharenbroich's father and to support veterans' causes with a portion of the sales from the Nice Bike book.



### **JUSTIN SCHUVIE**

Justin Schuvie is a native of Denver, Colorado and has 20-plus years of marketing experience in the entertainment and hospitality industries, specializing in large-scale event marketing. Over the years, Schuvie has planned a variety of events including concerts, festivals, charitable events and more for

many companies including Clear Channel Entertainment, now iHeart Radio, Levity Entertainment Group and the Improv Comedy Clubs. In 2017, Schuvie moved from California back to Colorado and now is the Director of Marketing for Hyland Hills Park & Recreation District.



### **JUSTIN SEMPSROTT, MD, FAAEM**

Justin Sempsrott, MD, FAAEM, is a graduate of the University of South Florida College of Medicine and did his residency in emergency medicine at the University of Nevada, School of Medicine. In 2006, he founded Lifeguards Without Borders and serves as their Executive Director. Sempsrott is Medical Director

For Starfish Aquatics Institute and several EMS agencies in North Carolina and an Emergency Medicine Physician and the EMS Faculty at Wake Forest University. He speaks around the globe on the topic of drowning. He lives in Kuna, Idaho with his wife Melanie, son Hunter, and works full time as an Emergency Medicine Doctor and Facility Medical Director for the Emergency Department at West Valley Medical Center in Caldwell, Idaho.



### **ASHLIE SHARP**

Ashlie Sharp is the Sales Manager at Splash Lagoon Indoor Water Park in Erie, Pennsylvania. She joined Splash Lagoon 4 years ago, and was awarded the 2016 Sales Manager of the Year Award. Prior to her waterpark career, Sharp spent 5 years working in the finance industry, as a financial sales consultant for

PNC Bank, where she received the 2011 and 2012 Achievement Award for Sales Production and the 2012 Achievement Award for Customer Service Excellence. She earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Mercyhurst College (recently renamed Mercyhurst University). In addition to her professional experience, she is a graduate of the Erie Ambassador Program, sponsored through the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership, and is a member of the Young Erie Professionals Organization. Sharpe volunteers on a weekly basis for McLane Church as a youth



# SPEAKERS

ministry leader and monthly with The Emmaus Ministries Kid's Café, for inner city youth in the Erie community. Sharp serves on WWA's Waterpark Resort Committee.



## SCOTT SILAR

Scott Silar has more than 20 years of hospitality experience in the amusement industry. He is currently the Manager of Attractions at Hersheypark, where he oversees the management of more than 1,200 attraction operators and lifeguards, and the ongoing safe operation of more than 70 attractions. Silar sits on WWA's

Waterpark Resort Committee, the Waterpark Committee of the Pennsylvania Amusement Parks Association, and is an instructor with the National Assoc. of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO). Silar is certified as a Jeff Ellis & Associates Lifeguard Instructor Trainer, and is certified as an EMT, Pennsylvania State Ride Inspector II, Certified Pool Operator, Aquatic Facility Operator and National Weather Service SkyWarn Certified Storm Spotter. Silar is a Lifetime Member of the Hershey Volunteer Fire Dept.; and in his spare time, he devotes time to Project Fellowship with the Milton Hershey School, and is on the Steering Committee for Junior Achievement of Central Pennsylvania.



## STEPHEN SIMS, ED.D. ATC

Stephen Sims, ED.D, ATC, has been the General Manager of SomerSplash Waterpark for 12 years. He holds certifications in athletic training from the National Athletic Trainers' Association Board of Certification and the Kentucky Board of Medical Licensure. He holds multiple certifications from the American Red Cross, in-

cluding: Lifeguard Instructor Trainer, Lifeguarding and Water Safety Instructor. In 2010, he was selected to be on the American Red Cross Lifeguarding Sounding Board and Workgroup. Sims is also certified as an AFO from the NRP. Currently, Sims oversees the City of Somerset's waterpark, SomerSplash Waterpark. At SomerSplash Waterpark, he oversees all daily operations and procedures including all aspects of administration, marketing, admissions, concessions, aquatics and maintenance. Sims also oversees special events that include the City of Somerset's Fourth of July celebration. During the season, he manages approximately 110-120 seasonal employees. In the off-season, while working full time at SomerSplash, he works as an athletic trainer for a local hospital providing medical coverage for high school athletes during games and practices. Plus, he is a part-time instructor at Eastern Kentucky University teaching in the Recreation and Parks Department. Among his other accolades, Sims holds his doctorate in education (emphasis in educational leadership and policy study), dual master's degrees; one in physical education (emphasis in sports administration) and the other in recreation and parks administration and a bachelor's degree in physical education (emphasis in athletic training) from Eastern Kentucky University.



## RYAN SMITH

Ryan Smith is a native of the Lehigh Valley in Eastern Pennsylvania and a graduate of The Pennsylvania State University. He received his undergraduate in Psychology and is a member of the class of 2014. His start in the industry was with Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom in the Operations Department as a Ride Operator.

Smith spent a total of 8 years with Dorney receiving multiple promotions and worked across different positions in the department. His last role held at Dorney was as the Seasonal Area Manager for the Operations Department. Smith joined Camelback Lodge & Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark in 2015 as a Park Services Manager for Aquatopia. In 2017, his roles greatly expanded as

he absorbed the Administrative functions of Aquatopia and in late 2017, he became the Assistant Director of Aquatics. Smith is currently an Ellis & Associates ILTP Instructor and Certified Pool Operator.



#### **SCOTT STEFANC, ASLA**

Scott Stefanc, ASLA, is the Commercial Business Development Manager for Vortex Aquatic Structures International. Stefanc has more than 17 years of experience in the design and development of aquatic facilities from Splashpads® to full scale waterparks including work for Great Wolf Resorts, Cedar Fair,

Universal Studios, Busch Entertainment and Center Parcs UK. Stefanc works with Vortex's commercial clients to develop comprehensive aquatic attractions and amenities for their properties.



#### **BRETT STEINBRUECK**

Brett Steinbrueck is President of BECS Technology, Inc. in St. Louis, Missouri. He received his B.S. and M.S. degrees in computer science from Washington University in St. Louis. Since 1985, Steinbrueck has been designing and implementing embedded software for digital water chemistry controllers. In

1991, he was one of four founders of BECS Technology. BECS employs a multi-discipline engineering and product development team dedicated to developing reliable and innovative automated water chemistry and filtration controls. All products are manufactured in the U.S. at BECS' plant in St. Louis, which includes full surface-mount and through-hole circuit board assembly facilities.



#### **ALLISON STOCK, PH.D., MPH**

Dr. Allison Stock, MPH, is an internationally known toxicologist and epidemiologist with 22 years of toxicological, epidemiological, regulatory and environmental experience. Stock has a doctorate in toxicology and in epidemiology from the University Of Texas School Of Public Health. She also holds master's in public

health in occupational and aerospace medicine from UT. She is a former Epidemic Intelligence Officer with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Her background is supported by experience in the federal and state government and industry (small and Fortune 500 companies). Stock specializes in human health risk assessments combining both toxicological and epidemiological data. She has expertise in petrochemicals, oil and gas, environmental permitting, property transfer, environmental, social and health impact assessments, inhalation toxicology, renal toxicology, toxicological and epidemiological risk assessment, foodborne outbreaks, rapid needs assessments, emergency response, ambient and indoor air monitoring, occupational health and safety plans and stakeholder communications. Stock has served on both federal and industry working groups on air pollution issues such as particulate matter (PM2.5), benzene, carbon monoxide and low sulfur diesel exhaust. Stock has also served as an expert witness and as the corporate representative for litigation support. She also has extensive experience in the evaluation of human health impact studies following environmental, occupational and pharmaceutical exposures. She is currently the Principal Consultant/Toxicologist and Epidemiologist for Rimkus Consulting Group, Inc.

# SPEAKERS



## CHRIS SWARTZ

Chris Swartz has more than 25 years of experience working in the waterpark industry and is currently employed as the Waterpark Manager for Wild Wadi Waterpark in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Wild Wadi was the first waterpark in the UAE and is uniquely located on the Persian Gulf next to the prestigious

Burj Al Arab and Jumeirah Beach Hotels. Previously, he served as General Manager for NRH<sub>2</sub>O Family Water Park located in North Richland Hills, Texas. NRH<sub>2</sub>O Family Water Park is the largest city owned and operated park in the United States and it has garnered numerous awards and recognition over its operating history. He joined the City of North Richland Hills team from White Water/American Adventures in Marietta, Georgia, where he worked as Operations Manager. Prior to this, he worked for Wet 'n Wild Orlando starting as a lifeguard and was promoted up to Operations Training Supervisor. He has presented at numerous local, state, national and international conferences including the World Waterpark Association, the National Recreation and Park Association, Rocky Mountain Revenue School and the Texas Recreation and Park Society. In 2010, *Aquatics International* featured him as one of the "Power 25 Reinventors" in the aquatics industry. Swartz currently serves on the WWA's Technology & Innovations Committee. He served on the WWA Board of Directors, and held the offices of Secretary, Treasurer, Vice Chair, Chair and Past Chair.



## HELICIA THOMAS

Helicia Thomas is a native of Las Vegas and continues to serve her community through mentoring, teaching, training and giving of her vast resources. In 1989, she knew her passion was working with individuals with behavioral and mental health disorders. Throughout her career, she has worked in residential facilities, restricted

institutions and a maximum security prison. In addition, from 2001 to present she develops innovative leadership activities, employability workshops and academic enrichment programs that are very successful in assisting hundreds of youth with obtaining their personal goals. Additionally, her programs assisted thousands of individuals with the skills necessary for obtaining long term employment that resulted in them becoming self-sufficient. She loves training, facilitating workshops and mentoring both youth and adults. She has been a radio broadcaster for 19 years on KCEP Power 88.1FM radio station. She is a national motivational speaker and has more than 30 years of successfully motivating at-risk individuals to make better choices. She has her bachelor's degree in human services management and is an ordained Minister. In 2015, she joined Clark County Department of Parks and Recreation's Gang Intervention Team. She continues to use her experience, resources and knowledge to positively impact the residents of Southern Nevada.



## DAVID THOMPSON

David Thompson has been in the industry since 2009 where he started at Holiday World and Splashin' Safari located in Santa Claus, Indiana. His career began as a cashier, yet his continued growth year after year with the company led him to become Food and Beverage Manager. He moved to Texas in 2016 to work at

Hawaiian Falls in Pflugerville, Texas. Since 2017, he has been the Food and Beverage Manager for Typhoon Texas in Katy, Texas. He has a bachelor's degree in Chemistry from Kentucky Wesleyan College.



### **LORI THOMPSON**

Lori Thompson is a long time veteran of aquatics and truly enjoys the field. Thompson recently retired from the position of Community Services Director for the City of La Mirada which includes the Splash! La Mirada Regional Aquatics Center. She is currently consulting and teaching in aquatics operations.



### **KARI TJADER**

Kari Tjader began in the industry as a lifeguard in 2005 where she worked for Six Flags Hurricane Harbor in Gurnee, Illinois, and moved up the ranks into a training supervisor. In 2008, she was hired as the Corporate Training Manager for CoCo Key Water Resorts, where she helped develop standard operating procedures, assisted with planning and facilitating hiring events and five grand openings and provided assistance in many management positions. From there, she went on to become Director of Water Resort Operations for CoCo Key Hotel and Water Resort in Orlando, Florida, where she was responsible for recruiting, hiring, training, staffing and managing day-to-day operations. Tjader became an Instructor-Trainer for Ellis & Associates and has been certified as a Jeff Ellis Swimming Program Coordinator and current CPO, ServSafe Food Safety Manager Instructor and Proctor, Tips Trainer and CARE Instructor. In 2014, Tjader left CoCo Key to become a Training Manager for Safety Skills Training in Dubai, UAE. She returned to the U.S. in 2016 to oversee four food and beverage outlets, a resort retail store and the waterpark operation as the Director of Operations-Water Resort Food & Beverage for CoCo Key Hotel & Water Resort. In 2017, she moved from operations to a new position at Liftopia, the industry's first dynamic pricing and e-commerce software provider focusing on bringing their Cloud Store platform to waterparks and attractions. Tjader serves as the Vice Chair on WWA's Waterpark Resort Committee.



### **RYAN VADEN**

Ryan Vaden is the Director of Aquatics at Wilderness at the Smokies. Vaden started in 2009 at Wilderness as Assistant Manager of Aquatics before becoming Manager of Aquatics. He began his waterpark career as a lifeguard at Dollywood's Splash Country and became an Ellis & Associates Lifeguard Instructor.



### **CADE VEREEN**

Cade Vereen currently is the Director of Revenue for Typhoon Texas in Austin. Vereen has worked in the waterpark industry since 2010 starting as a lifeguard. He quickly climbed the ranks and has had the opportunity to lead in many different areas of the industry. Vereen was the Regional Director for Hawaiian Falls, and then was selected to be the Director of Operations at Typhoon Texas. After a very successful inaugural season, he transitioned into the Director of Revenue. From a young age, Vereen knew that he wanted to work in the waterpark industry; he now has the privilege to live out his dream and have a positive impact on thousands of people each day.



### **SHAWN WELCH**

Shawn Welch is originally from south Louisiana and graduated from Oklahoma Wesleyan University with a degree in health education. During the summers of his college years, he worked at Pine Cove Camp in Texas. Upon graduation, he joined Pine Cove full time and spent 9 years on staff as a director. Afterward,

# SPEAKERS

Welch got the opportunity to work as General Manager of a small waterpark and is now the Director of Organizational Culture at Typhoon Texas. When not spending time with his family and friends, Welch enjoys playing sports (especially basketball), watching the New Orleans Saints and reading.



## LAKE WHITE

Lake White has extensive experience in all aspects of the aquatics industry. He is a SAI faculty member for the Starfish Aquatics Institute, serving as Director of Quality Assurance. He travels around the world educating instructors on how to teach lifeguard training, providing emergency care instructor training and providing on-site risk management and safety evaluation audits for waterparks, swimming pools and beachfronts. He has served on industry leadership committees including the Lifeguard Standards Coalition and the Children's Drowning Prevention Council. Under his leadership, his aquatic facilities have earned a "Best in Aquatics" award numerous times from *Aquatics International*. In 2013, White received a Best Speaker Award from the WWA. He holds a bachelor's degree in liberal arts.



## CORION WYNN

Cory Wynn began his aquatics career almost 20 years ago at a small waterpark during university summer breaks. This experience led to jobs at other parks & recreation settings, including training lifeguards and lifeguard trainers and managing a lake-front facility. Wynn opened and coordinated a new mixed-use facility beginning in 2006, then moved to become the Director of Aquatics at the Great Wolf Lodge in Grand Mound, Washington, beginning in 2012. He now serves as Operations Manager at Wet'n'Wild Palm Springs, where he oversees all operations, including lifeguards, slide attendants, security, First Aid, training and risk management. Wynn has maintained certification over the last 18 years in AFO and/or CPO certification, and is currently a Lifeguard Instructor Trainer and associate with Jeff Ellis & Associates, and has served as faculty for the International Aquatics Safety School.



## RICH YOUNG

Rich Young has more than 31 years of municipal, public pool and waterpark experience, including operating and maintaining many public and commercial pools in addition to several waterpark facilities with maintenance, operations and programming responsibilities. In addition, he has been a sales and service representative for several major manufacturers of commercial pool equipment and distributors. For the past 20 years, he has worked as a licensed contractor and consultant having worked on many public/commercial facilities and waterparks throughout the western United States and abroad. Young has taught CPO for the National Swimming Pool Foundation (NSPF) for more than 14 years and has been an AFO instructor for the National Recreation and Park Association since its conception and recently was the managing editor for the 6th Edition of the AFO manual. He is the technical advisor and a board member for the Professional Pool Operators of America. Young has been published dozens of times in industry periodicals, often speaks at national and regional conferences and is the General Manager of Aquatic Commercial Consulting.