



## **MICHAEL L. AMARO, ESQUIRE**

Michael L. Amaro is a partner in the law firm of Amaro Baldwin LLP, and has been representing clients in the amusement and recreation fields for over 36 years. He is one of the founding members, and currently on the board of directors of the International Amusement and Leisure Defense Association (IALDA), and he represents waterparks, amusement parks, carnivals, family fun centers, race and go-kart tracks, bowling centers, miniature golf facilities, circuses, white water rafting companies, ice and roller skating facilities, health and fitness clubs, equestrian facilities, trampoline parks, outfitters and guides and concert venues. He has also defended a number of products liability cases involving jet skis, boats, sports and exercise equipment and pyrotechnic devices. His law practice services clients throughout California.



## **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 & Reinholz 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*.



## **ALEXANDRA BARILLA**

Alexandra Barilla is the Revenue Director for Cowabunga Bay Water Park in Las Vegas, Nevada. In her current position, she is responsible for managing the overall operations of Food & Beverage, Admissions, Guest Services, Retail, Rentals and Finance. She started her career in the amusement industry as a Recreation Management Intern for the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida and held various roles in Resort and Recreation Management. In 2014, Barilla joined the Cowabunga Bay family brand as the Guest Service Manager, and is excited for her new role as Revenue Director for the 2019 Season.



## **CLAY BARNES**

Clay Barnes is the Associate Director, Loss Control, for the Specialty Insurance Group, a Division of Everest Insurance®. He has more than 30 years' experience in the waterpark, sports and 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 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.



## **JAMES BARNES**

Jim Barnes is Assistant Village Manager for the Village of Wellington. He served previously as Director of Parks and Recreation, Assistant Director of Community Services and Director of Operations. Barnes has experience in public facility planning, design and construction, as well as municipal operations and maintenance. He is a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP) given by the National Recreation and Park Association, a credentialed manager by the International City/County Management Association and a certified planner with an advanced certification in environmental planning by the American Institute of Certified Planners.



## **EVAN BARNETT**

Evan Barnett is a 23 year veteran of the waterpark industry. At just age 16 he started as a park services employee cleaning up trash and restrooms. Not a glamorous job, but one that highlights Barnett's servant leadership attitude and mindset. Barnett is an energetic, confident leader. Budgets and business planning aside, he is the kind of guy you want to work for. Barnett brings his heart to work and has a unique ability to really connect with people—employees and park guests, alike. He's developed such rapport and respect among his team that everyone buys in fully, creating high performing teams. Under his leadership, the park has received the Executive Board Award from the World Waterpark Association and the Brass Ring Award for the best employee recognition program from IAAPA. Currently, Barnett serves as the President for Typhoon Texas, Houston's premier waterpark destination. Barnett is a proud dad, and it's not unusual to find him serving as the makeup canvas for his two young daughters or struggling to braid their hair. One thing you can be sure of—his commitment to and pursuit of excellence is unbreakable.



## **ADAM BLACKMORE**

Adam Blackmore 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 65 full-time employees and 500-1,000 part-time staff depending on the season. He previously served as the President of the Nevada Recreation and Park Society and was on the Southern Nevada Children's Drowning Prevention Coalition Board of Directors. Blackmore has been in the recreation industry for 13 years working in both the public and private sectors, respectively. Current certifications include National Recreation & Park Association Certified Parks & Recreation Executive (CPRE) and The Pool & Hot Tub Alliance's (formerly the National Swimming Pool Foundation's) 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 in recreation administration from Missouri Western State University. He has presented at the National Recreation & Park Association Congress on multiple occasions, the World Waterpark Association Symposium, Association of Aquatics Professionals Conference and the Nevada Recreation and Park Society annual conference. Blackmore currently serves on WWA's Board of Directors.



## **THOM BLAIR**

Thom Blair is the Director of Sales at Zoombezi Bay & the Columbus Zoo & Aquarium. He started his career in 2006 as the non-corporate sales representative and has been in sales ever since. He was promoted three different times before becoming the director. Blair is a graduate from Bowling Green State University with a degree in marketing and communications. Blair was recently elected the president of the Delaware County Convention and Visitors Bureau. He has been in sales for over 12 years and resides in Powell, Ohio.



### **NICHOLE BOHNER**

Nichole Bohner is Aquatics Division Manager for the City of Round Rock Parks and Recreation department in Round Rock, Texas. Her team was recently honored as an Aquatics International 2017 "Best of Aquatics" winner for leveraging social media to recruit and manage lifeguards, along with honors as the Texas Public Pool Council's Class 1 Agency of the Year in both 2016 and 2018. She currently oversees the newly remodeled Rock'N River Water Park, while also leading creative direction for the division's branding, training, recruitment and social media programs. (Check out @roundrocklifeguards on Instagram!) She is an alumna of Bowling Green State University with a BFA in graphic design. Her current position has allowed a melding of her skillsets in both the aquatics and marketing fields. After years working in the marketing field, Bohner was pulled back into aquatics where she holds her roots. In her aquatics career, her skills were honed while programming and supervising the pools, beaches, lifeguarding and learn-to-swim programs for the cities of Bowling Green, Ohio; Incline Village, Nevada; the Tahoe Donner Association in Truckee, California and the City of Austin, Texas at Barton Springs Pool. She has served multiple waterpark, pool and beachfront operations throughout the nation and holds a great passion for all things water and water safety-related.



### **JASON BORNFRIEND**

Jason Bornfriend is an experienced results-driven online marketing strategist. As Director of Marketing at 829 Studios, he has helped craft digital strategy for clients in various audiences including luxury travel, outdoor adventure and education. He has a passion for integrated media and oversees 829's growing production department. He consistently pushes for digital media innovation and his skills include strategy, account management, managing high performing teams and business development. Bornfriend earned his degree in visual media arts: interactive media with a minor in business studies from Emerson College in Boston. He is frequently sought out to speak as a Digital Marketing expert as it pertains to digital strategy, media and marketing. He has spoken at numerous ACA events and was a featured keynote speaker at the American Outdoor Association's annual conference.



### **JESSICA BOUND**

Jessica Bound is a strong critical thinker whose analytical and strategic skills bring an overall holistic and well-considered approach to her projects, leaving nothing to chance. Bound's experience has varied from working on projects relating to staffing analysis, operating room build outs and reduction in patient wait times. She has led a legal network composed of over 250 attorneys at 30 environmental law firms throughout the United States, including foreign affiliates in 8 countries. She has a passion for working on meaningful projects and seeing growth, while creating leaders that move results through their people. Bound has been personally trained on the X Commandments trademarked methodology by John DiJulius and uses this methodology regularly with The DiJulius Group's consulting clients. As a Customer Experience Consultant with The DiJulius Group, Bound leads clients in generating ideas, turning those ideas into systems and then implementing and executing them enterprise wide. She is also an accomplished keynote speaker full of insight and wit; she leaves audiences motivated, entertained and walking away with great content to implement immediately.



## **SHAWN BOWMAN**

Shawn Bowman is the founder of Waterpark-marketing.com and CEO of IdeaSeat Marketing and Advertising, a Chicago-based creative and targeted marketing agency, specializing in waterparks, hotel and entertainment properties as well as many other industries. He has been a corporate branding advisor on strategic targeted marketing and thought-leadership development since 2007. With 20 years' client marketing experience, Bowman helps corporations leverage current technologies to drive sales, online visibility and generate leads. His practical approach to teaching and training uses simple explanations to demystify complex marketing strategies and topics. He specializes in targeted marketing, heightening waterpark/resort awareness and focused marketing strategies and tactics. Actively involved with the industry for 16 years, Bowman and his team have received numerous awards for online, television, radio and print design and he is currently on the WWA's Marketing & Communications Committee, for which he has also served as chairman. As the CEO for IdeaSeat, Bowman leads marketing programs in Web Design and Development, Search Engine Optimization, Reputation Management, Digital Strategies, App Development, Content Strategy, Analytics, Online Marketing Campaigns, Social Media Marketing Strategies and Branding for B2B and B2C clientele. Bowman's passion, dedication and exceptional attention to detail helps executives build, expand and protect strong reputations and brands that cultivate fresh business.



## **BOB BRADLEY**

Bob Bradley is the owner of Aquatic Consulting & Educational Services (ACES), based in Raleigh, N.C. With four decades of experience as a leader 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 over 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 and continues to serve as an Instructor Trainer for the program. 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 served as a member of the WWA's Children's Drowning Prevention Council. Bradley has been an instructor trainer in multiple specialties for ARC and other training programs. He has worked with camps, YMCAs, public and private aquatic leisure facilities and resorts. Bradley holds degrees in liberal arts and recreation administration.



## **JENNIFER BRILLANTE**

Jennifer Brillante, Vice President of C & D Advertising, has had a lifelong passion for theme parks and waterparks that shows through the campaigns developed for Water Safari. She specializes in comprehensive advertising and marketing solutions through dynamic business strategy planning, media buying, digital & social media, promotions and cutting-edge video & graphic design. C & D Advertising has award-winning ideas and fresh innovations that have received national attention, but more importantly, measurable results. Brillante has focused on the client needs approach in her career to bring successful campaigns for clients. Brillante resides in upstate New York and loves to go on adventures with her husband, Chris and 3-year-old son, Giovanni. She is a graduate of Emerging Leaders and was named CNY's 40 under 40 Class of 2019.



### **JUSTIN BROWN**

Justin Brown is the Senior Manager of Water Quality and Environmental Affairs at Universal Orlando Resort. He is responsible for all water quality operations within the resort's three theme parks including seventeen pools and attractions at Universal's Volcano Bay, three water attractions at Universal's Islands of Adventure and dozens of fountains and interactive water features. Brown also oversees resort-wide aquatic weed control, storm water conveyance and hazardous waste disposal. He leads a team of skilled technicians and supervisors from a wide array of backgrounds including plumbing, electrical and industrial water treatment. Prior to joining the Universal Orlando Resort team, Brown was the Director of Aquatics at DelGrosso's Park and Laguna Splash in Tipton, Pennsylvania. In this role he was charged with the management of all waterpark operations including guest arrival, aquatic risk management, park services and maintenance. While at DelGrosso's and Laguna Splash, Brown led the company's largest park expansion project in its 72 year history which included a new main entrance, wave pool, "lazy" river and five new food venues. While earning his MBA at Penn State University, Brown served as the Coordinator of Aquatics at McCoy Natatorium. In this position he was responsible for all pool operations, special event coordination and risk management procedures for the university's aquatic center. Brown's lifeguards from Penn State University have excelled on the national level, starring in various American Red Cross training materials and winning the collegiate Guard Wars competition in 2013. Brown is passionate about teaching and developing pool operators, lifeguards and other aquatics personnel. He has an extensive background as a coach, instructor and aquatics administrator at the municipal, non-profit and higher education levels. He holds certifications as a Pool & Hot Tub Alliance Instructor, Emergency Medical Technician and Lifeguard Instructor Trainer. Originally from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Brown is a resident of Orlando, Florida. He is an avid road cyclist, runner and SCUBA diver.



### **CODY BUTCHER**

Cody Butcher brings Neuman Group a vast and diverse knowledge of waterpark facilities from an operational perspective. As the Aquatics Coordinator for a community association, he was responsible for the operations and staff of a large indoor and outdoor facility for five years. Butcher then spent ten years growing his knowledge and passion for aquatics with the Great Wolf Lodge organization. With experience in a variety of positions, he ultimately advanced his understanding and respect for the impact that operations have on the aquatics facility by acting as a Certified Pool/Spa Operator Instructor and by getting involved with the CMAHC and Jeff Ellis & Associates Advisory Board. Butcher cares about providing a safe and entertaining environment that exceeds guests' expectations while also addressing the challenges of efficiency and profitability in the corporate world.





## **BARRETT BYERS**

Barrett Byers is currently the General Manager at Hydro Adventures, a family entertainment center and seasonal waterpark in Southeast Missouri. He started his career in the amusement park industry in 1996 at Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio. While attending Fairmont State University in Fairmont, West Virginia, he was hired as a ride host at a college job fair. This sparked his interest in amusement parks and waterparks that would continue to grow and set the stage for his career. During his second season at Cedar Point, Byers joined the aquatic technician crew and was later promoted to seasonal leadership. Just after graduating from college, and while attending his first of 16 International Aquatic Safety School sessions, he was offered a full-time position at Cedar Point. As area manager of Challenge Park, he oversaw its many amusements and attractions, including the Sky Coaster, go-kart tracks, 32-hole mini-golf course, six hotel pools and spas, a mile-long beach, a petting zoo and the newly expanded Soak City. Byers has the distinction of being part of the management team that opened Cedar Point's first indoor waterpark, Castaway Bay. Shortly after marrying his wife, Elisa, he was offered the position of operations manager at Knott's Soak City in Palm Springs, California, a position he held for nine years. He was promoted to General Manager when the park changed to Wet 'n Wild Palm Springs. He worked at that location for an additional 18 months before accepting the Maintenance Manager position at Raging Waters Sacramento. In this role, Byers was involved with numerous capital projects, was liaison to the California Department of Safety and Health and assisted upper management with the daily difficulties involved in running an aging waterpark. Amidst this fulfilling opportunity, Byers decided to accept an offer from Hydro Adventures in Southeast Missouri as General Manager. At Hydro Adventures, he has been instrumental in every aspect of operations and maintenance. During his tenure, the park has added seven amusement rides including 2 rollercoasters, laser tag, a 40-game arcade and a tropical themed bar. Byers is a CPO, AFO, Ellis & Associates Instructor Trainer, NAARSO Level 1 inspector and AIMS Amusement ride and device level 1 inspector. Over the course of his career, Byers has been an enthusiastic and dedicated manager. He takes great pride in the fact that at least 12 of his past employees now work full-time as managers or above in the amusement park industry.



## **JUSTIN CARON**

Justin Caron has worked with more than 130 municipalities and park and recreation districts and at over 25 colleges and universities as they studied, planned, programmed, designed and constructed new or renovated aquatic centers. He has been particularly active in assisting Aquatic Design Group's clients with feasibility, needs assessment and master plan studies in the early stages of their projects to help them properly size, program and plan for a facility that is fiscally responsible. Caron received his MBA in 2009. One of the major focuses of his studies was accurately analyzing and predicting demographic and cultural changes and phenomena with regards to aquatic recreation. Caron is an accomplished speaker and author. He has presented multiple educational sessions at conferences for six national organizations and four regional organizations as well as having six articles published in national or international publications. Caron has also been a project manager for more than 150 completed aquatic facilities in 22 states around the country and seven countries around the world and routinely makes presentations to city council's, park and recreation boards, public forums and at college campuses relating to aquatic issues.



### **GEORGE CARPENTER**

George Carpenter, President and Founder of C&D Advertising, has over 40 years of experience in marketing, broadcasting, production & talent. Carpenter held the position of General Sales Manager for Regent Broadcasting, Utica prior to opening C & D Advertising in 1997. Carpenter has spent the past 18 years with a focus on advertising and marketing for the tourism industry. C & D Advertising is an award-winning integrated marketing agency delivering measurable results for their clients. "What motivates us is creating, implementing and managing a campaign that brings incredible results for our clients." Carpenter resides in Central New York with his wife, Sue. He loves giving back to his community through his involvement in rotary, his church and inspiring those around him.



### **TYLER CATANIA**

Tyler Catania is the Media Director at Zaiss & Company. He leads a team of analytical and creative thinkers to strategize media planning, implementation and analysis on traditional and digital media campaigns across industries. As a lover of digital technology, Catania cut his teeth in the world of digital marketing and social media, providing cost-effective, goal-oriented results to clients in family entertainment, education, automotive and more.



### **ERIC CHESTER**

Since 1998, Eric Chester has been the leading voice in attracting, managing, motivating and retaining the emerging workforce. As an in-the-trenches workplace researcher and thought-leader, Chester has cracked the code on the tactics and strategies companies that are recognized as "best places to work" in their respective industries are using to win the talent wars. *On Fire at Work: How Great Companies Ignite Passion in Their People without Burning Them Out* (2015) is Chester's 4th leadership book, featuring top-tier leaders of the world's best places to work who share their best practice strategies for getting employees to work harder, perform better and stay longer. His previous release, *Reviving Work Ethic: A Leader's Guide to Ending Entitlement and Restoring Pride in the Workforce* (2012) is the first business book on developing soft skills and core work ethic values since 1904. He is the Founder of The Center for Work Ethic Development and created a work ethic training curriculum that is being taught at hundreds of schools, colleges, workforce centers and organizations all over the world. Chester has delivered more than 2,000 paid keynote speeches on three continents and is a 2004 inductee into the National Speakers Association's acclaimed Hall of Fame. Companies that have invited Chester back multiple times to keynote annual conventions, conferences and meetings include Harley Davidson, McDonald's, Sprint, Great Clips and ALCOA, to name a few.



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OUR AMAZING WWA SHOW SPEAKERS –  
IN PERSON AND BY TWEETING YOUR  
THANKS TO #WWASHOW!**



## **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 has served on the WWA Government Relations Committee. Cirigliano was honored with an Executive Board Award from WWA in 2016. Cirigliano is a proud graduate of Rutgers University in 1986, and currently lives in Middletown, New Jersey with his daughters, Taylor & Allie.



## **CHAVONDA COCHRAN**

Chavonda Cochran joined Bolingbrook Park District in 2011. She brought more than 20 years of customer service and sales experience from the retail industry. She gained marketing knowledge at West Virginia State University and Roosevelt University. Her expertise includes recruiting, hiring and training diverse talent to achieve overall goals. Throughout her career, Cochran has conducted regional roll out meetings, opened new store locations, conducted train-the-trainer programs and exceeded sales projections. Cochran successfully merged six front desk teams into one team serving six locations. She has implemented an extensive new team member training program and serves as a leader for Bolingbrook Park District on customer service.



## **TYLER CURRIE**

Tyler Currie is currently the General Manager of Daytona Lagoon in Daytona Beach, Florida. He started as a seasonal lifeguard in 1996 at Soak City Cedar Point. He worked his way up to Supervisor at Soak City and at the end of the 1999 season had the opportunity to move out to California and take part in opening the first Knott's Soak City next to Knott's Berry Farm the summer of 2000. After opening the park, he then was asked to become the Operations Manager at the Second Knott's Soak City in San Diego, and later became the Operations/Maintenance Manager at that facility until 2007. In 2007, he became the General Manager of Knott's Soak City in Palm Springs. After the 2009 waterpark season, Currie moved back to San Diego to be the General Manager of Knott's Soak City San Diego until it was sold to SeaWorld at the end of 2012. He then had the opportunity to move up to Santa Clara and become the Director of Park Operations at California's Great America Amusement Park and Water Park and work very closely with the San Francisco 49ers on traffic/parking plans at the new stadium next to the park. Currie ended his 20-year career with Cedar Fair at the end of 2015. He joined the United Parks Team and made a quick stop at Hydro Adventures in Poplar Bluff, Missouri for one year. In 2017, he became the General Manager at Daytona Lagoon, a year-round family entertainment center with a seasonal (a long season) waterpark. Currie has been an Ellis & Associates Lifeguard Instructor since 2000 and held his CPO certification for many years. He has also always prided himself as a well-rounded employee with experience in both operations and maintenance, as well as in finance.





### **ROB DECKER**

With a career spanning 35 years, Rob Decker's focus has been to conceive and launch strategic initiatives to generate excitement for guests while leading the design and development of projects that in total exceed \$2 billion. With a love to entertain and create, the theme park/waterpark resort environment became his perfect laboratory. "When I approach a new project, I like to let the guest's voice lead me to create a better experience. The business case and market condition will shape the project, but ultimately my role is to create a strong sense of place, wonderment and fun for our guests." Decker recently retired as the Senior Vice President of Planning & Design for the Cedar Fair Entertainment Company after 20 years of service. Prior to joining Cedar Fair, he served as an architect and master planner at internationally recognized firms on the East Coast before taking a lead role as Design Director at Jack Rouse & Associates.



### **GEORGE DEINES**

George Deines is a Studio Director for Counsilman-Hunsaker, specializing in aquatic facility feasibility studies. He has 24 years of experience in the aquatics industry and holds degrees from the University of North Texas and Dallas Theological Seminary. He spent the past four years as Chair of the World Waterpark Association's Safety Committee, on which he still serves, and received the WWA Kelly Ogle Memorial Safety Award in 2012.



### **CARVIN DIGIOVANNI**

Carvin DiGiovanni has been employed by The Pool & Hot Tub Alliance (formerly known as the Association of Pool & Spa Professionals) from 1990 to the present. He currently is Vice President for Technical and Standards where he directs PHTA's standards and technical programs. He was recently presented with the International Code Council Affiliate Award "in recognition of his service and commitment to the development of codes and standards in the interest of public safety." DiGiovanni worked to create WWA's first ANSI-approved standard for the waterpark industry, "ANSI/APSP-9 2005 American Nation Standard for Aquatic Recreational Facilities." He also worked on the International Code Council (ICC) to get the contents of the aforementioned ANSI waterpark standard into the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code (ISPSA). To date, this code has been adopted into law in 21 states and 119 local jurisdictions. DiGiovanni's accomplishments in the standards and technical arena has positioned the PHTA as the authority on pools, spas and hot tubs to government, regulators and consumers. He holds a master's degree in industrial safety from New York University and a second master's degree in supervision and administration from the City University of New York.



### **NATALIE DUNLAP**

Natalie Dunlap leads SharedLABS, a full services digital marketing and web services business which includes website design and development, digital marketing, social media and full-scale production services. For over 16 years, Dunlap has led teams in creating successful marketing and advertising strategies which offer high-quality creative and innovative strategies for both B2B and B2C clients. Prior to SharedLABS, she was founder and CEO of Media Mix, a full-service advertising agency. She holds a degree in behavior psychology from the University of North 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, thirty 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 InDepth™ approach that is applied to all aspects of project management and development. A registered architect with over thirty years' experience at ADG specializing in aquatics, Dunn oversees all design/build projects. His portfolio includes many of the most prestigious waterparks in the country. His work has received numerous awards over the years including several WWA Leading Edge awards, an *Aquatics International* Dream Designs award, multiple IAAPA Brass Ring awards and a WWA Executive Board Award. 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) on which he serves as a board member. Dunn graduated from SUNY Buffalo with a degree in architecture.



## **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.



## **GARY FOLEY**

Gary Foley has more than 35 years experience in amusement park and attractions management, customer service, team development and train-the-trainer leadership facilitation. A lifelong passion, Foley began his career in Ocean City, New Jersey with Gillian's Wonderland Piers and Gillian's Island Water Theme Park as a frontline team member in 1976. Very soon he was appointed to the Director of Human Resources and then to Director of Operations for both parks. In 2009, Foley was offered the General Manager job at a new, 58,000-square-foot indoor water theme park in West Berlin, New Jersey. Now established as the guy who makes it happen, Foley was sought out in 2011 to serve as Chief Operating Officer and open iPlay America, the new, 120,000-square-foot indoor, multi-purpose entertainment complex in Freehold, New Jersey. In 2015, Foley was again tapped to join the Funplex Amusement Center, a company with two New Jersey locations in Mount Laurel and East Hanover. Joining the company as Chief Operating Officer, Foley achieved his primary purpose to restructure the businesses, developing and implementing systems to increase profits and grow the enterprise to ensure financial strength and operating efficiency. A key to

Foley's success in this industry is his zest for learning. He takes advantage of the resources provided by IAAPA and the WWA, including workshops on hospitality to business development, to marketing, to training and operations. Foley is also on staff at Zaiss & Company, the marketing collaborative that specializes in FEC/waterpark brand building.



### **BLAKE FORD**

Blake Ford is the Director of Aquatics for Great Wolf Lodge New England. Prior to joining Great Wolf Lodge, 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 serves on the 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.



### **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.



### **REED GONZALEZ**

Reed Gonzalez brought a unique perspective to WTI when he started in 2014. He has more than 10 years of experience working at an amusement and waterpark including two years as waterpark manager and operator. At WTI, he initially designed mechanical rooms with special focus on functionality for future operators using the space by properly sizing and locating equipment for long-term success. He now manages waterpark projects from design through construction by working closely with clients, architects and other project consultants. His knowledge of park procedures has helped WTI to focus their designs on operational efficiency and his experience is an incredible asset to his clients at WTI.



### **LAUREN GOSSETT**

Lauren Gossett is the Recreation Proprietor for Disney's Contemporary Resort. In her current position, she is responsible for managing the overall operation of recreation which includes pools, cabanas, the fitness center, the arcade, marina operations with day time rentals and nightly fireworks cruises, resort activities and special events. In her role, she also leads a team of Guest Experience Managers, Coordinators and 80+ Cast Members. Gossett has worked with Walt Disney World® Resorts for the past 14 years in various sports and recreation roles and also had the opportunity to open Aulani, a Disney Resort & Spa. She studied at Western Illinois University getting her bachelor's degree in recreation, parks and tourism administration and her master's degree in sport management.



## **SANDRA GREINER**

Currently Sun Splash Family Waterpark's General Manager, Sandra (or Sandie, as her colleagues know her) Greiner was hired by the City of Cape Coral, owner of Sun Splash, to utilize her prior banking, management and finance knowledge to bring the park alive, make money and bring good publicity to the City of Cape Coral. In her first year, she increased revenue by 34 percent and decreased expenses by 9 percent. By her third year the waterpark was profitable, posting the best numbers since the park was opened in 1992. Sun Splash's main building was lost in a fire on July 7, 2016, but through hard work, she and the team were able to rebuild a Guest Relations area that better serves her guests. Her goal is to always give the guest an "added value" experience so they keep coming back year after year.



## **BILLY HAMILTON**

Billy Hamilton has more than 40 years of experience in the swimming pool industry with 36 of those years spent as Water Quality Manager at Wet 'n Wild in Orlando, Fla. Hamilton is currently a Water Quality Supervisor for Universal's Volcano Bay waterpark. During his time with Wet 'n Wild, Hamilton was responsible for all pools and water, including a lake and played a major role in the development and design of new rides. Hamilton has been called upon frequently during his years at Wet 'n Wild and Universal to share his knowledge. Hamilton is a CPO instructor and enthusiastically teaches and shares his knowledge with others. He is an accomplished and respected leader in the water quality field. Hamilton lives his passion for water quality, safety and excellence in the industry on a daily basis. He is a true water lover at work and away. Hamilton is an avid offshore fisherman and enjoys being out on the ocean. Hamilton has been married for 38 years to Cerinda, has one grown daughter and a lovely 2 year old granddaughter, and resides in central Florida. Hamilton served on the WWA Board of Directors and was a 2014 WWA Executive Board Award recipient.



## **MARK C. HATCHEL, PLA, ASLA**

Mark C. Hatchel, PLA, ASLA, is one of the most experienced commercial and municipal waterpark designers in the United States with over thirty years of park design experience. He is a Vice President and Senior Project Manager with Kimley-Horn & Associates. Prior to joining Kimley-Horn, he served as Director of Architectural Services at Wet'n Wild International, 1993-1997, and as Vice-President of Design and Development, Schiltebahn Waterparks/NBGS International, 1997-1999. His first municipal pool project was in 1980. Since that time, Hatchel has done over 150 commercial and municipal waterpark projects ranging in budget from \$500,000 to over \$30 million throughout the United States and in Brazil, China, Mexico and Turkey. In 2008, Hatchel was named to *Aquatics International's* "Power 25" list. He has been a featured speaker at WWA and numerous parks and recreation conferences. Hatchel's projects have received numerous awards including industry leadership and innovation awards from WWA's Board of Directors. Since joining Kimley-Horn, Hatchel has completed over thirty-five aquatic projects during the past 12 years. He is currently leading a number of aquatic system master plan and aquatic design projects nationwide.



## **TINA HATCHER**

Tina Hatcher is the President of 3i Advertising/ PR. In her 31-year marketing and public relations career, she has spent 28 of them working with waterparks and attraction venues. She specializes in developing brand/ image campaigns, traditional media, digital and social media platforms, public relations, promotions, special events and creating revenue generating programs for parks. Her work over the years has received WWA Wave Review Awards and Addy Awards for creative and campaign conception. Hatcher serves on the WWA's Marketing & Communications Committee. Hatcher has been married for 24 years to her better half, Tom, has a 14-year old daughter and resides in South Florida. She can be reached at [tina@3iadvertising.com](mailto:tina@3iadvertising.com).



### **JENNIFER HATFIELD**

Jennifer Hatfield has more than 15 years of legislative and regulatory experience. She has spent the last 9 years working as the managing member of J. Hatfield & Associates, PL, a government consulting business based out of Rockledge, Florida. Hatfield provides clients with federal, state and local legislative and regulatory services that include: analyzing and monitoring legislation and regulatory rulemaking; lobbying legislative and regulatory bodies; drafting amendments, petitions for declaratory statements, public comments and various other documents; and specializing in state and national building code processes, code proposal submittals and national consensus standard processes as well as energy efficiency and construction contractor issues. In addition, the firm provides grassroots advocacy development with trade associations and advisement on political action committees and their decisions on supporting candidates for elected office. Hatfield has represented the pool & spa industry since 2006, first as the Florida Swimming Pool Association In-house Government Relations Director and then as their Government Relations Consultant from August 2010 through September 2018. She began working with the Pool & Hot Tub Alliance (formerly the Association of Pool & Spa Professionals), a national trade association, in 2008 and has been their Government Affairs Director since 2010. Past clients include the Florida Solar Energy Industries Association, the National Utility Contractors Association of Florida, the National Swimming Pool Foundation (now part of the Pool & Hot Tub Alliance) and various product manufacturers. She also continues to teach code and licensure classes to Florida contractors and speaks to groups on advocacy best practices. Hatfield has a bachelor of arts in government from the College of William & Mary and is a graduate of the Frederic G. Levin College of Law at the University of Florida. She is a member of the Florida Bar and previously worked at the Florida legislature as a committee attorney for the Florida House of Representatives.



### **DAVID HEATON**

David Heaton has worked for SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment for more than 20 years. He began his career in 1997 at Water Country USA in Williamsburg, Virginia as a seasonal leader in admissions. He spent the next several years progressing through seasonal leadership roles in operations at both Water Country USA and Busch Gardens Williamsburg with responsibility for water safety, ride operations, admissions and park quality. Heaton joined the salaried management team in 2003 and was promoted to Director of Operations at WCUSA in 2005. He moved to Orlando, Florida in 2011; and during that time, has served as the Director of Operations for both Aquatica and SeaWorld Orlando. In 2017, Heaton was promoted to Vice President, Aquatica Orlando and enjoys being back at Aquatica Orlando, as he has always had a passion for waterparks.



### **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 Admissions & Promotions Coordinator where she oversees the sale of tickets and passes and is the onsite contact for special events. She also recently became certified as an instructor with Ellis & Associates so she can assist with hiring and training lifeguards. Hee-Johnston currently 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.



## **ED HODGDON**

Ed Hodgdon has been employed at Funtown Splashtown USA continuously since 2001, and seasonally since 1998. He got his start in the business at age 16, selling individual ride tickets and all-day bracelets at the park. He held many seasonal front-line and supervisory positions until in 2001 when he was promoted to a Group Sales Assistant. Since that time, he has worked extensively on the park's marketing campaigns, handled press relations, on top of working in group and corporate sales. In 2006, Hodgdon was appointed to the Board of Directors of the New England Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions. He has served on many committees, and in 2011 was appointed to the position of Association Secretary, effectively handling day-to-day operations for the nation's oldest attractions 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 Pool & Hot Tub Alliance's (formerly 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.



## **NICOLE HUDSON**

Nicole Hudson is the Walt Disney World Manager of Hotels and Resorts Recreation for The Walt Disney Company. In her current position, she leads a team that is responsible for managing the overall resort strategy for recreation. In her role, she is responsible for setting holistic standards, driving new initiatives, consulting on new build designs and delivering new assets, maintaining safety requirements, leading global safety initiatives, providing global consultation to all Walt Disney Company sites and providing operational support. Hudson has worked with Walt Disney World® Resorts for the past 15 years in various sports and recreation roles. She studied at Saint Ambrose University getting her bachelor's degree in international business.





### **RANDALL HUDSON**

A reformed banker turned waterpark group sales expert, Randall Hudson's background in banking has given him a unique approach to serving clients in the waterpark industry. Hudson got his start with Hawaiian Falls Waterpark in Mansfield, Texas as a Group Sales Manager in 2010 following the banking collapse.

His success quickly moved him into the GM role by the summer of 2012, but he always kept selling. While in banking, he was recruited by 3 of the top banks at that time, at each bank he quickly became a top performer. While with Hawaiian Falls Mansfield, he quickly turned the park into one of the top destinations for families and groups in DFW. Fast forward to November of 2018, he is now Director of Sales for Epic Waters Indoor Waterpark. Hudson will be leading the way for group sales for American Resort Management as their expansion and reach continues to grow. This has been spurred after the successful launch of Epic Waters Indoor Waterpark in 2018. In his 5 months so far with Epic Waters, he has helped to almost double group sales revenue through his aggressive, yet relationship-building approach to the business.



### **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).



### **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, she was with the firm of Water Technology, Inc., for 12 years as a Marketing and Operations Consultant. She returned to public life in 2007 as

the Director of Community Programs for the City of Summit, N.J. until her recent retirement in 2019. Under her leadership, the Summit Family Aquatic Center grew into one of the most awarded municipal pools in the country. She is now President of JLJ Enterprises LLC. Known internationally as a speaker and author, Leblein Joseph's specialty in marketing and promotions has proven quite valuable to her clients. Her 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 recently earned the distinction of being awarded all of the WWA major awards with the addition of the Kelly Ogle Memorial Safety Award in 2019. Leblein Josephs served as host for the WWA General Session for 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 also had a career both in television and talk radio in New Jersey. Leblein Josephs has a knack for making learning a memorable and enjoyable event.



## **DUSTIN KAUFFMAN**

Dustin Kauffman is the North America 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 8+ 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 *World Waterpark 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 annual show.



## **GENO KLOIBER**

Geno Kloiber is the Director of Waterpark Operations at the Springs Waterpark at The Ingleside Hotel in Pewaukee, Wisconsin. Prior to his current position, Kloiber has worked as an Executive Committee member and the Director of Operations at several indoor waterpark hotels including Timber

Ridge, CocoKey and Kalahari Resort. He's an experienced operator involved with renovations, development and openings of multiple hotel/water resorts in Texas, Ohio and Illinois. Kloiber is currently an instructor and Instructor-Trainer candidate with Jeff Ellis & Associates, as well as a lifeguard instructor and former Instructor-Trainer for the American Red Cross. He has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Michigan, and he serves on the WWA Waterpark Resort Committee. Kloiber is a proud father of 2 teenagers who are Ellis lifeguards as well.



## **KAROL KOMAR**

Karol Komar is the Facilities Manager for the Tinley Park-Park District. She has been active in the recreation industry for 22 years. Komar's career began with the district as the fitness center manager. In 2001, Komar was appointed to Facilities Manager, responsible for the new 70,000-square-foot Bettenhausen

Recreation Center, White Water Canyon, a 5 acre waterpark, in addition to overseeing the current fitness center. Since 2001 the original waterpark has gained a spray ground and the new fitness center and indoor pool opened in 2013. Komar is involved in all aspects of these properties including marketing, sales, maintenance, lifeguard, staff training, membership accusation and also in-house concessions. In 2013, Komar and her staff were presented with the Executive Director's Award from the National Drowning Prevention Alliance. Komar was the recipient of the World Waterpark Association's Kelly Ogle Memorial Safety Award in 2014 and is currently the Chair of the WWA's Public Sector Committee.



## **SUSAN KRUIZINGA**

Susan Kruizinga is a veteran executive of the marketing, sports and entertainment industries having spent the past ten years in the waterpark industry, starting with Hawaiian Falls Waterparks, which included the startup of three new waterparks in Dallas, Waco and Austin, Texas. In the fall of 2015, Kruizinga joined

the team starting a new waterpark in the Houston area to create and implement a sponsorship program, in addition to developing the programming schedule for Typhoon Texas. Due to the success of that park, Kruizinga was recruited to join the Premier Parks team and assist in the rebranding and building of a waterpark in Toronto, Ontario, Canada and began this project in September of 2016. Kruizinga currently holds the role of Director of Sales and Marketing for Wet'n'Wild Toronto. Prior to her waterpark experience, Kruizinga was with K1 International Sports Marketing & Events based in Arlington, Texas where, as Vice-President, she directed the day to day efforts for all marketing, event management and tour management contracts for multi-sport events. Prior to leading K1 Events, Kruizinga founded and built the London Sports Council in London, Ontario, Canada and served as its Executive Director. Through



coordination with The City of London as well as the Chamber and CVB, Kruizinga developed backing for an initiative to increase the presence of sports and sport events at all levels of play to better serve the community and create additional economic impact for the city. Some of her projects included: development of the London Sports Hall of Fame and Annual Dinner, securing Ontario Winter and Summer Games and creation of a kids' sport program. Kruizinga is a graduate of The University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada where she received an honors B.A. in recreation.



### **JESSICA RALLES LAGUNA**

Jessica Ralles Laguna has been an American Red Cross certified lifeguard for over 25 years and is currently also an American Red Cross Lifeguard Instructor, Water Safety Instructor and Water Safety Instructor Trainer. She has been working in aquatics as a Program Supervisor with Clark County Parks & Recreation in Las Vegas, Nevada since 2004. With Clark County, Laguna oversees year-round urban aquatic facilities as well as smaller seasonal swimming pools in outlying rural communities. Previously, she worked for a small city in California where she was certified under Ellis as a lifeguard and Lifeguard Instructor. After so many years in aquatics, she is always looking for new ways to train and motivate staff.



### **NATALIE LIVINGSTON, CPRP**

Natalie Livingston, CPRP, is a 22 year veteran of the aquatics industry. She is currently a Vice President of Oostman Aquatic Safety Consulting focusing on accident and drowning investigations, litigation support and consulting and training programs for aquatics operations. She was previously the General Manager of the Wave Waterpark in Vista, California for 10 years and has worked at both public and private facilities including Six Flags Hurricane Harbor, Knott's Soak City Buena Park and the City of Vista. Livingston studied education at Biola University and is currently a trainer of lifeguard Instructor Trainers. She is an AFO, CPO, Certified Park & Recreation Professional (CPRP) and serves on the WWA Board of Directors. Livingston has been recognized with numerous safety awards including Manager of the Year for the City of Vista, Decade of Aquatic Excellence from Ellis & Associates, Board of Directors' awards and SWIM! Awards from the WWA, and Best Public Sector Waterpark and Best Lifeguard Management from *Aquatics International*. Livingston is passionate about aquatic safety, and training and development. She currently resides in California with her husband and two kids.



### **JOSH MARTIN**

Josh Martin serves as President & Creative Director of Martin Aquatic Design & Engineering, a firm that has completed more than 2,200 projects in its 30+ year history, including themed entertainment features and attractions for clients such as Walt Disney World, SeaWorld and Universal Orlando Resort, as well as numerous family entertainment centers and municipal/public sector parks and aquatic facilities. Martin designs world-class water features for the resort and theme park industries, creating engaging water to produce compelling guest experiences and memorable aquatic moments. In addition, Martin has experience as an aquatic master planner and is regularly retained to prepare feasibility studies for new developments and renovations in the hospitality sector. He has helped shape the communal gathering places within major tourist and shopping destinations as well as onboard the open decks for cruise lines such as Royal Caribbean. Martin is an expert on the topic of aquatic design and has presented to the United States Public Health Board on the subject of water safety as a consultant for the cruise industry.



## **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.



## **ANDREW MAUREK**

Andy Maurek began his waterpark industry career in 1979 hosing the sand off guests' feet just before they rode down the newly installed waterslide at Hyland Hills Water World in Denver, Colo. The following years included seasonal positions in all of Water World's department's, eventually settling in as the Operations Director on the Management team. Maurek was responsible for developing recruiting, training and leadership programs, building and managing the safety and operations departments and providing creative direction for over 30 years to Hyland Hills. Maurek has served on, shared with and developed programs for multiple industry communities including the IAAPA Waterpark, Education and Membership Committees, National Aquatic Safety Company, Ellis & Associates, American Red Cross lifeguarding programs, the World Waterpark Association and the National and Colorado Park and Recreation Associations. In his current role as VP of Business Development for Proslide Technology Inc., Maurek is extremely excited to share his experience, knowledge and expertise to help the waterpark industry design, develop and build the "world's best waterparks."



## **CHRIS NAWRACAJ**

Chris Nawracaj has more than 10 years of experience in the waterpark industry. Currently, he is the General Manager at Deep River Waterpark. He also serves as the park's graphic designer and resident technology geek/specialist. In 2010, he obtained his master's degree in technology from Purdue University while completing graduate research on determining the effectiveness of social media marketing. He is a member of the WWA's Technology & Innovations Committee. Nawracaj truly loves the industry; when not working he can usually be found traveling to or reading about different amusement and waterparks throughout the world.



### **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.



### **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.



### **CHRISTINE PALMA**

Christine Palma is the General Manager of The Funplex in Mount Laurel, N.J., and has worked in the theme park/waterpark industry for over 20 years. She started her career as a front-line employee with Six Flags Great Adventure in N.J. In over ten years with SFGA, she worked in numerous management roles including Security Supervisor, Waterpark Manager and Park Services Manager. She was also part of the team who opened the new Hurricane Harbor-New Jersey in 2000. In 2005, she accepted a job at Breakwater Beach Waterpark. During her tenure as Operations Manager, Breakwater Beach was the winner of the Kelly Ogle Memorial Safety Award for significant contribution to guest and employee safety. Recently, she has accepted the position of General Manager at The Funplex in Mount Laurel, N.J., where she is excited to oversee a waterpark, an indoor/outdoor ride park and a bowling alley. Palma has been an instructor with Jeff Ellis & Associates, an Instructor-Trainer with NASCO, a N.J. Emergency Medical Technician and holds a B.S. in business management from Rowan University.



### **GEORGE PANTAN**

George Pantan 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. Pantan'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, Pantan 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, Pantan 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, Pantan 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 five years of lifeguard training and certification with both Ellis & Associates and NASCO.



## **JOHN PHAM**

John Pham started working at Typhoon Texas in December 2015 after graduating from Sam Houston State University with a bachelor of business administration degree. He began his full-time career at Typhoon Texas as the Operations Manager overseeing water safety and admissions where he became certified as an instructor with Ellis & Associates. In 2017, Pham transitioned roles to be the Business Manager overseeing point of sales, admissions, partnerships, social media and guests experience. He is always seeking out new opportunities to develop others. Prior to joining Typhoon Texas Waterpark, Pham worked as a real estate agent in the State of Texas, where he focused on commercial leasing and residential sales. Pham is enrolled as a student at Houston Baptist University where he is pursuing his master's in business administration.



## **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 has been 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 WWA's Children's Drowning Prevention Council and the WWA's insurance program.



## **ANTHONY "TJ" POLLACK**

Anthony "TJ" Pollack is the Regional Human Resources Manager for Campus Cooks. He has worked for more than 15 years in the aquatics industry for both the public and private sectors. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in business administration and holds certifications as an Aquatic Facility Operator, SAI Lifeguard Instructor and SAI Swim Instructor. He has worked with three major aquatics risk management companies and has worked in hotel waterparks including KeyLime Cove Water Resort, which is now a Great Wolf Lodge. He contributes to organizations in aquatics and hospitality and serves on the WWA's Waterpark Resort Committee.



## **WINTER PROSAPIO**

Winter Prosapio recently joined The Atkins Group, an ad agency based in San Antonio and focused on tourism and travel, as Communications Director. She has worked in a lead communications role for organizations as diverse as Schlitterbahn Waterparks and Resorts, the San Antonio Public Library and the Texas Credit Union League, as well as Fiesta Texas (now Six Flags Fiesta Texas) in its inaugural season. At Schlitterbahn, Prosapio led corporate communications, digital content strategy, PR, media relations and government relations for the company during 2013-2019. Prosapio has a B.S. degree in political science from the University of Texas El Paso, is an active volunteer in her community and is a published author and humor columnist. She serves on WWA's Government Relations Committee.



### **ROBIN RITZ**

Certified Playground Safety Inspector, Robin Ritz is creative visionary and Owner at InCord Play, where she has been involved with administration, training, HR, strategy and sales for over two decades. Ritz has worked within the waterpark industry for over 10 years & is passionate about safety—and excited when form can meet function. Drawing from her past experiences abroad and years of professional development, she empowers multi-cultural 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.



### **MEG ROBACK**

A firm partner, registered architect and project manager with over 25 years of experience, Meg Roback led the highly skilled design team who shaped The Kartrite Resort and Indoor Waterpark in New York's Catskill Mountains. She believes that good design is good business. Her enthusiastic, client-centered approach shows how design transforms and enhances guest experiences in waterparks across the country. Roback plays a key role in ADCI's Hospitality Team, a group of talented design professionals who create many of the most successful indoor waterpark resorts in the U.S. Roback graduated from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee with a bachelor of science degree in architectural studies. ADCI has designed more indoor waterpark resorts than any other firm in the world by a factor of 10, including Kalahari Resort in the Poconos, Camelback Lodge and Indoor Waterpark (PA), Wilderness at the Smokies (TN) and Great Wolf Lodges across the country. ADCI's designs have received numerous WWA awards over the years including multiple Leading Edge awards.



### **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.



### **SHAWN ROBY, CPRP**

Shawn Roby, CPRP, is the Executive Director for the Tinley Park-Park District in Tinley Park, Illinois. He has been in the recreation industry for 12 years after 14 years in the hospitality industry. Roby began his career in the recreation industry with a municipal parks department as the special events supervisor but quickly took over as the department head. In 2013, he was responsible for the replacement of the community pool from start to finish at a cost of \$2.5 million. The installation of the pool was an instant hit with the public and immediately took a pool budget that lost money due to high opening cost to a net profit generator. In 2017, Roby was selected as the Executive Director of the Tinley Park-Park District. Roby has associate and bachelor degrees in accounting, a master's in business administration and is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional.



## **TAYLOR ROBY**

Taylor Roby is currently the Assistant Director of Aquatics for Campus Recreation at the University of Texas at San Antonio in San Antonio, Texas. She holds a bachelor's degree in kinesiology from the University of Texas-Arlington and a master's degree in recreation management from Texas State University. Roby has worked in various aquatic roles throughout the years including municipalities, private higher education and public higher education institutions. She has a passion for all things aquatics, water safety and student development. She currently serves as the President for the Central Texas Aquatics Association and has spoken at NIRSA regional and national conferences in the past.



## **PETER ROSS**

Peter Ross is the co-founder of 829 Studios, a mid-sized marketing firm based in Boston, Massachusetts. Ross has defined the vision, strategy and culture of 829 Studios since its founding in 2007. It has been his mission to help clients transform their data into strategy and provide an integrated approach that blends creativity with technological sophistication. He is constantly hunting for new opportunities that clients can leverage to achieve differentiation, develop competitive advantages and better communicate their brand story. Ross received his Executive MBA from Imperial College London and primarily focuses his time on business consulting, marketing strategy, site architecture, frontend/backend development, SEO/SEM and interactive media. Last year, his team was awarded two Adrian Awards by the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMAI) for their work on OceanEdge.com and Oars.com. Ross serves on the Board of Advisors for the Family Travel Association, America Outdoors Association and TedXKenmore Square. Other notable clients include Stanford University, Oxfam, Black & Decker and BitSight.



## **KLINT RUDOLPH**

Klint Rudolph is a founding partner of The Xcite Group, a digital advertising agency based in Denver, Colorado. The Xcite Group is a Google-certified, full-service, digital marketing agency. Xcite takes a holistic look at all available data and pays close attention to consumer behaviors in today's multi-device, always connected world in order to help keep their client's website and company in front of their audience when they need them. With a background in theater, stage performance and as a lead singer in a rock band, Rudolph is more than just a computer geek. He is digital marketing strategist who speaks nationally on radio shows and conferences. Rudolph has also presented in Mountain View, California at Google headquarters educating agencies around the world on agency best practices. Rudolph has an advertising background that started in the "Yellow Pages" industry. When he and his partners realized the opportunity to help businesses be more efficient and effective in their strategy, they formed Xcite. Following Google like a lost puppy, he travels to the Google campus on a regular basis. By following the leadership style and culture modeled by Google, he has a prospering Google Partner Agency that ranks in the top 10 percent nationally and has won multiple awards including Top Digital Marketing Agencies 2015 and Top Web Design Firms 2016. By keeping up with the pace of business success stories online, Rudolph can demonstrate the growth potential that is truly possible using the Internet to its highest potential.



**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 has completed more than 600 studies of indoor and outdoor waterparks. He maintains databases concerning performance figures of indoor waterpark resorts, resorts with outdoor waterparks and stand-alone outdoor waterparks. Sangree was named one of *Aquatics International's* "2019 Power People" 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.



**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, including Lifeguard Instructor Trainer and 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 NRPA. 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.



**ALICIA M. SMITH, ESQUIRE**

Alicia M. Smith is a trial attorney who has spent nearly 20 years representing the amusement, sports and entertainment industries. She has obtained defense verdicts and dismissals on behalf of her clients throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Florida.

Having recently returned to Florida, she continues to represent the industry as a shareholder with the law firm of Marshall, Dennehey, Warner, Coleman and Goggin in their Tampa location. Smith received her Juris Doctorate from Florida State University along with her master's degree in international affairs in 1999 all while working with the Florida Senate Transportation Community. An avid traveler and lover of languages, she has worked as a waitress in the Alps, studied in Oxford, repaired a roof in Fiji and married in Italy. Having been raised up in a small family business, Smith's favorite aspects of her career are the people she has met and the perspectives they have given her. Her proudest moment is a trial win obtained during a tornado. Her number one litigation survival tip is a sense of humor, but never in writing.



## **KIMBERLY SMITH**

Kimberly Smith joined Bolingbrook Park District in 2000 as the district's first Marketing Coordinator. Over the past 15 years, she has grown the district's marketing and customer care department to a team of five full-time staff and 20 part-time staff members. She earned her B.S. degree in business administration from

Carroll University and her master's of strategy, leadership and management from Michigan State. Smith gained sports marketing experience with the Milwaukee Wave, Milwaukee Bucks and Pettit National Ice Center. While holding those positions, she assisted with national and international skating events, including Olympic Trials and World Championships for speed-skating, game-day operations and overall ticket sales. She then moved to the non-profit sector working with the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago. Smith has applied her diverse work experience to Bolingbrook Park District where she now manages the district's marketing, communications and customer care functions.



## **MANDY SMITH**

Mandy Smith has nearly 20 years' experience working in the travel industry—primarily focused on museums. She has served as a director of sales and account management, headed up visitor experiences at Chabot Space and Science Center and taught a course on museums and technology at the University of San

Francisco. She currently works on the Experiences team for TripAdvisor helping attractions optimize their TripAdvisor listing.



## **RYAN G. SNYDER**

Raised in a family of inventors, engineers and artisans, Ryan G. Snyder, as a formally trained design/build architect, now focuses on the product & business development of sustainable entertainment solutions with Infinite Kingdoms. Snyder is a versatile, creative professional with over 30 years' experience in storytelling,

full scope branding/apparel design, architecture/planning, themed entertainment, resorts, product development, manufacturing and construction. With over 20 years of extensive experience in leisure entertainment and related aquatic facility development, Snyder has served in lead design & development positions with WhiteWater West Industries and Aquatic Development Group. Past clientele have included Disney Resorts, Kalahari Resorts and Wilderness Resorts, Six Flags, Warner Bros. and a wide variety of unique adventure, Olympic, parks and recreation and educational memory-making venues globally. Snyder is also the founder and Immersive Experience Officer of Immersive LEAP and Immersive Aquatics where he combines a child's-eye perspective with operational, fabrication & construction practicality while applying a hands-on partnership approach to innovative product and project development. Holding a professional master's of architecture/professional practice degree from Norwich University, Snyder's favorite questions are "Why?" and "Why not?"



## **DANA STANIUNAS**

Dana Staniunas began his career in the indoor waterpark industry in March of 2003 as Operations Manager of Splash Lagoon Indoor Water Park Resort in Erie, Penn. Having no waterpark experience, he dove into the position, learning all about aquatics, building maintenance, water chemistry and team

development. Fast forward to 2005, he was recruited to be part of the new management team for the Massanutten WaterPark, slated to open at the end of that year. He began as the Assistant WaterPark Manager, earning the manager title a short 6 months later, and was promoted to Director of Recreation at Massanutten in 2012. Staniunas is widely regarded throughout the country as a knowledgeable source of information about the indoor waterpark business. He is regularly called upon to help new parks—whether that is with best hiring practices, locations of break rooms, pump rooms, arcades or food service areas. He keeps a clean and safe park and continues to improve the guest experience with meticulous attention to detail and training. Massanutten WaterPark is one of the top attractions in the state and that is surely due to his commitment to the business, his team and the industry.





### **SCOTT STEFANC**

As a programmer, designer and project manager, Scott Stefanc has over 23 years' experience in the design & development of aquatic facilities including waterparks, splashpads, aquatic centers and aquatic amenities for resorts & hotels. He joined the Vortex team in 2013, and in his consultative role, assists clients with complex projects to achieve unique, entertaining and commercially successful attractions. Stefanc has worked on projects throughout the world with both traditional and design-build delivery methods. His past clients include Wet'n'Wild Sydney, Dreamworld, Great Wolf Resorts, Universal, Disney, Wanda, Hilton, Marriott, Kalahari Resorts, Center Parcs and numerous city and county parks departments. He travels to engineering, landscape architecture and other design firms and organizations, educating designers and clients on the integration of aquatic play attractions. He has also participated as a speaker for many industry organizations including WWA, IAAPA and NRPA. Stefanc holds a bachelor of landscape architecture degree from Iowa State University. He lives in the Des Moines area and enjoys the outdoors (particularly kayaking and hiking) and is a volunteer with his local Scouts BSA Troop.



### **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.



### **JENNA STEVENSON, AQP**

Jenna Stevenson, AQP, is the Aquatics Superintendent for the City of Baytown and an Event Director and Safety Coordinator for Swim Across America. She holds a master of science degree in sports management and has been involved in aquatics for 18 years. Stevenson loves everything about water from the lifeguard brick test to kayaking to long distance open water swimming.

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## **ANGELA SUMMERS**

Angela Summers, Recreation Services Manager for the City of Henderson, was born and raised in Northern California and started her recreation profession as a lifeguard for the Greater Vallejo Recreation District. During her career, she has worked for recreation facilities in California, Hawaii, Japan and, most recently, in Nevada. In 2003, she graduated with a bachelor of science degree in recreation and leisure studies from California State University, Sacramento and she is currently finishing her master's of science degree in recreation administration. In April 2008, Summers joined the City of Henderson's Parks and Recreation Department and has brought an enormous amount of creativity and leadership to her department. With expertise in the areas of leadership, communication, management, internal and external customer service, Summers provides new perspectives and fresh ideas that promote growth and development within the parks and recreation industry. Since 2008, Summers has served as the Pacific Southwest Region Representative on the board of directors for the National Aquatic Branch (NAB), a branch of NRPA; as a President and Past President for the Nevada Recreation and Parks Society-Aquatic Committee; and as the Swimming Lesson Committee Chair for the Southern Nevada Child Drowning Prevention Coalition. She is currently serving as the President of the Nevada Recreation & Park Society. Summers has conducted various training sessions at state and national levels where she stresses the importance of professional networking, mentoring and community involvement to further enhance recreational programming, teamwork and superior customer service. As a professional speaker, leader and mentor, Summers' goal is to educate recreation professionals on the key elements needed to motivate, spark creativity and create positive working environments that promote leadership and produce future leaders.



## **MEREDITH TEKIN, BCCS**

Meredith Tekin, BCCS, is the president of the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards. After years working in healthcare, marketing, professional development and nonprofit spaces, she joined IBCCES to help further its mission of improving the lives of individuals with cognitive disorders. She has shared the impact of IBCCES' work at many international and domestic industry conferences, and is a key liaison for IBCCES partners such as SeaWorld, Mayo Clinic, top-tier universities and others. Tekin understands the purpose-driven components of autism and cognitive disorder training as well as the critical industry-specific metrics and benefits of certification. When she's not working, Tekin enjoys spending quality time with her two large lap dogs and husband in Jacksonville, Fla. Tekin graduated cum laude from University of North Florida with a degree in communications and is a Board Certified Cognitive Specialist (BCCS) through IBCCES.



## **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.



## **MELISSA TIMCO**

Beginning her professional amusement industry career at IAAPA as a marketing intern in 2009, Melissa Timco started out maintaining online content and fine-tuning details for the association's upcoming events. Eventually this segued into an opportunity with Premier Rides' (Baltimore, MD) Parts and Service Department, where she focused on project management and administration of their ride service projects. This led to a role near her hometown's Ralph S. Alberts Co. (Montoursville, PA), where for 5 years Timco was Director of Operations for

all manufacturing and sales functions. In May of 2018, Timco was announced as the new Director of Amusement Park Division at Baynum Painting, Inc., the industry's premier global provider of ride coating services. She can be seen actively participating at trade association events for WWA, IAAPA, NAARSO, AIMS, NJAA, NEAAPA and PAPA. Today, Timco manages Baynum projects throughout the AP division, cultivating key client and vendor relationships, and helping direct the growth efforts as one of the industry's top service providers for ride renovation and slide restoration worldwide.



### ***JONATHAN "JT" TOAVS***

Jonathan "JT" Toavs serves as Studio Director at Orlando-based Martin Aquatic Design & Engineering. For 20 years, has been creating compelling guest experiences and memorable aquatic moments as part of water features, resort amenities, waterparks and themed entertainment. Toavs brings his passion for water to municipalities, designing community parks that attract crowds (and revenue) for local governments. With a client roster that has included Walt Disney World, SeaWorld and Royal Caribbean, he has the project experience to translate major thrills into attractions and rides geared for the public sector.



### ***JESSE VARGAS***

Jesse Vargas is the Vice President of Marine and Waterpark Operations at Atlantis, The Palm in Dubai, UAE. Vargas began his career as a front-line ride operator and lifeguard while in university, earning his bachelor's degree of business administration from the University of Texas at San Antonio. Prior to joining Atlantis, The Palm, he was the General Manager of Ferrari World Abu Dhabi. Previously, he worked with the City of Austin, San Francisco Zoo, Six Flags Theme Parks and Osus International. Vargas has been an active participant in knowledge-exchange events throughout his years in the attractions industry, including as the emcee and facilitator of the WWA's last three Middle East Symposia. Currently, Vargas is supporting the delivery of the largest expansion in the history of Aquaventure and Dolphin Bay, and engaged in the greater ongoing development of the region's leisure and entertainment industry.



### ***STEVE VAUGHN***

Steve Vaughn began his career at Castaway Cove Waterpark as the Lead EMT in 2004; he then became the Aquatics Manager two years later. In 2008, Vaughn took the position of Operations Manager where he stayed for two years before being promoted to Park Manager when the park was sold to the City of Wichita Falls from the privately owned company that started the park. Vaughn has many certifications in Emergency Medicine and is a Certified Pool Operator.



### ***NICOLE WALKER***

Nicole "Niki" Walker started at Wet 'n' Wild Phoenix (now Six Flags Hurricane Harbor Phoenix) as a seasonal lifeguard in 2010. Walker continued her work at Wet 'n' Wild Phoenix throughout her high school and college career. Walker excelled in lifeguard operations and was promoted to Lifeguard Supervisor in 2011. In 2012, Walker was promoted to Head Guard where she worked in conjunction with the Director of Operations and Operations Manager to recruit, train, schedule and coach over 250 lifeguards seasonally. Walker joined Camelback Resort in 2015 as part of the opening team for Camelback Lodge and Aquatopia Indoor Waterpark. Under the guidance of Jason Bays, Walker was promoted to Director of Aquatics in May 2016. Walker holds an ILTP instructor license through Jeff Ellis & Associates.



## **SHAWN WELCH**

Shawn Welch is the Director of Organizational Development for Typhoon Texas Waterparks. He has a passion for equipping leaders and their teams for maximum effectiveness. At home, he enjoys spending time with his beautiful wife, Jen and their English Spring named Rudy. He loves cheering on the New Orleans Saints (Who Dat!), playing basketball and, when the weather is nice, he relaxes by going fishing.



## **MICHELLE WEYDERT**

Michelle Weydert is the Aquatics Supervisor for the City of Round Rock Parks and Recreation department. She currently supervises operations and programming for four aquatic facilities, including the newly renovated Rock'N River Water Park. She is a former Division 1 athlete from the University of Wyoming and holds a bachelor's degree in education. She has experience in both athletics and aquatics operations, programming and management. She honed her skills as a Program Coordinator for the City of Gainesville in Florida and before that worked in aquatics for a military base in Washington State. As an American Red Cross Water Safety Instructor Trainer and Lifeguard Instructor Trainer, she is very passionate about teaching and training. She hopes that students will be able to utilize the skills taught in their courses to teach others how to swim or, if needed, to save a life in an emergency situation.



## **BETH WHEELER**

Beth Wheeler is currently the Director of Waterpark Operations for Breaker Bay Waterpark at Blue Harbor Resort in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Before Blue Harbor, Wheeler worked as the Asst. Aquatics Director at the Great Wolf Lodge in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin. She made her first splash in aquatics in 2004 working as an Ellis lifeguard at Timber Ridge Lodge in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Wheeler worked her way up through the ranks to become the Assistant Director of Aquatics there, and eventually moving to Asst. Director of Waterpark Operations at Country Springs Waterpark and Hotel in Pewaukee, Wisconsin. She currently is also an E&A lifeguard instructor, and a Red Cross Lifeguard Instructor and Lifeguard Instructor Trainer. Wheeler enjoys camping, hiking and walking her German Shepherd.



## **KIRSTEN WHITE, MS, P.E.**

Kirsten White, M.S., P.E., is a biomechanical engineer with Talas Engineering, Inc., located in the San Francisco Bay Area, California. Over the last 15 years, White has provided consulting services in biomechanics, injury causation and accident reconstruction. Her work involves the study of movements of the body, determining injury mechanisms, tolerance and causation, and analyzing how an incident or accident occurred. She has analyzed a wide variety of matters including industrial incidents, workplace tasks, recreational accidents, retail establishment claims, falls on level ground and from heights and vehicular impacts. White has conducted research and co-authored several studies in biomechanics and accident reconstruction. White received her bachelor's of engineering degree in mechanical engineering from Adelaide University, in Australia, and her master's of science degree in biomechanical engineering from Stanford University.



## **HOLLI WILSON**

Holli Wilson is the Assistant General Manager for Splash Kingdom Family Waterparks. Her responsibilities include hiring, managing the waterpark on a day-to-day basis, developing relationships with businesses and organizations to increase group sales revenue, managing social media and planning/organizing in-park events. Wilson began her group sales and marketing career at Holiday Inn Express & Suites while working on her B.A. degree at the University of Texas. She graduated cum laude with a concentration in communications. She has just finished her fourth year with Splash Kingdom, and is looking forward to many more!



### **WENDY WISEMAN**

Wendy Wiseman's fulfilling career includes experiences marketing Fortune 500 brands, start-up brands and brands of all sizes in between. Her expertise includes unearthing smart strategies for positioning brands uniquely so they stand out and have relevance for prospects and customers alike. More than brand identity, Wiseman and her teams know how to apply smart strategies to creative and in-market implementation to get results. In the waterpark industry, this translates into getting more people into the park, more often and spending more while they're there. Database management is an integral part of this equation, as is knowing how to integrate the multiple layers of the marketing eco-system such that the people you want to visit can't help but bump into your brand.



### **KATIE WOJDYLA**

Katie Wojdyla is the Vice President and Director of Marketing for Enchanted Forest Water Safari. She started her career in the amusement industry growing up in her family business. She worked in many different departments such as Food Service, Games, Photo, HR, Admissions, Administration and the campground, all of which have provided a backdrop for industry knowledge and experience. She returned to the company in 2004 after completing a bachelor of science degree in speech communication with minors in linguistics and French from Syracuse University. In her current role, she oversees all marketing for Water Safari Resort, which includes Enchanted Forest Water Safari (waterpark), Calypso's Cove (FEC), Old Forge Camping Resort (campground) and the Water's Edge Inn (hotel). She also oversees all business operations with her sister, Kelly and her father, Tim.



### **ASHLEY WOLFE**

Ashley Wolfe joined Oostman Aquatic Safety Consulting, Inc., as the Director of Operations & Development in 2018. Prior to that she was the the Operations Manager at Roaring Springs Waterpark since 2013. She started in 2006 as a lifeguard and has served in various roles including aquatics technician, park services supervisor, and operations coordinator. She is also an Instructor Trainer for Jeff Ellis & Associates and has served on faculty for their International Aquatics Safety School. Wolfe has a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the College of Idaho and played basketball there. She is currently working on her master's degree in mental health clinical counseling with a specialization in trauma and crisis from Walden University. She has a minor in education and was a student teacher for a local high school for a semester and then at the College of Idaho for the second semester. She serves on WWA's Education Committee as Vice Chair and enjoys education and continues to pursue learning in every capacity of personal and professional life.



### **TIFFANY WOODWARD**

Tiffany Woodward is the Director of Marketing and Water Park Sales at The Ingleside Hotel in Pewaukee, Wisconsin. Prior to her current position, Woodward worked for Wave Renovations and Jackson Street Hospitality as the Director of Sales and Marketing. She has been involved with the development, opening and operations of two branded hotel properties in Wisconsin and twelve water resort properties in nine states. Woodward is a member of WWA's Marketing and Communications Committee, and in 2011, was awarded a Special Recognition Award by the WWA's Board of Directors for significant accomplishment with their volunteer committees.



## ***RICH YOUNG***

Rich Young has more than 35 years of municipal, public pool and waterpark experience, including operating and maintaining several public and commercial pools and waterparks with both programming and maintenance experience. In addition, he has been a sales and service representative for several major manufacturers and distributors of commercial pool equipment. Young worked as a licensed contractor and consultant for nearly 25 years and is now the principle for Aquatic Commercial Consulting ([www.aquacom.solutions](http://www.aquacom.solutions)). Young has taught CPO for over 16 years and AFO since its inception and was the managing editor for the 6th edition of the AFO manual. He remains the technical advisor for the Professional Pool Operators of America and a member of various ANSI, ASTM and MAHC committees. Young has been published dozens of time in industry periodicals and often speaks at regional and national conferences on water quality.



## ***LARY ZUCKER, ESQUIRE***

Lary Zucker is Senior Counsel at Marshall Dennehey Warner Coleman and Coggin LLC where he is the Chair of the Amusement Sports and Recreation Practice Group. Zucker also serves as Counsel to the New Jersey Amusement Association and is a founding member and Director of IALDA.Inc. Zucker represents many aquatic facilities and waterparks as a defense attorney and risk management consultant. A member of the bar in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, Zucker has been designated by the New Jersey Supreme Court as a Certified Civil Trial attorney for more than 25 years.

