

I'd like to thank the Frankfort Square Park District Board and Jim Randall, for giving me the opportunity to attend the 2018 Illinois Association of Park Districts/Illinois Park and Recreation Association Conference in Chicago. There are too few opportunities that allow us to get together with friends and colleagues in the recreation field. The conference provides us with that opportunity and gives us the chance to grow both personally and professionally by offering the workshops and educational sessions. There are so many different programs and ideas out there that we can bring back to the Frankfort Square Park District, and the conference gives us the chance to see and hear first hand what's working in other communities and what isn't.

FRIDAY MORNING CONFERENCE SESSION

Most Innovative Outdoor Programs and Events

This interactive, brainstorming presentation was led by Paul Wiese, the Vice President of Smith Group JJR and Teishetta Daniel, Center Director of the Chicago Park District. They discussed 25 of the most innovative outdoor programs and events. They talked about program hits (and misses) in order to learn more about what drives the most successful programming, and opened the floor to allow others to share their park district's most innovative program and events. Night golf, Astronomy, bubble soccer, evening walking trail outings, and wine/beer tasting were just a couple of the programs I would like to bring to the Frankfort Square Park District. Unfortunately, most of the programs ideas that were discussed in this presentation to attract adults ALL involved alcohol which is outside the philosophy of the Frankfort Square Park District.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Bridging the Gap: Managing Multiple Generations

With Millennials and Generation Y entering the workplace, five generations now make up our team of supervisory and frontline personnel for the first time in history. This session focused on understanding basic generational demographics as well as their differences, and how to improve communication, create stronger advertising materials, and reach members of every generation. First we learned to identify members of each generation. Then we discussed each generations' preferred method of communication within the workplace and as a customer. And finally how to apply basic generation-based communication skills to improve communication within the workplace and improve guest service.

Rec Academy: Onboarding Program

In this presentation we learned how the Fox Valley Park District equips its recreation staff with valuable resources and tools to successfully maximize their talents and perform their jobs at a high level. They encouraged every park district to establish an effective onboarding program to provide consistent practices and procedures that create a culture of efficiency. In this session they reviewed the core training modules within the program which include marketing recreation, program budgeting, registration software, IT, operations, finance, HR risk management, and professional development. Policies, procedures, and staff change every year; that's never going to change. According to the presenters, a successful training program will help keep everyone on the same page.

Respectfully submitted,

John Keenan

Superintendent of Recreation
Frankfort Square Park District

Conference 2018 recap- Nicolette Jerik

Overall the sessions I chose to attend were very helpful and interesting. I did attend the socials and networked with other professionals as well. I met up with the IPRA Teen Committee where I sometimes attend the meetings. The committee is actually hosting a meeting at Frankfort Square Park District in April now! I went to this one session called The Why of Work: Aligning Passion and Strengths to Get the Job Done. It was interesting to hear the speaker talk about how we as employees understand what we do for work on a daily basis but the “why” of work. This session broke down strengths individuals have to find work meaningful. This session also touched on leadership practices and what motivates staff. It was neat to evaluate what I do on a daily basis and putting in the “why” perspective. Another session I attended was called Happy Campers: Integrating New Games into Your Camps. Palos Sports put on this presentation. The games they demonstrated along with the supplies to buy were great ideas for rainy days. If I were to buy the supplies you can play 4-5 different games with them. One of the games was called Cannon Catch where you push down with your foot and a mini ball shoots out. Some games and ideas were out of the ordinary and good to have for multi age rangers. A lot of the other sessions I attended were on leadership and managing multi generations. Different styles of leadership I was aware of. The support on how to manage multi generations was helpful as to how some speakers had different approaches. Overall my time spent at conference was well worth it. It was great catching up with other professionals and broadening my knowledge on different topics within the field of recreation. Thank you to the board and Jim for letting me attend conference and bringing back new ideas to use in a variety of programming settings.

MEMO

To: Jim Randall, Executive Director
From: Carter Patton, Athletic Supervisor
Date: 1/25/18
Subject: IPRA Conference January 19 & 20, 2018

Thank you very much for allowing me to represent the Frankfort Square Park District at the annual state conference in Chicago. Thank you to the board as well for sending me and letting me gather valuable professional knowledge. I had a great time networking with other professionals and attending sessions to broaden my horizons.

Athletics for Dummies: A “How To” Guide

Speakers: Stephanie Ainslie, Elmhurst Park District & Ryan Coffland, Huntley Park District

This session was a guide to running successful athletic programs in a park district setting. The speakers discussed topics like running a tournament, how to set up a league and different ways to break out teams. The speakers also discussed field usage which was important for us to gather some insight so that we can better handle or rentals of Lincoln-Way North.

25 Most Innovative Outdoor Programs and Events

Speakers: Paul Wiese, Smith Group JJR & Teishetta Daniel, Chicago Park District

This session spent the entire time talking and discussing innovate and cool programs and events to host outdoors. The speakers shared what has worked for them and how we should not limit outdoor programs and events to just the fall, spring, and summer months. There was also a lot of time for discussion with professionals from other park districts to hear about what they are doing at their districts.

The Mindfulness Movement

Speaker: Dannielle Wilson, DW Recreation Consulting

This session focused on the mindfulness movement and how it has become much more mainstream in everyday life. People in all communities want more ways to be mindful which can be through yoga, meditation, and different outreach programs. As park districts we have the ability to give the people in the community exactly what they want. The speaker discussed going deeper into relationships in the community too. Specifically, she touched on having a relationship with home school associations. This is something we have been experiencing with the extended hours at Lincoln-Way North.

Confessions of a Young Professional

Speaker: Jolee Paden, Fellowship of Christian Athletes

This session was very useful for myself being a current young professional in the field. It was nice hearing some of the struggles and achievements of other young professionals and knowing that you are not alone. The speaker, being a young professional herself, was able to share stories about things that have happened to her and how she has been able to overcome them.

Keynote General Session: The Best Version of YOU

Speaker: Eddie Slowikowski

This session was very inspirational and very refreshing to hear as a parks and recreation professional. The speaker did a great job of motivating and telling stories about how to get the best out of yourself each and every day. He was able to relight that fire to achieve greatness and do your best every single day. Eddie did a great job of keeping everyone involved and awake by using music and audience participation to get the most out of the presentation.

Stuart Sports Complex – Inner Workings of a Premier Sports Facility

Speakers: Josh Barry, Fox Valley Park District & Michael Hayes, Fox valley Park District

This session was all about how to operate, promote and scheduling an outdoor athletic complex. I was interested in going to this session because I was hoping it would give me some new ideas into how to operate and manage Lincoln-Way North. There were a lot of good points discussed especially on the topic of resident groups and non-resident groups which is the most important factor to us when scheduling usage of the facility.

I also spent time in the exhibit hall meeting people and learning about all the good things the vendors do. Finally, it was nice going out to dinner with the rest of the staff. Thank you so much for the opportunity, I had a great time conference and can't wait till next year!