



# 2026 Massachusetts Recreation and Parks Conference Session Schedule

Tuesday, March 24th	Time	Room: 2	Room: 3	Room: 4	Room: 5
Director's Forum	12:15-2:30pm	<b>Director's Forum: Planning for the Future with Neelay Bhatt</b>			
Session 1	1:15- 2:15pm	Welcome to the 2026 Conference! Your next great session is waiting, let's get started!	Michael Mancini	Garrett Warfield	Julia Firavich & Hunter Moffatt
			Beyond the Splash: Designing Spray Grounds for Longevity, Safety, and Community Impact	Data to Make the Best of a Year in the Life of Running a Park & Rec Agency	Synthetic Turf in 2025: Systems, Standards, and Sustainable Solutions
Session 2	2:30 - 3:30pm	Matthew Frye	Dave Brown	Emmy Richards & Keith Cox	David Kulis & Ena Baker
		A Positive Youth Development Approach to Serving Participants with Disabilities	Training Staff to Intentionally Develop Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Skills in Youth	Challenges, Creativity, and Change: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities in Small Towns	Sports Lighting: Research and Best Practices
General Session	3:45-5:00pm	<b>Moving from Best Practices to Next Practices with Neelay Bhatt</b>			
Wednesday, March 25th	Time	Room: 2	Room: 3	Room: 4	Room: 5
Session 3	9:30-10:30am	Ashley McClain & Kerry Haynes	Dave Brown	Neelay Bhatt	Kyle Rowan & Todd Brown
		Building Inclusive Recreation through Community Partnerships	Coaching with Care: Supporting Staff Who Struggle with Feedback	Panel Discussion: Talking Next Practice with the Next Practitioners	Game-Ready Year-Round: Maintaining Athletic Facilities
Session 4	10:45-11:45am	Rachel Hayward & Jonathan Spiller	Jeff Achee	Tim Davis	Jen Filer
		Relationships are Key to our Well-Being: Building Friendships Between People with and Without Disabilities Through Recreation	Advocacy in Action: Empowering Legislative Efforts in New Professionals	Budget Basics: Financial Literacy for New Recreation Professionals	Healing Ourselves, Healing Our Parks: How Conservation Building Connections and Purpose
Lunch	12:00-1:15pm	<b>Lunch</b>			
Session 5	1:30-2:30pm	Jon "Kaz" Kazanjian, Nick Campion & Christine Dean	Dave Brown	Sharon Locke, Kevin Bailey, Hannah Corrigan, Amanda Wong & Kizen Semprum	Emmy Richards & Keith Cox
		Programming 101: How to Build Successful Recreation Programs from A-Z	The Really Scary Stuff: Self-harm and Suicidal Ideation at Camp	Cannonballs, Creativity, and Community: Aquatic Events That Make a Splash	People, Parks, and Possibility: From Big Ideas to Real Impact in Small Towns
Session 6	2:45 - 3:45pm	Denise Leckenby	Adam Lapointe	Chad Norton	Panel Discussion
		Adaptive and Inclusive Aquatics Programming: From Lessons to Competitive Rec Teams	Funding Fun: Sponsorships for Municipal Recreation	You Can Teach an Old Dog New Tricks: How ChatGPT is Changing the Way We Communicate and Work	Breaking Into the Field: A Parks & Recreation Panel for Students & New Professionals MRPA New Professionals Committee
Thursday, March 26th	Time	Room: 2	Room: 3	Room: 4	Room: 5
Session 7	9:30-10:30am	Enjoy the final day of the MRPA Conference!	Jeff Achee	Andrea Egmont & Tarah Luciano	Suzanne Quinn
			Unplug Texas: Building a Statewide Parks Movements from the Ground Up	Recreation as Prevention: How to Help Others See the Connection	Designing Playgrounds for Neuro - Inclusion
Session 8	10:45-11:45am	Molly Keays	Channon Ames DiCiurcio & Jon Campbell	Tarah Luciano	Allie Lane
		Show up and Show Off: Making Your Agency's Story Stand Out	Don't Get Lost! Discover the Benefits of Orienteering	Spaces of Pride: Building Affirming Communities for All	Beyond the Basics: Effective Staff Training Strategies for an Outstanding Summer Camp Season
Lunch	12:00-1:30pm	<b>Lunch with Annual Meeting</b>			