

2025 Conference Featured Sessions



Tuesday 10/14/2025



Joe Fingerhut is the oldest jumper at his local trampoline park, and occasionally walks to his kids' bus stop on stilts. He has inspired over 1 million people while speaking at conferences, schools, and organizations across the globe. He is an international bestselling author, and his first book, "Permission to Play," is about overcoming excuses and pursuing your dreams. Joe's time on trampolines and stilts keep his dream alive of playing in the NBA someday. He's here to help us unlock potential and possibilities!

1pm HOW CAN I? Unlock Potential & Possibility (Keynote) with Joe Fingerhut

"We tried that. It won't work. There's no way to do that right now."

These and other excuses plague individuals, companies, and organizations. Award-Winning Entertainer and International Speaker Joe Fingerhut will bring you on an exciting and engaging journey landing on three simple words that unlock potential and possibility in people and organizations alike - HOW CAN I?

This program ignites energy and potential that carries over to everyday life and work experience. These tools to help overcome adversity and apathy lead to more productive, positive people and teams that get results and support each other.

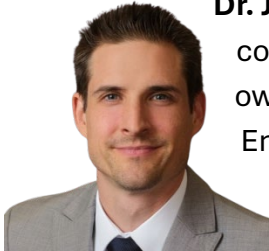
Wednesday 10/15/2025



Chris Nunes, CPRE is the Chief Operating Officer for The Woodlands Township, in The Woodlands, Texas. In that position, he oversees a \$50+ million operational budget and is accountable for the management of 151 parks, 14 swimming pools and aquatic facilities, 220 miles of pathways, and 200 miles of streetscape. He speaks around the country (over 750+ times) on topics including business plans, contracting, innovation, relevant services, creative programming, marketing, external funding, communication, leadership and succession planning.

10:15-11:15 am Culture of BIG Ideas Agencies of all sizes will be able to unlock a culture or possibility through imagining and implementing "big idea" type of projects. No matter what "big" means to your agency, this dynamic session allows professionals to develop a transformative mindset, equipping them to envision and execute impactful projects for their community. Explore the "secret sauce" of the culture of possibility which includes strategies to identify and seize opportunities, leverage resources effectively, and engage the community in ambitious initiatives

11:30-12:30 pm PolitiQ This session will equip both small and larger agency leadership with skills to build successful government relationships through fostering strong relationships with elected officials and others who influence those elected officials. This session will provide tools to navigate through various political terrains, identify strategies to relate your cause to their abilities and reach success to secure funding, enhance advocacy, and increase public benefit!



Dr. James Moore James Moore has worked in Asia for 15 years in the retail, consulting, and government sectors, where he set up four wholly foreign-owned enterprises and was a former Senior Government Consultant at the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Bureau in Hangzhou, China. He was the first American to hold such an official position. He is currently the CEO of the Eastern hemisphere for a global firm in Salt Lake City and a co-founder of the We Believe App (formerly known as the Come Follow Me App). He holds a BA in Chinese from Brigham Young University, a Ph.D. from Zhejiang University in Entrepreneurship Management, and an MPA from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. James and his wife are the proud parents of five children.

2:15-3:15 pm Attributes of a Leader The most effective and impactful leaders bring out the best in others, but typically “best” doesn’t appear until there’s trust. In this session, we’ll cover eight essential attributes for building trust through leading by example. Focusing on these attributes is proven to strengthen trust, produce positive results, and improve the relationships with those you lead, which hopefully infuses some joy back into what we too often deem as the burden of leadership.



Jared Moore Entrepreneur with over two decades of experience building businesses from concept to successful exit. Creating world-class organizations by combining innovation with an unparalleled customer experience.

3:30-4:30 pm Online Presence Building and managing a strong digital presence is vital for boosting community participation, but it doesn't have to drain your resources. This session explores free and paid tools from Google, Facebook, and Instagram to help you effectively engage with your audience. Learn the key differences between having a social media presence and an advertising presence, and discover best practices for maximizing your impact online for your parks and recreation department. You'll gain insights into essential “must-do” strategies, as well as pitfalls to avoid when navigating the digital landscape. From understanding the power of targeted ads to knowing which

platforms offer the best return on investment, this session equips you with actionable knowledge to create a more efficient and impactful online presence.

Thursday 10/16/2025

Dr. James More (see bio above)

8:30-9:30 am Mastering the Art of Persuasion—From Team Huddle to Town Hall In today's dynamic landscape, effectively communicating the value of parks and recreation to teammates and politicians is paramount. This session equips professionals with essential skills to craft powerful arguments, understand diverse perspectives, and foster meaningful community and team engagement. Through practical examples tailored to the parks and recreation field, you'll learn to articulate benefits, analyze persuasive techniques, develop communication strategies, navigate challenging conversations, and inspire action in your team and the community. Amplify your voice and become a more persuasive leader on your teams and advocate for the vital role of parks and recreation in enhancing quality of life.



Shawn P. DeRosa, J.D., AqP , Attorney, Risk Management and Aquatic Specialist, is one of the leading experts in aquatic risk management in the nation, having been selected as one of the Top 100 Leaders in the aquatic profession for 2003 and 2004, as profiled by Aquatics International magazine. In February 2005, DeRosa was profiled by Aquatics International as one of "the 25 most powerful people in the world of aquatics." He was recognized by the Association of Aquatic Professionals in 2014 for his Distinguished Service to the profession and again was profiled in 2020 by Aquatics International magazine as a Power Honoree. Shawn is often asked to serve as an expert witness for both plaintiff and defense matters and is a highly requested speaker at industry events. Through DeRosa Aquatic Consulting, Shawn helps organizations minimize risk and improve safety.

9:45-10:45 am Are You Prepared for Litigation The litigation process is an intimidating one, both for “professional” staff and for lifeguards. Understanding the process and how common records will be used in the course of litigation will help you better prepare yourself, your staff and your employer for the inevitable lawsuit following a catastrophic injury or death.

10:45-11:45 am Conflict Resolution - What Is Your Style Conflict is a normal part of our everyday life. Many people fear conflict, but conflict itself is not a problem - it is what we do with it that counts. Angry patrons, fighting children, and employee disagreements are just a few examples of how leisure service professionals must deal with conflict. This session will offer proven strategies for reducing conflict in the recreational setting.