

# BOARD NOMINATIONS

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2024





# PRESIDENT ELECT



# Aaron Dobson, CPRP

City of Cleburne - Director of Parks and Recreation

## **Education and Training:**

I received my Bachelor of Science with an emphasis in Corporate Wellness and Recreation from Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, Missouri.

I have held various certifications such as CPRP, CPSI, CPO, and more throughout my professional career. I graduated from NRPA's Revenue Development and Management School and Park Maintenance Management School.

## **Work Experience:**

- I have had the pleasure of being part of a culture change for the City of Cleburne, serving as their Director of Parks & Recreation for the past six years.
- I spent two years in Maryville, Missouri, serving as their Parks & Recreation Director.
- I was with the City of Rockwall for approximately five years, with three and a half as their Recreation Superintendent and the last year and a half as their Parks Superintendent. This allowed me to learn a different side of our industry.
- With the City of Burleson, I had the opportunity to help open the BRiCk and worked there for two years as their Recreation Supervisor.
- I have additionally worked in Florida with Hillsborough County and West Palm Beach recreation departments.

## **List any professional organizations you are affiliated with, including positions and awards:**

- I am a member of TRAPS. On the state level, I have served multiple terms as the At Large Director 3 on the executive board. I have also chaired the membership committee and participated in other committees. I co-chaired the education committee for many years with TRAPS North.
- I served TAAF Region 7 as their Executive Board Member and Region Director. I also sat on numerous committees such as Legislative and Conference Planning.
- I have been a member of NRPA throughout my career.

**Describe your contributions to the Texas Recreation and Park Society:**

In addition to serving on the state executive board, chairing a committee, and serving on others, I had the privilege of being on the Academy of Leadership Development Committee, now the Dr. Michal Anne Lord Leadership Academy. For many years, I also advocated for the creation of a Young Professionals group.

**Discuss what goals you would seek to accomplish during your term of office, if elected:**

During my term, I will attempt to honor our organization's past and the legacy of those leaders who came before me, while looking toward the future and encouraging our emerging leaders to take the next step within TRAPS.

I will seek to establish a road map for the organization's future by creating and implementing action items and benchmarks based on our strategic plan, with input from the executive board, committees, TRAPS membership, and the state office.



# AT LARGE DIRECTOR 2



# Sydney Elliot, CPRP

City of DeSoto - Youth and Business Supervisor

## **Education and Training:**

I hold a Master's in Business Administration (MBA) from Texas A&M University-Commerce, which I completed in May 2018. Before that, I received a Bachelor of Science (BS) in Kinesiology with a Minor in Spanish from Stephen F. Austin State University in May 2013. I am currently a Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE). My career background stems from Administrative Operations and Teen Programming and is further enriched by my active involvement in the professional community, including speaking at various local, regional, and national conferences, including the NRPA and TRAPS conferences.

## **Work Experience:**

Youth and Business Supervisor, City of DeSoto, October 2020 - present

I manage the department's operating and capital improvement budgets, totaling \$6 million in operating funds and \$30 million in capital. I also oversee the department's Accreditation and the City's Tourism Initiatives, implement strategic processes and initiatives for the department, and program for the DeSoto Teen Council.

Lead Cashier, City of DeSoto, May 2017 - October 2020

Implementation Consultant, Anthology, Inc., August 2018 - October 2020

In this capacity, I was responsible for implementing ERP Student Information Systems for various colleges and universities. My work involved ongoing reviews of customers' current practices and existing data to optimize business processes for greater efficiency. I also evaluated analytics to improve engagement, formulated growth strategies for student retention, and ensured projects stayed within budget by reviewing invoices and contracts.

Implementation Consultant, Active Network, September 2014 - August 2018

During this time, I implemented SaaS software solutions for the Youth and Education Market, conducted functional planning sessions with project stakeholders, and provided administrative training for efficient software usage. My work also involved reviewing contracts and Statements of Work (SOW) to ensure the successful implementation of software solutions.

**List any professional organizations you are affiliated with, including positions and awards:**

Texas Recreation and Park Society (TRAPS)

- Current Chair of Minorities in Leisure Services Branch
- Awards Committee Member
- Conference Speaker (2022 - 2024)
- Past President's Rising Star Award (2024)

National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA)

- Vice President, North Texas Chapter
- Conference Speaker (2022 & 2023)

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)

- CAPRA Visitor
- Conference Speaker (2022 & 2023)

National Recreation and Park Ethnic Minority Society (NRPEMS)

- Southwest Board Representative
- Young Professional of the Year Award (2023)

DeSoto Area Chamber

- Ex-Officio Board Member
- Woman of the Year Award (2023)

**Describe your contributions to the Texas Recreation and Park Society:**

I have contributed to the Texas Recreation and Park Society (TRAPS) through my active involvement and leadership. I currently serve as the Chair of Minorities in Leisure Services, a role I have held from 2022 to 2024, where I have advocated for diversity and inclusion within the field. I have participated in TRAPS Institutes as a speaker providing knowledge on various topics, including teen initiatives and community engagement. My dedication and impact within TRAPS has been recognized with the Rising Star Award in 2024 by the current Past President. These accolades reflect my commitment to advancing the mission of TRAPS and having an influence in shaping the future of parks and recreation in Texas.

**Discuss what goals you would seek to accomplish during your term of office, if elected:**

I seek to continue working with the TRAPS Board of Directors with the goals of improving the MOGO and strengthening the relationships with the various branches and the executive board.



# Chase Ellis, CPRP, CPO

Town Of Trophy Club Parks and Recreation Director

## **Education and Training:**

I am proud to hold a Master's degree in Recreation Sport Management with an emphasis on Public Administration from Indiana State University and a Bachelor's degree in Recreation and Park Management from Utah State University. My professional certifications span multiple areas, including Parks and Recreation, Collegiate Recreational Sports, and various safety and first aid disciplines. My journey of continuous learning and professional growth is further highlighted by my participation in the NRPA Directors School.

With over 20 years of vibrant experience in parks and recreation management, I have cultivated a dynamic track record of leadership and project management across both governmental and academic settings. I have had the privilege of serving as the Director of Parks and Recreation for the Town of Trophy Club, TX, and the Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Desoto, TX. My areas of expertise encompass capital development, master planning, strategic staff development, and community engagement. I have successfully managed large-scale projects, including the development of Dakota Nature Park and Utah State University's recreation center, securing substantial funding through grants and community partnerships. My innovative approaches in program development and operational management have earned me recognition and numerous awards in the field. I am passionate about creating exceptional recreational experiences and fostering vibrant communities.

## **Work Experience:**

I have had the privilege of working in diverse and impactful roles within the parks and recreation field. Currently, I serve as the Director of Parks and Recreation for the Town of Trophy Club, TX. Before this, I was the Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Desoto, TX, where I managed multiple large-scale Capital Improvement Projects worth over \$60 million, including the redesign of Moseley Pool and the McCowan Aquatic and Recreation Center. My experience also includes directing community recreation at Connect2Concepts and consulting for Core Unlimited LLC. During my tenure at Utah State University, I was the Director of Campus Recreation and a Faculty Instructor, overseeing the development and operation of a new recreation center funded by a \$40 million student bond initiative.

Earlier in my career, I served as the Recreation Superintendent for the City of Brookings, SD, where I oversaw the development of the Dakota Nature Park, including its nature center, trails, and programming. Additionally, I have been a Director at Knox County Parks and Recreation, IN. Throughout my career, I have



demonstrated expertise in strategic staff development, complex budget management, and public engagement. I have also been involved in grant writing and securing major donations, contributing to significant projects and initiatives in the communities I have served. My innovative approaches and dedication to excellence have earned me recognition and awards, including the Outstanding Sports Facility award from NIRSA and Utah Design and Construction Magazine.

**List any professional organizations you are affiliated with, including positions and awards:**

Throughout my career, I have been actively involved in several professional organizations, holding various positions and earning notable awards. I am a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP) with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) since 2008. Additionally, I am a Registered Collegiate Recreational Sports Professional with the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) since 2016. My leadership and expertise in the field have been recognized with prestigious awards, including the Outstanding Sports Facility award from NIRSA in 2017 and the Outstanding Sports and Recreation Facility award from Utah Design and Construction Magazine in 2016.

My commitment to the industry extends beyond certifications and awards. I have served as a CAPRA Accreditation Commissioner, Reviewer, and Mentor, providing guidance and support to other professionals in achieving high standards of excellence. As a national speaker and presenter at conferences such as the National Parks and Recreation and Athletic Business Conferences, I have shared my knowledge and experiences to inspire and educate others in the field. My dedication to fostering community engagement and developing innovative recreational programs has been a cornerstone of my career, reflecting my passion for enhancing the quality of life through exceptional parks and recreation services.

**Describe your contributions to the Texas Recreation and Park Society:**

As a dedicated member of the Texas Recreation and Park Society for four years, I have actively volunteered and participated in all state and North Region conferences. This association plays a crucial role in our success as parks and recreation professionals, and I am passionate about giving back. By contributing my time and effort, I aim to support the mission and vision of the association and inspire others to get involved and volunteer, fostering a vibrant and engaged community within our field.

**Discuss what goals you would seek to accomplish during your term of office, if elected:**

My goal is to support the leadership team and committee chairs in advancing the strategic future of the association. I aim to learn from all regions to ensure we can effectively support them, demonstrating our commitment to equity across the board. By fostering collaboration and understanding, I want to help every region feel valued and equally represented in our collective efforts.



# Monica Martin, CPRE, AFO, LGI-T, WSI-T

City of Denton Program Area Manager

## Education and Training:

I have a BFA in Communication Design from the University of North Texas with a minor in creative writing.

American Red Cross:

- Lifeguard
- Lifeguard Instructor
- Lifeguard Instructor Trainer
- Water Safety Instructor
- Water Safety Instructor Trainer

NRPA:

- CPRE
- Aquatic Facility Operator

American Canoe/Kayak Association:

- Level I/II Instructor

## Work Experience:

City of Denton

- Program Area Manager (2021-Present)
- Recreation Supervisor-Aquatics (2012-2021)

Town of Flower Mound

- Aquatic Coordinator (2010-2011)

City of Plano (2009-2010)

- Masters Coach/Instructor/TAAF Coach

Baylor Tom Landry Fitness Center (2007-2009)

- Recreation Coordinator

University of North Texas (2002-2007)

- Head Guard/Fitness Aid/Outdoor Pursuits Instructor

City of The Colony (2000-2007)

- WSI/LGI/Assistant Manager/Lifeguard

**List any professional organizations you are affiliated with, including positions and awards:**

Texas Public Pool Council

- Safety Program of the Year 2013
- Agency of the Year 2014, 2015
- Safety Program of the Year 2015

DFW Director's Association

- Excellence in Mentoring Award 2019

NRPA

- Education Speaker/Author 2023

North Texas Aquatics Association

- President 2016-2017
- Secretary 2012-2016

Texas Amateur Athletics Association

- American Canoe/Kayak Association (ACA) - Level II Instructor
- USA Triathlon - National Events Swim Coordinator
- TRAPS North - Planning Committee (2018-Present)
- Toastmasters International - (2021-2022) VP of Education

**Describe your contributions to the Texas Recreation and Park Society:**

I have been a volunteer on the TRAPS North Planning Committee for over 6 years and will be the liaison for the 2024 TRAPS North conference in Denton, TX this November.

I have been a regular speaker at TRAPS and TAAF conferences throughout the state. My topics range from aquatic programming, leadership development, budget planning, capital maintenance, and park planning.

**Discuss what goals you would seek to accomplish during your term of office, if elected:**

During my term, I would like to assist with updating guidelines, benchmarking reports, trends, and the flow of communication between the State office and various branches. As the economy changes, so does the State of Texas, which has seen a lot of growth in our communities. Creating go-to methods to quickly find information that will help keep up with the rate of change is essential for the future of business. I would also like to work closely with sister agencies like TAAF, Texas Public Pool Council, and more to strengthen each other and support the missions.



# Josh Rodrigue, CPRP, CPO

Cedar Park Parks and Recreation - Recreation Manager

## Education and Training:

My education in recreation began at 10 years old when my friends and I organized 3v3 basketball tournaments in our neighborhood. I only continued from there, volunteering at camps in high school and graduating with a BA in Sport Management at Schreiner University in Kerrville, TX (2016). I have an MA in Ethics from Fuller Theological Seminary which has helped me immensely in decision-making. I am currently a Certified Pool Operator (2028 exp.) and a Certified Parks & Recreation Professional (exp 2025).

## Work Experience:

RECREATION MANAGER - PROGRAMS & EVENTS City of Cedar Park, TX

October 2023 - Present

- Improved special use in park applications and policies to address our ever-popular park systems.
- Playing a pivotal role in the design and construction of the city's second recreation facility.
- Oversaw the release of the city's first outdoor recreation and education programs.
- Helped improve processes for encouraging innovation, creativity, and problem-solving in the department.
- Spearheading preparations for going after CAPRA accreditation.

RECREATION MANAGER City of Missouri City, TX

October 2021 - September 2023

- Oversaw operations and activities of the Recreation Center
- Played a role in creating a continuous partnership with a local brewery.
- Involved community and staff in the development of a department mascot.
- Set and achieved goals to bring more programs for the preschool-aged demographic. Brought the first-ever street art festival to the city.
- Helped improve processes for encouraging innovation, creativity, and problem-solving in our department.
- Played a pivotal role in the continued administration of the CAPRA accreditation.

RECREATION & EVENTS COORDINATOR City of Jersey Village, TX

November 2018 - October 2021

- Introduced art and culture, outdoor recreation, and aquatics programs.

- Revamped all special events and even brought two new special events, including a farmers' market.
- Increased safety priorities in aquatics division by bringing weekly in-service training and annual safety audits of lifeguards and the facility.
- Implemented an award-winning partnership with the county library to combine childhood literacy and wellness.
- Partnered with a local brewery to raise money for planting trees in the city.

**RECREATION SPECIALIST City of Kerrville, TX**

November 2017 - November 2018

- Led the development of a Christmas decoration program to increase tourism.
- Cultivated new community partnerships with private to improve our sponsorships.
- Conducted full community recreation assessment to better meet the needs and desires of Kerrville.
- Introduced a brand-new adult sports program catalog.

**SPORTS AND RECREATION COORDINATOR Kerrville Kroc Center**

September 2014 - November 2017

- Revitalized adult sports program offerings.
- Developed first-ever department sponsorship packet.
- Helped grow all programs at least 100% in my 3 years in the position.
- Oversaw fitness and wellness programs for the Boys & Girls Club in the facility.

**List any professional organizations you are affiliated with, including positions and awards:**

- TRAPS Central Region, Ways and Means Committee Chair

**Describe your contributions to the Texas Recreation and Park Society:**

My contributions to TRAPS have been most heavily felt in the East and Central Regions. In the East region, I spoke at multiple lunch & learns, regional workshops, and further education opportunities. I held roles as the Recreation Programming Chair, Young Professional Regional Representative, a member of the Awards Committee, and briefly Region Secretary/Treasurer. This is really where I got my feet wet in the organization of TRAPS. In the Central Region, I am currently the Ways and Means Committee Chair, a member of the Awards Committee, and I have also spoken at the Central Region Workshop. At the state level, I am set to deliver two educational sessions at the 2025 Expo in Allen. I also mentored multiple students and younger professionals through the F&YP Branch.

**Discuss what goals you would seek to accomplish during your term of office, if elected:**

Before the end of the term, I plan to play a role in a more systematic approach to regional success across the state level. Having worked in multiple regions, I have noticed that regions have vastly different ways of approaching their events, marketing, education, committees, outreach, and giving.

I plan to help the Society put together more information, education, and solutions for nontraditional recreation, alternative recreation, and cutting-edge leisure. How do we help our agencies increase their outreach to people who don't enjoy the outdoors or community events?

Finally, I plan to improve the approach to information sharing on things like policies, best practices, and procedures with a particular aim for young and new professionals.



# EAST REGION DIRECTOR



# Sara McClure, CPRP, LGIT, WSIT, CPSI

City of Oak Ridge North TX Director of Economic Development and Community Programs

## **Education and Training:**

I began my professional career in Parks and Recreation with the City of Oak Ridge North in 2016. I started as solely aquatics, but quickly moved into special events, community outreach, and parks in addition to aquatics. After a couple of years, I moved into a sales role with the American Red Cross focusing on aquatics. Shortly after, I decided to leave aquatics to explore playground equipment. I absolutely loved my time selling playground equipment, understanding the design of playgrounds, playground safety, and most importantly meeting most everyone in the TRAPS East Region. In 2022, I decided to go back into aquatics. While aquatics will always hold a special place in my heart, I'm excited to semi-recently return to the City of Oak Ridge North as their Director of Economic Development and Community Programming. While I am taking on new job duties, I am able to keep all of my previous Parks and Recreation job tasks.

Throughout my career I have been extremely lucky to be with organizations that have supported future development and learning. I has obtained, and continued to maintain, my Water Safety Instructor Trainer and Lifeguard Instructor Trainer Certification. I previously obtained my Certified Playground Safety Instructor Certification and Certified Pool Operator. Most recently I received my Certified Parks and Recreation Professional Certification, and am currently working on my Aquatic Facilitator Operator certification.

## **Work Experience:**

- Director of Economic Development and Community Programming, City of Oak Ridge North- 1/24-current
- Aquatics Supervisor, City of Conroe, 4/22-1/24
- Playground Specialist, fun abounds, 12/19- 4/22
- Aquatics Specialist, American Red Cross, 11/18-12/19
- Director of Parks and Recreation, City of Oak Ridge North, 3/16-11/18
- Relational Marketing Director, YMCA Camp Cullen, 8/15-3/16
- Constituent Services Representative, US House of Representatives, 5/14-8/15

**List any professional organizations you are affiliated with, including positions and awards:**

- Education for Tomorrow Alliance- Next Generation Leadership Mentor 2018- Current
- Leadership Montgomery County Board Member- 2024-2026
  - Small group discussion leader 2019 - Current
- Texas Public Pool Council- Board Member - Current
  - Social Media Committee Chair- 2016-2017
  - Regional Lifeguard Competition Host 2022
- April Sound Civic Association Board Member - 2017-2022
  - April Sound Parks Committee Chairperson 2022
- Leadership Montgomery County
  - Graduate 2018, Master Class Graduate 2023
- Texas Public Pool Council
  - Class III Agency of the Year 2017
  - Scholarship Recipient 2017
- Conroe Noon Lions 2019-2023
  - Membership Committee- currently Second Chair

**Describe your contributions to the Texas Recreation and Park Society:**

- TRAPS East Region Secretary- Current
- I have served as the East Region Legislative Chair off and on since joining in 2017. When not chairing, I serve on the committee. I have also served on the state-wide committee off and on since 2017.
- East Region Social Vice Chair 2020-2022, Chair 2023-2025. Organize, plan, and find sponsors for two socials a year; Help with a social at the golf tournament and workshop
- East Region Golf Tournament Vice Chair 2021, 2024- I have/continue to serve on the committee off and on; Help plan all aspects of the golf tournament; Obtain sponsors; Help with operations day of
- TRAPS East Region Communication/Social Media Chair 2017- present- assist with the TRAPS East Region Social Media pages
- TRAPS East Region Workshop Chair- 2022; Planned the Workshop that will take place in January of 2023

**Discuss what goals you would seek to accomplish during your term of office, if elected:**

My goal would be to unite and grow not only the East Region but the state organization as a whole. We are a large organization full of talented individuals who can all learn from each other. I would like to support the organization as best as possible by connecting individuals throughout the region, but also at the state level. My other goal would be to engage members in committee-level work. As a region, we have a ton of great events and programs going on, with room for everyone to get involved.





# Jason O'Mara

City of Angleton Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation

## **Education and Training:**

I have a Bachelors in Recreation & Leisure Management from SUNY Brockport and Masters in Kinesiology from Stephen F. Austin.

I have been in the parks and recreation industry for over 13 years with experience in fitness, facility operations, resource development, and parks & recreation administration. In addition, I've contributed 7 years in campus recreation, resort and tourism, and non-profit recreation.

## **Work Experience:**

City of Angleton, Parks & Recreation Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation, May 2022 – Present

In my current role, I direct the recruitment, training, supervision, and professional development of two full-time staff, along with overseeing their direct reports. I support the Parks and Recreation department's budget planning and execution of approximately \$4 million, assist in recommending and implementing policies, procedures, and goals, and lead efforts to pursue CAPRA accreditation. I assist staff in overseeing a 35,000 sq. foot recreation center, 11 parks, and various amenities, while preparing and presenting material for key boards and commissions. I analyze department data to monitor trends and provide recommendations to leadership, serve on the Senior Angleton Leadership team, and assume the role of Director in her absence.

Additionally, I serve as the Executive Director for Keep Angleton Beautiful, managing all aspects of the commission, including board development, event coordination, and annual reports.

City of Pearland, Parks & Recreation, Facility Supervisor, March 2020 – May 2022

I oversaw the daily operations of a 107,000 sq. foot Recreation Center and Natatorium, which included two basketball courts, a weight room, activity rooms, an indoor track, multipurpose rooms, and both an activity and competition pool. I hired, trained, and supervised seven Facility Attendants while providing indirect supervision for 20 Recreation Attendants at the Welcome Center and Kidz Korner. I assisted in managing the Recreation Operations budget of over \$500,000, with direct responsibility for nearly \$100,000 for building maintenance, repairs, and contractual services. I ensured facility maintenance through regular inspections, coordinated with the Facility Management division, and monitored contractor compliance. Additionally, I coordinated and facilitated short-term rentals, conducted bi-monthly staff meetings for professional growth, implemented inventory management protocols, and maintained accurate marketing and promotional signage throughout the facility.

City of Pearland, Resource Development Manager, November 2015 – March 2020

I developed and implemented a comprehensive fundraising strategy that promoted the vision and mission of Pearland Parks & Recreation, securing annual sponsorship revenue of more than \$100,000. I supervised, evaluated, and mentored a full-time Volunteer Coordinator, providing guidance on goal setting and managing the city-wide volunteer program of approximately 500 volunteers. I managed all aspects of sponsorships and donations for the department, including identifying funding sources, creating proposals, and executing sponsorship agreements. I compiled and analyzed data for sponsorship reports, presenting to sponsors to strengthen relationships and demonstrate return on investment.

I managed the Resource Development division's annual budget of approximately \$150,000, served on the Strategic Development team, and advised the Forever Parks Foundation of Pearland. I collaborated with the Special Events Division to coordinate annual city events and facilitated community partnership agreements. Additionally, I managed departmental advertising, promotional materials, and maintained the Parks & Recreation website in collaboration with the city Communications department.

City of Pearland, Fitness Specialist, August 2011 – November 2015

I interviewed, hired, trained, supervised, and evaluated five part-time Fitness Attendants, 18 Recreation Attendants, five personal trainers, and 15 group exercise instructors. I developed, implemented, and supervised fitness programs to promote healthy nutrition, exercise, and weight training habits. I marketed, registered participants, and regularly evaluated fitness programs to keep up with demand and changes in fitness trends. I monitored and enforced rules for drop-in recreation usage at the Recreation Center and Natatorium, resolved complaints, and assisted as needed.

I developed protocols for administering and tracking preventative maintenance, cleaning, and equipment repairs to ensure patron safety. I coordinated and executed the full replacement of cardio and strength equipment, totaling over \$300,000, including research, quote solicitation, proposal recommendations, layout, and installation. Monitored and completed reports to track facility usage, area goals, program revenue, and expenses. I developed and submitted zero-based and supplemental budgets annually, monitored fitness programming and maintenance budgets, and administered group exercise instructor and class evaluations.

I also coordinated partnerships with outside agencies for fitness related programs, served as Committee Chair on the Employee Recognition Program Committee, and taught CPR/AED, First Aid, and Bloodborne Pathogen classes for employees.

Niagara University, Assistant Director of Operations and Fitness, January 2010 – July 2011

I served as the Interim Assistant Director of Recreation from July 2010 to January 2011, where I developed, organized, promoted, administered, and supervised all programs related to recreation, intramurals, and personal training services. I assisted in hiring, training, evaluating, and supervising approximately 30 work-study student employees. I contributed to the supervision and daily operation of the natatorium, including rentals, employee scheduling, and lifeguard training, holding American Red Cross Lifeguarding and Lifeguarding Instructor certifications as required. I also assisted in coordinating and administering operations for the Emergency Shelter in case of unforeseen disasters.

I managed front desk operations, including memberships, program registration, facility usage, and staff supervision. I handled daily facility operations, developed and implemented policies and procedures, reviewed reservation requests, scheduled facility usage, and ensured facility security. I documented and reviewed fitness program participation numbers to evaluate effectiveness and provide recommendations.

for future improvements. I provided leadership in risk management training, conducted safety audits, evaluated emergency preparedness procedures, and purchased supplies for facility first aid kits. Additionally, I developed and administered the general maintenance and cleaning of fitness equipment, assisted in purchasing and repairs, and monitored the budget allocated for equipment maintenance and repairs.

**List any professional organizations you are affiliated with, including positions and awards:**

NRPA, TRAPS, GGCPARDA, TML, Texas AgriLife Extension Office – Horticulture Committee Member

**Describe your contributions to the Texas Recreation and Park Society:**

I have submitted proposals for educational sessions at the annual institute, focusing on professional growth and networking. Additionally, I am collaborating with the current East Region Director to explore opportunities for serving on committees with potential vacancies.

**Discuss what goals you would seek to accomplish during your term of office, if elected:**

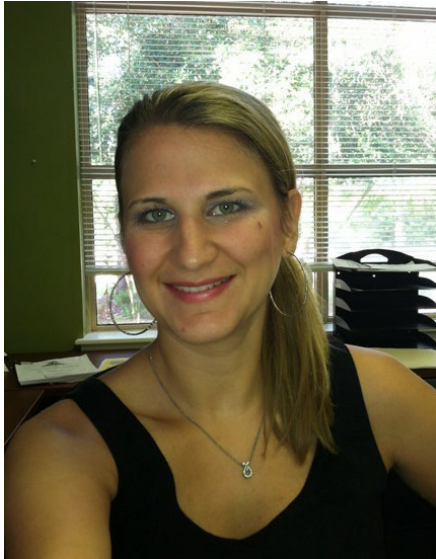
If elected, one of my primary goals would be to improve communication between TRAPS, regional members, and affiliates to foster stronger connections and encourage greater participation within the East Region and enhance access to various resources. Additionally, I aim to develop initiatives that help regional members better understand who they are and how they can use their strengths to support their region. By recognizing the unique strengths, challenges, and goals of each member and organization, and taking the time to truly listen and engage within the region, we can better identify how to serve effectively.

I believe that understanding the diversity of experiences and perspectives within TRAPS is critical to developing strategies that resonate with all members. I envision using my energetic and enthusiastic personality, along with my passion for finding unique ways to motivate people, to create an environment where collaboration and education thrive. My goal is to inspire members to grow beyond their boundaries—whether through professional development, leadership opportunities, or creative approaches to problem-solving. I want to ensure that everyone feels empowered to contribute to the larger mission of TRAPS, enhancing our ability to serve our teams, cities, region, and state.

My term in office would focus on building strong relationships, amplifying voices, and driving collective growth in a fun, interactive, and engaging way. I believe we can more effectively tailor our efforts to ensure that our entire region benefits from greater collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to advancing parks and recreation.

To accomplish this, I propose increasing collaboration, engagement, and share outs across regional committees. Enhancing meetings with interactive activities such as speed mentoring roundtables, community challenges, and themed discussions. I will also create opportunities for members to present their work and ideas at regional meetings, helping them prepare for local and national conferences. Additionally, I plan to regularly survey and evaluate feedback to continuously refine and improve educational opportunities, ensuring they meet the evolving needs and interests of our members while fostering development and growth.

Ultimately, I believe this position provides an excellent opportunity to take a more active role in the future of TRAPS.



# Pamela Woods, CPRP

The Woodlands Township Assistant Director

## **Education and Training:**

- BS- Parks and Recreation- Texas A&M
- TAFF-SMS
- AFO/CPO- Certified
- Certified Parks and Recreation Professional
- USA Triathlon- Certified Race Director (previous)

## **Work Experience:**

For the past 19 years, I have worked with The Woodlands Township in a multitude of roles including Recreation Specialist, Recreation Coordinator, Recreation Superintendent and now Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, where I oversee the following divisions: Recreation, Special Events and Aquatics.

## **List any professional organizations you are affiliated with, including positions and awards:**

- TRAPS Member- 2005-Present
- NRPA Member-2005-Present
- GGCRDA-2022-Present
- Various committee memberships with TRAPS East Region and GGCRDA
- NRPA Gold Medal Award-2019
- East Region Recreation Professional of the Year-2015

## **Describe your contributions to the Texas Recreation and Park Society:**

As a dedicated member of the Texas Recreation and Park Society, I have actively contributed to the organization's mission of advancing the field of parks and recreation in Texas. My involvement has spanned several areas:

- Committee Service: I have served on various committees (awards, social) for several years helping to facilitate the growth and development of fellow professionals
- Mentorship Program: As an informal mentor I've guided early-career professionals, offering insights and support to help them navigate the field.

- **Regional Networking:** I've helped organize and host regional networking events, fostering connections among parks and recreation professionals in my area.
- **Awards Committee:** I served on the Awards Committee for four years, helping to recognize outstanding achievements in the field across Texas.
- **Volunteer Work:** I've volunteered at multiple TAFF/TRAPS events-regional workshops.

Through these contributions, I've aimed to support TRAPS' goals of professional development, networking, and advocacy for parks and recreation in Texas. My involvement has not only benefited the organization but has also enhanced my own professional growth and connections within the field.

**Discuss what goals you would seek to accomplish during your term of office, if elected:**

As a leader in the Texas Recreation and Park Society (TRAPS), I would focus on the following goals during my term of office:

- **Enhance Professional Development Opportunities:** Expand online learning platforms to offer more accessible, on-demand training.
- **Strengthen Advocacy Efforts:** Create a grassroots advocacy network to mobilize support for parks and recreation initiatives. Develop a comprehensive advocacy toolkit for members to use in their local communities. Increase TRAPS' presence and influence in state-level policy discussions.
- **Promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** Implement a mentorship program focused on underrepresented groups in the field. Ensure diverse representation in leadership positions and conference speakers. Develop resources and training on creating inclusive parks and programs.
- **Enhance Member Engagement:** Implement a regional ambassador program to strengthen local networks. Develop a mobile app for easy access to TRAPS resources and networking. Create more opportunities for member recognition and peer-to-peer learning.



# NORTH REGION DIRECTOR



# Shannon Coates, Ph.D., CPRP

City of Frisco Director of Parks & Recreation

## **Education and Training:**

Ph.D. - Educational Leadership – concentration in Research and Evaluation Methods

- University of Florida; Gainesville, FL

Executive Development Program

- Clemson University; Clemson, SC

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

- University of Central Florida; Orlando, FL

Bachelor of Arts Degree (BA) – Elementary Education;

- Transylvania University; Lexington, KY

Additional:

- LEAN Certificate – Black Belt
- FEMA Classes – 100, 200, 300, 400, 700, 800, G-191
- Certified Play Facilitator - Instructor Trainer
- CPRE (Certified Parks and Recreation Executive)

## **Work Experience:**

Department Director - Play Frisco, City of Frisco, Texas (Population 240,000+): July 2017 - Present

- Department Director responsible for 200 FTEs (over 400 staff at full capacity) assigned to 6 unique divisions, an operating budget over \$21 million, and a robust capital improvement program consisting of multiple funding sources.
- Successfully led leadership team in the creation of a new brand (Play Frisco), a new mission, new vision, and a strategic plan that ties to City Council's strategic focus areas. Restructured department operations, policies, and procedures to reflect the changes implemented.
- Successfully implemented LEAN philosophy across the department with 75% of full-time employees currently certified as Bronze-level practitioners. Utilized continuous improvement

methodology to reorganize several divisions within the department resulting in more efficient workflows and a cost savings to the city.

- Successfully led the department through 2 re-accreditation cycles, most recently achieving 99.35% of the 154 standards included for evaluation.
- Participate in regular conversations with the Economic Development Corporation and Convention and Visitors Bureau regarding economic impact of parks and their ability to draw both visitors and businesses to the area.
- Led the department in a successful bond campaign in 2019, which resulted in \$53.5 million for parks, trails, and open space. Prepared the bond package for 2023 to include a request of \$43 million for parks, trails, and open space, and \$31 million for a joint Parks Operation Center/Building Services Maintenance Facility.
- Strengthened relationships with internal and external partners by re-establishing regular meetings to review metrics and plan for future initiatives.
- Created the city's first Natural Resources division comprised of education and outreach, and operations in response to needs of the community.
- Created an Employee Engagement Team (The Playmakers) to "catch" employees making good choices to support the department's mission, vision, and strategic plan, and the city's Core values program.
- Led the development of the first Park Operations plan, first Natural Resources plan, an updated Hike and Bike Master Plan, the first Public Art Master Plan, and the first Cultural Arts Roadmap.
- Utilize innovative meeting formats and training techniques to build and retain high-performance teams within the department.
- Liaison to the Parks and Recreation Board, Public Art Board, Community Development Corporation, and the Urban Forestry Board.

Division Manager (Recreation), City of Gainesville, Florida (Population 130,000+): February 2006 – July 2017

- Gather data and empirical information and utilize data analysis, Design Thinking, LEAN Six Sigma and user-centered design techniques to support conclusions and decisions made within the Recreation Division.
- Organize activities and coordinate efforts of multiple cross-functional and cross-cultural teams including anticipating and adjusting for problems, risks, and roadblocks.
- Help lead and support teams of varying sizes in achieving results such as the development of the Department's Master Plan, Strategic Plan, Accreditation process, and the planning and implementation of the City of Gainesville's first "hackathon."
- Assess business and organizational needs and design/implement initiatives and professional development programs in person and through e-learning platforms.
- Lead business changes, workforce changes and succession planning related to the Recreation Division.
- Demonstrate positive impact of change using quantitative and qualitative methods.
- Serve as part of the Executive Leadership team evaluating and measuring the success of strategies and programs.



- Ensure evaluation and feedback is collected to determine ROI and overall effects.
- Coach section leaders in the use of organizational development tools and methods, to enhance the leaders' own coaching skills, increase engagement, productivity, and retention.
- Establish and maintain strong working relationships with peers and stakeholders.
- Communicate concisely and clearly with peers, internal customers, external customers, and Executive Leadership team via written, verbal and presentation forms.
- Provide regular status updates to project teams, stakeholders and management summarizing issues into key points and required actions.
- Meet commitments and resolve open action items in a timely fashion. Actively resolve conflicts.
- Serve as Project Manager for capital improvements including developing specifications for and serving on evaluation committee for RFPs.
- Prepare, submit, and monitor annual division budget.
- Oversee up to 150 employees (full-time and part-time) depending on season and demands of community.
- Recommend selection, promotion, discharge, and other appropriate personnel actions.
- Handle grievances in conjunction with the Human Resources Department.
- Perform staff evaluations.
- Review and approve payroll.
- Inspect facilities and equipment to determine safety and maintenance needs. Initiate work orders.
- Prepare and issue news releases and information bulletins both in print and electronically.
- Liaison to the Public Recreation and Parks Board.
- Serve on the City's Leadership Forum Steering Committee and the Leading Innovation Team.
- Attend conferences and subscribe to industry journals to remain abreast of new ideas.

**List any professional organizations you are affiliated with, including positions and awards:**

- TRAPS (Texas Recreation and Parks Society) - Member
- NRPA (National Recreation and Parks Association) – Member

**Describe your contributions to the Texas Recreation and Park Society:**

I moved to TX in July 2017. Since then I have been an active member in TRAPS. I have applied for, and spoken at, most north region conferences and state conferences. We hosted state in Frisco twice, which was amazing. We have also hosted the maintenance rodeo.

**Discuss what goals you would seek to accomplish during your term of office, if elected:**

I would like to continue to help the Board enhance the educational opportunities and leadership opportunities throughout the region and the state. I would also like to help with a framework for career progression in our field, including those (like me) that came from other industries. I would like to see TRAPS become a High Performing Organization. Utilizing continuous improvement techniques and working together to continue to encourage and reward collaboration this is more than possible.



# Jennifer Kashner, CPRP, WSIT, LGIT

City of Grapevine Parks and Recreation General Manager

## **Education and Training:**

I am a proud graduate of Western New Mexico University with a Bachelor of Applied Science. I have grown up in the Parks and Recreation industry, beginning my career as a lifeguard and swim lesson instructor. I am a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP), as well as a Water Safety Instructor Trainer (WSIT) and Lifeguard Instructor Trainer (LGIT) with the American Red Cross. Additionally, I am a proud member of the parks board for the Town of Trophy Club.

## **Work Experience:**

Current Position: General Manager, The REC, City of Grapevine June 2022 – Present

- Oversee programs, activities, and operations at The REC and aquatic facilities, ensuring safe and efficient management for 22,000 members.
- Hire, train, and supervise 22 full-time staff, and oversee 95 part-time recreation staff and 150 aquatics staff; manage payroll and maintain adherence to City policies.
- Develop and oversee budgets for recreation programs and facilities; monitor expenditures and approve new programs and equipment.
- Provide exceptional customer service and represent the City in various capacities, including liaison roles and promotional activities.

Previous Positions:

Assistant Recreation Services Manager, City of Frisco June 2022 – Feb 2024

- Developed and led 15 direct report full-time staff members, including Youth Services Supervisor, Membership Supervisor, and Senior Center Supervisor, as well as 60 part-time employees in the Youth Services and Membership divisions.
- Managed the Frisco Athletic Center and The Grove at Frisco Commons, serving as an active adult community center and public event space.
- Administered budgets, revenue, and expenses for multiple recreational facility areas of operations.
- Improved efficiency and productivity by streamlining policies and procedures to remove redundancy and increase cohesion.

Senior Activities Center Director, City of Hurst May 2021 – July 2022

- Promoted to direct operations for the Hurst Senior Activities Center, with responsibility for the development and management of programs, budget administration, and the oversight of full and part-time employees, contractors, and volunteers.
- Managed the Senior Center Supervisor, Senior Center Coordinator, and seven part-time front desk staff.
- Defined policies, procedures, and best practices for all areas of operations.
- Reinforced relationships with 2,000 members, building trust and confidence. Created programs to rebuild and attract members following reopening after the pandemic.

Recreation Manager Aquatics/Athletics, City of Hurst Feb 2017 – May 2021

- Operated two outdoor aquatic facilities, supervising seasonal and full-time teams while managing budgets and establishing performance targets. Managed the Recreation Coordinator.
- Handled customer relations issues, event planning, human resources, and other duties. Created programs for adult athletics and new community events.
- Hired, onboarded, and trained for all roles. Led recruiting strategies that improved application volume and increased employee retention and return rates by 30%.

Aquatics Supervisor, City of Grapevine May 2015- Feb 2017

- Assembled and trained a team to staff the newly constructed indoor aquatics center, including four full-time Recreation Coordinators and 220 seasonal employees.
- Supported daily operations, special events, program development, human resources, and monitoring of water quality.
- Debuted four special events that attracted up to 250 attendees and established new streams of revenue.
- Expanded the number of instructor-led classes from two to ten per year.

Recreation Coordinator, City of Grapevine Nov 2006- May 2015

- Supervised outdoor programs, including tennis, sailing, and summer camps, as well as the summer aquatics program across two pools. Managed up to 250 seasonal staff members at peak times.
- Coordinated and executed 13 special events, including a Halloween event that grew to encompass 10,000 attendees.
- Trained aquatic staff in public safety techniques, leading to the saving of two lives during medical emergencies in 2014.

**List any professional organizations you are affiliated with, including positions and awards:**

Texas Amateur Athletic Federation

- Committees:
  - Served on the Finance Committee
- Awards:
  - 2018 Young Professional Award
  - 2019 Professional Service Award
  - 2021 President's Award

## North Texas Aquatics Association

- Positions:
  - President, 2018-2021
  - Secretary, 2016-2018

## Texas Recreation and Parks Society

- Positions:
  - Special Events & Program Branch Chair, 2022-2023
  - Membership Branch Co-Chair, 2023-Present
- Awards:
  - North Region 2016 Recreational Professional of the Year
  - North Region 2016 Lone Star Programming Award

## Aquatics International Magazine

- Recognition:
  - Top 25 Aquatics Professionals, 2022 Power Issue

### **Describe your contributions to the Texas Recreation and Park Society:**

I have actively contributed to the Texas Recreation and Park Society through various leadership roles and initiatives. From 2022 to 2023, I served as the Special Events & Program Branch Chair, where I was responsible for organizing and overseeing branch meetings and programs that enhanced the engagement and participation of our members.

Currently, I hold the position of Membership Branch Co-Chair, a role I began in 2023. In this capacity, I focus on growing and retaining our membership base, ensuring that our society remains a vibrant and supportive network for recreation and park professionals.

Throughout my tenure, I have been recognized for my contributions with awards such as the North Region 2016 Recreational Professional of the Year and the North Region 2016 Lone Star Programming Award.

These accolades reflect my commitment to excellence and my dedication to advancing the mission of the Texas Recreation and Park Society.

### **Discuss what goals you would seek to accomplish during your term of office, if elected:**

Foster collaboration between different Regions of TRAPS to streamline efforts and share resources. Facilitate additional networking opportunities beyond the annual North Region Conference. Offer additional educational opportunities throughout the year.



# SOUTH REGION DIRECTOR



# Sara Sharp, CPRP

City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Manager

## Education and Training:

- Mott Community College, 1996
  - Associate of Arts-Honors
- Central Michigan University, 2001
  - Bachelor of Science
  - Outdoor and Environmental Recreation
  - Substance Abuse Education: Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment
  - Psychology
- Our Lady of the Lake University, 2021
  - Master of Science
  - Organizational Leadership

## Work Experience:

City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Manager - February 2021 to present

- Develops, implements, and monitors overall administrative and operational programs
- Meets the department and City goals for management of parks and facilities
- Supervises, trains, and evaluates assigned staff
- Develops and monitors division budget
- Oversees construction projects
- Establish short and long-range departmental priorities, goals, and objectives
- Directs staff in the development and administration of programs and services; evaluates program services
- Serves as liaison to the community, neighborhood organizations, public and/or private agencies to include responding to citizen inquiries and complaints
- Oversees field and office studies relative to the further development of existing areas and the possible development of proposed areas
- Oversees independent studies and statistical analysis on park developments
- Performs related duties and fulfills responsibilities as required

- Also includes Assistant Manager duties listed below

#### Assistant Parks and Recreation Manager - July 2018 to present

- Oversight of the Summer Youth Program, an 8-week program run in partnership with 7 school districts in San Antonio
- Serve as the liaison between the school districts and the Parks and Recreation Department
- Developed age-appropriate educational curriculum, including STEM activities, fitness, arts, math, science, nature and more for ages 6-14 year olds
- Recruited and hired 250 staff and served as the managing supervisor
- Coordinated and conducted registration for over 4500 participants in summer program and handled any behavioral issues and/or parent concerns
- Fiscally responsible for the budget of the program
- Supervise the Centralized Programming Program Manager and all programs as well as the Open Play Area Supervisor and the Open Play Centers
- Oversee the Frank Garrett Multi-Service Center's recreation programming in partnership with the Department of Human Services Re-Engagement Facility
- Serve as an advisor for the City of San Antonio's Women's Leadership and Mentoring Program
- Serve on the Educational Committee for the Texas Recreation and Parks Societies Annual Conference

#### Program Manager - February 2014 to July 2018

- Responsible for the oversight of the Centralized Programming initiative operated by the City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department
- Directly manage and supervise 11 Community Center Leaders
- Oversee the development of Arts and Education programs, Science, Nature and Teen's programs and Fitness and Sports programs for the community centers
- Ensured supplies for all programs were purchased in accordance with contracted vendors and within the department budget
- Developed program reporting methods and provided these reports to management monthly
- Oversaw a number of recognized programs including, but not limited to, The Gallery, an art program that won the TRAPS Arts and Humanities II award, an art exhibit that was featured at the Institute of Texan Cultures, a poetry project from San Antonio's Poet Laureate, on display at Plaza de Armas
- Coordinate instructor and volunteer contract agreements for the community centers
- Served as an Area Supervisor for community centers and their staff for over a year due to staff shortage, assuming all responsibilities of the position

#### Community Services Specialist - October 2010 to February 2014

- Developed all programming for Summer Youth Program at 64 school and community center sites
- Recruited and hired 200 staff for Summer Youth Program
- Coordinated and conducted registration for 4000 participants in summer program
  - Responsible for ordering all supplies for Summer Youth Program
- Member of Quality Support Team for Community Centers
- Emcee of Our Part of Town Talent Show

- Member of Eco Team
- Reporter for Park Bench
- Committee Chair for United Way Charitable Campaign
- Texas Recreation and Parks Society Young Professional of the Year

Community Center Leader - October 2005 to October 2010

- Responsible for all programming within center, including developing summer, after school and all camp curriculum
- Responsible for center's summer nutrition program run through the USDA, including all paperwork
- Recruited participants for center sports programs, set up all youth sport schedules, rosters, practice and game times and secured fields as needed
- Served on numerous committees, including Activities Committee, Teen Club Committee, Hike and Bike Committee
- Co-chaired Elite Teen Summit Committee, which included special programming for 16 community center site's teen participants

**List any professional organizations you are affiliated with, including positions and awards:**

- TRAPS – 2012 Regions 5&7 Young Professional Award
- TRAPS - 2019 to present Education Committee Member
- NRPA - CPRP, 2021
- UMAST
- ICMA

**Describe your contributions to the Texas Recreation and Park Society:**

- 2010 Presenter - TRAPS Group Games Session
- 2011 Presenter - TRAPS Group Games Session
- 2012 Presenter - TRAPS UNITY Programming Session
- TRAPS – 2012 Regions 5&7 Young Professional Award
- TRAPS - 2019 to present Education Committee Member
- Co-host of TRAPS South Region Workshop – 2023

**Discuss what goals you would seek to accomplish during your term of office, if elected:**

I am deeply passionate about advancing the quality-of-life industry through Connections, Advocacy, Resources, and Education, as championed by the Texas Recreation and Park Society (TRAPS). Engaging new audiences through community, business, and university partnerships is crucial for promoting TRAPS' growth and sustainability. Sharing my enthusiasm for recreation and TRAPS with diverse audiences would be a significant achievement for me. In my everyday life, I advocate passionately for the importance of recreation and outdoor activities. I aspire to expand this advocacy on a broader scale, reaching more individuals to positively influence and make a difference in their lives. I strongly believe that innovation is key to organizational growth. By continuously seeking new resources, embracing technology, and staying on trend, TRAPS can achieve not only greater success but also financial stability. I am eager to contribute to enhancing statewide connections, fostering mutual understanding among stakeholders, and building robust support networks as we move forward together.