



Featured Article

Legal Corner

Dealing with Minors

Virginia is for (Adventure) Lovers
by Adventure Park Insider

Building a Strong Foundation for
Learning
by Jen Stanchfield

ACCT Research Grant Available
by Research Advisory Committee

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Welcome to Parallel Lines™!

We are pleased to present our members with this online and user-friendly newsletter. Our goal is to provide our members with an easy-to-read periodical that reflects the more modernized world in which we live.

In this edition of Parallel Lines, we will be sharing information about the upcoming 26th Annual International ACCT Conference & Exposition, good practices for dealing with minors, the growing adventure park sector, and much more.

We encourage you to share Parallel Lines with your colleagues in your community. Remember that you can also view the publication on our website at www.acctinfo.org. As always, let us know if you have a program, member, or topic that you would like to have included. We can be reached at membership@acctinfo.org.

Inside This Issue:

- ACCT Call for Presenters3
- Happy Spring!4
- Legal Corner: Dealing with Minors6
- ACCT is Going Digital7
- ACCT Partners with HPN Global8
- Virginia is for (Adventure) Lovers9
- From Silver Anniversary to Silver Spurs11
- ACCT Research Grant14
- ACCT Logo Usage Policy | Membership Benefits.....16
- Facilitator’s Toolbox: Building a Strong Foundation for Learning17
- ACCT Professional Vendor Members.....20

THE NEXT ISSUE OF PARALLEL LINES WILL BE PUBLISHED IN JULY. ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS JUNE 26, 2015.

April

21 — 22
ACCT Board Meets in Atlanta, Georgia

24
Parallel Lines - Spring Edition

27
ACCT Clipboard Published

May

21
ACCT Board Conference Call

29
ACCT Call for Presenters Deadline

25
ACCT Clipboard Published

30
ACCT Research Grant Deadline

June

18
ACCT Board Conference Call

29
ACCT Clipboard Published

30
End of the Fiscal Year

About ACCT

The Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) is an Accredited Standards Developer (ASD) by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and was responsible for the development of the first Challenge Course Technology standards originally published in 1994. These internationally recognized standards are currently being maintained by ACCT through our accredited ANSI public comment process.

ACCT serves as the leading trade association for the Challenge Course and Aerial Adventure Course industries. ACCT has 41 accredited Professional Vendor Members (PVMs) and more than 2,600 members globally (including the United States, Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, Canada, Japan, Korea, and Central America).

What is a Canopy Tour?

A guided aerial exploration or transit of the forest canopy, most commonly done by means of a series of zip lines or aerial walkways with platforms.

What is a Challenge Course?

A facility or facilities consisting of one or more elements that challenge participants as part of a supervised educational, recreational, or therapeutic curriculum.

What is a Zip Line?

A lifeline (typically sloped) suspended between support structures that enables the participant, who is attached to a pulley, to traverse from one point to another.

ACCT Call for Presenters



The Association for Challenge Course Technology's 26th Annual International ACCT Conference and Expo **Call for Presenters deadline is Friday, May 29th 2015**. The ACCT Conference will be held on January 28th — January 31st, 2016 at the Hyatt Lost Pines Resort and Spa in Austin, Texas.

We are requesting proposals for four different categories of workshops for the 26th Annual ACCT Conference and Expo:

- Pre-Conference Session (full-day session)
- General Conference Session (90-minute session)
- Post-Conference Session (half-day session)

Are you interested in presenting at the 2016 conference? If so, please go to the following link to submit a proposal:

[2016 Call for Presenters Proposal Form](#)

For additional information about presenting at the 26th Annual International ACCT Conference and Expo, visit www.acctconference.com or call 800-991-0286 ext. 917.

To become an exhibitor, sponsor, and/or advertiser, contact:

ACCT Exhibit Management
Phone: 800-991-0286 Ext. 917
Email: events@acctinfo.org
www.acctconference.com





Happy Spring!

by Micah Henderson
ACCT Board Chair

I am sure that each of you reading this article right now has roughly 1000 other things you need to get done before summer, but thanks for taking the time to stay in touch with the ACCT community. This is the time of year when most of you out there are preparing for a fun-filled summer of impacting people through the broad range of experiential tools we have at our disposal. If you are lucky, you or your facility may even have a new element or attraction that you get to debut this year.

Personally, I love springtime. For one thing, it is finally warming up outside and it is so much easier to get outside and play when it is sunny and lovely. Also, I am extremely motivated by being busy and having lots of deadlines to accomplish. I appreciate visioning and planning for the year and watching the small tasks I complete help me meet my goals. I also know that the long list of to-do items can be stressful and can seem insurmountable at times. I have to remember that every task I complete is still moving forward, even if it is not at the speed I would like. I have a great quote on my phone that helps me keep perspective. It says, "Everything will be ok in the end... If it's not okay, it's not the end." (By John Lennon)

It was great to see so many of you at the ACCT Conference this year in California. I hope you were able to learn something new and get energized by networking with so many of your peers. I hope you could tell that the Board of Directors was also energized about the new endeavors that we are moving forward with this year. If you were not able to attend, I'll give you an update. The Board created a few new task forces that

we know will help us make these new programs available to all of you. The first group is the Program Accreditation task force who will get a pilot program assembled for courses out there to seek ACCT accreditation as a sign of quality in the industry. We hope many of your programs will get excited about this opportunity to help educate the public on how to find great courses and hopefully increase business for everyone.

"The new task force is charged with integrating this new test into the current certification system. This is the next step into providing consistency within Practitioner Certification."

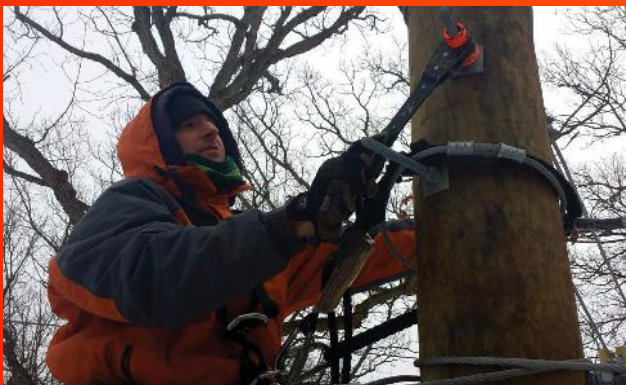
The next group created is the Practitioner Certification task force. Because of the work of our current Practitioner Certification Test work group, an ACCT specific exam has been created. The new task force is charged with integrating this new test in to the current certification system. This is the next step in providing consistency within Practitioner Certification.

The final group created is the ACCT University task force. They are charged with developing a plan for the delivery of educational content through e-learning webinars and live workshops. They will also be identifying industry stakeholders who would benefit from delivering their content through ACCT's network. With the addition of this resource we are hoping each of you can have your educational needs met throughout the year instead of just at the conference.

We made an effort at the conference to recruit people to join these task groups as well as fill many of the empty seats on standing committees and work groups. This is all in an effort to increase our infrastructure and capacity for new and exciting programs in the future. I am pleased to report that we had over 100 people fill out the interest form. Their names have been sent along to each group and they should be receiving more information soon. This is a busy and exciting time for everyone and my hope is that we can all work together in moving the ACCT strategic plan forward as well. Have a great season!

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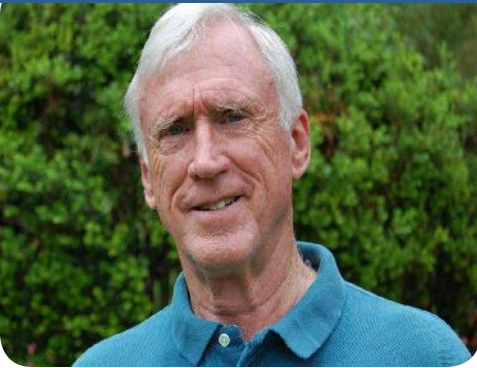
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Featured Article

Legal Corner

Dealing with Minors

by Reb Gregg

The age of your participant or client will influence a number of decisions relating to management of legal liability.

Set a minimum age for participation based on the nature of the activity, the degree of supervision expected, the proximity of parents or another responsible adult AND what other folks are doing in this regard. Regarding the latter, your local competition may all be doing it wrong, but at least research prevailing practices, and if you are hanging out there alone, have a very good reason for your deviation from the norm.

Your duty of care to a young visitor or participant is elevated. Some states still recognize the doctrine of "in loco parentis" – in the place of the parent – which means that you are expected to show the same care (caution) that a prudent parent would show. Fortunately, case law supports the reality that even the most cautious parent understands that risk is inevitable, and essential to a child's physical and emotional development. So, while you are not a guarantor of the minor's safety, you are expected to take certain extra steps – depending on the age – that take into account a child's likely lower level of attention and comprehension, and an underdeveloped appreciation of risk and judgment.

Your literature and your Participant Agreement should be very clear about the level of staff supervision, or observation, which a parent and child can expect while the child is in your care.

We know that a minor child (under 18 in all but a few states) cannot legally bind himself or herself by contract, including a pre-injury release or related agreement. In only about 20 states may a parent

"Some states still recognize the doctrine of "in loco parentis" – in the place of the parent – which means that you are expected to show the same care (caution) that a prudent parent would show."

or other legal guardian enter into a release agreement on behalf of the child. In those states which do allow a parent or guardian to agree for the child, the document should be agreed to by the parent for themselves and on behalf of the child, for you want the parent to release the claims she or he might have in the event of an injury to the child. In states which do not allow a parent to sign for the child, your agreement should nevertheless

require a signing parent to release his or her own claim and indemnify (protect) you from any claims from a non-signing parent (and perhaps other family members).

Whether or not a parent is allowed to agree to a pre-injury release on behalf of a child, require a parent to represent that he or she has discussed the activities and risks with the minor child who understands them and wishes to participate nevertheless.

Some aerial parks include a course for very young children not capable of understanding the risks of the activity or making an informed choice about whether or not to participate. For these infants, and for minors on the "adult" course, the site should have strict policies regarding the availability of a parent or other responsible adult. These responsibilities may begin with actually accompanying a young child (up to age ten perhaps), and being readily available if called to assist with an older child of, for example, twelve to fourteen years. Forgery – by a child, or by a non-parent/guardian for a child – is a problem we will discuss in a future article.



ACCT is Going Digital!

by the ACCT Events Department and
PR/Marketing Committee

The ACCT Conference Registration Brochure is going digital! We're excited to announce that this year ACCT will be conserving resources by releasing our Conference Registration Brochure in digital format.

Please note that this announcement is only regarding the Registration Brochure that is sent out before the conference in late summer, NOT the Conference Program that is given out at the conference.

The decision to go digital with the Registration Brochure means that we will be able to:

- Use considerably less printed materials
- Save significantly on postage costs
- Forego the use of a paid mailing service
- Avoid the stack of brochures that are "returned to sender" at the ACCT office each year
- Distribute the brochure in a more share-friendly format

We feel this is a responsible and smart choice regarding how to effectively use the resources at our disposal. As we consider our members' needs, however, we recognize that some members have a strong preference for a paper registration brochure. If you feel that your needs will be best met by continuing to receive a registration brochure in the mail, please let us know no later than July 1, 2015.

To make your request known and provide your mailing information to us, **[PLEASE CLICK HERE.](#)** We'll be happy to mail your brochure to you once it is ready for release later this summer.

A Special Thank You to the Conference Committee & Service Crew

The ACCT staff would like to thank the 2015 Conference Committee & Service Crew for putting on an outstanding anniversary event! We look forward to seeing what you have in store for us in Austin!!!

James Borishade
Executive Director

ACCT partners with HPN Global

HPN Global is pleased to announce they have entered into a partnership with ACCT for meeting and event services!

HPN's meeting management group is a network of seasoned hospitality professionals located all over the world with corporate headquarters in Scottsdale, AZ. We provide personal assistance to meeting planners to find, contract, and manage smarter meetings. Combining the ease and efficiency of a site selection company with experienced meeting professionals and suppliers, HPN is a strategic event solutions company that is fast and dependable. HPN Global will assist ACCT with future conference planning by searching for appropriate venues and negotiating contracts to maximize return on investment for the Association. Our pride is in our ability to be creative, flexible and nimble throughout the process. We believe in working smarter, doing what we say and having fun along the way.

As a global third-party meeting planning company, HPN knows corporate and association events from every angle, from conference attendees and organizers to hotel owners and operators. We have years of experience working for the best hotel and

resort properties and brands in the convention and meeting industry. As a result of our success, we have developed an excellent rapport with some of the nation's finest properties and suppliers in the meetings industry.

These long-term relationships afford ACCT access to the best properties, the most favorable hotel contracts available, and the confidence of knowing that we will reliably keep you up-to-date with the changes happening in our industry.

HPN Global will also be assisting in the development and expansion of ACCT's exhibitor and sponsor base. We will be relying on you to help us lead the way in growth, value and opportunities for exhibitors and sponsors of ACCT's events. We are here to help you achieve your goals. We believe that relationships matter and that together we can take ACCT to the next level. We look forward to getting to know each of you. See you in Austin!!!





Virginia Is for (Adventure) Lovers

A new adventure park at the Virginia Aquarium makes the most of unique elements and varied programming.

By Adventure Park Insider Magazine
www.adventureparkinsider.com
olivia@saminfo.com

When Kema Geroux and Wendy Tompkins imagined opening an adventure park on the grounds of Virginia Beach's Virginia Aquarium, they had no idea they would one day operate one of the largest in the world. Both women could see the potential in the space—a seven-acre wooded parcel above existing ground-level pathways and adjacent to the Owl Creek estuary—but it would be several years before the property's full potential was realized.

The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center is a public/private partnership between the City of Virginia Beach and the non-profit Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center Foundation. When Aquarium staff expressed their interest in opening an adventure park on the property, Geroux and Tompkins were intrigued—Tompkins has a background in education, and Geroux spent 14 years running a ropes course in Virginia Beach.

After some preliminary due diligence, the two formed a partnership with Connecticut-based Outdoor Venture Group, which designs, builds, and operates aerial adventure parks. Through a competitive bidding process, the partnership was chosen as the Aquarium's contracted adventure-park provider. The Adventure Park at Virginia Aquarium opened its doors in May 2014, on property leased from the Aquarium.

Outdoor Venture has designed 21 parks in North America and runs nine of them. OV president Bahman Azarm said the design process took a month, followed by three months of building. "Normally the design and construction phase would be shorter," says Azarm, "but this particular park is among the five biggest in the world."

Swiss-Style Design

As with all OV parks, the Adventure Park at Virginia Aquarium is a Swiss-style design, which uses a central platform where all courses start as opposed to a more traditional French design, where participants move from one course to the next.

"Some parks are set up like a golf course, moving from hole to hole systematically," says Geroux. "The Swiss style is more like going to a ski hill, where multiple trails weave off in different directions and you choose which one you want to take."

Continued on page 10 . . .

... Continued from page 9

At the Aquarium, when a client finishes a trail, they return to the central platform and choose another course. The park is large, offering 241 elements on 13 aerial trails that all start from one main tree platform.

The number of features makes this park one of the world's biggest; its mix of features makes it unique. One trail might offer a wooden dolphin that flies on cables from one tree to the next, while another might present a Tarzan-style rope with a disc base to ride on. On trails above, one person might be walking on stirrup-equipped ropes, while another is riding a modified skateboard attached to pulleys.

Trails are color-coded, ranging from kid-friendly purple (10-12 feet off the ground) up to double black (55 feet). Once users choose a trail, they stay on it until it ends, then can opt for an easier or more difficult color if they'd like.

One of the benefits of Swiss-style design is its ability to create opportunities for interaction. Because of the layout — assorted trails crisscrossing at different heights — people stay within eyesight of each other from various vantage points.

"You may have family members who want to climb together, but want to take on varying degrees of challenge," says Geroux. "This provides them with a way to be near each other and talk to each other, so there are a lot of opportunities to be together, even if they're not on the same trail."

Technical Details

Guests are fitted with a full-body harness and provided with a Bornack SSB Smart Belay. The system is designed so that users are always

locked onto life-rated safety cables while climbing. The Bornack system connects to a guest's harness and includes two lanyards with carabiner-like clips attached to each. Guests learn how to lock and unlock the clips to make transfers between cables. A special device, called a Tweezle, is affixed at the start of each safety cable and assures that both clips cannot be unlocked simultaneously.

The park uses an Outdoor Venture training program — currently a 32-hour annual training session, with monthly skills verification to test assist-related technical skills. Guides are available, but they're rarely requested, says Geroux. "The park is designed so you don't need a guide. There's a lot of empowerment that happens when you're in charge of yourself. I think people really enjoy it, because they get to be independent."

The park layout lends itself not only to families — thanks its Labyrinth, a product created for kid parties that accommodates younger climbers in group situations — but also to adult group business, which is actively targeted. Special packages have been developed for Boy and Girl Scouts, school PE groups, church youth groups, and similar community organizations.

"We want to make sure we're responding to the needs of the local market," says Geroux. "We've made real efforts to let different pockets of the community know about us."

Spreading the Word

For businesses, sports groups, or other organizations looking for team-building training beyond climbing, the park also offers three different packages that provide various levels of team bonding and development.

"We recognize that people are looking for this sort of thing," says Geroux. "Our primary focus is pay-to-play, but if you want to augment your climbing with a program that can help you meet specific objectives, we can create that for you."

Still, Geroux estimates that 90 percent of visitors are there to play. The park is located just five minutes from the Virginia Beach boardwalk, which is a boon for business, especially during the tourist-heavy summer season. Park marketers have been diligent in reaching vacationers before they arrive, via strong relationships with the Chamber, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the local hotel/motel association.

The park promotes repeat visits via ticket options and special events. In addition to three season-pass products — two punch card options and an unlimited day pass, of which only 50 are sold — the Adventure Park has made an effort to create events that provide variety and encourage return visitors.

"We want to be the answer to the question on Wednesday night, 'what are you doing this weekend?'" says Geroux. The park has also had success with midweek events like Glo in the Park, a twice-monthly Thursday night party that may include DJs, live performances, special lighting, and other attractions.

All that helped the Adventure Park at Virginia Aquarium draw approximately 41,000 visitors from May through December 2014. Geroux predicts only more success. "When you're launching something, there are always going to be surprises and questions that pop up. But when you're surrounded by passionate people, nothing is insurmountable."



From Silver Anniversary to Silver Spurs — Join us in Austin, Texas!

by Melissa Webb
Events Manager

On behalf of the ACCT Board of Directors, ACCT Staff, and the Conference Committee we want to express our sincere gratitude! Each year I am amazed by the growth of our conference and am reminded that the success of this event falls on the shoulders of so many. Not only those who were intricately involved in the planning of the 2015 conference, but also those who have paved the way for our association over the years.

Have you attended a conference? Been on a committee? Served on service crew? Been a scholarship recipient? Presented a workshop? If so, you have generously shared your valuable expertise and that has allowed us to continue to strive for the best for our industry. Each person who has served this association in some capacity deserves a pat on the back as you have been an integral part of the success of ACCT!

For those of you who weren't able to join us in Palm Springs, special effort was made to honor those who laid down the foundation for our association many years ago. The heart of the conference was the networking receptions in the exhibit hall where old friends were reunited and new friendships were established. The weather was beautiful and attendees had the opportunity to enjoy Demo Sessions, Meals, and the famed ACCT Olympics outdoors! With nearly 115 workshop sessions, 11 Pre-conferences, 3 Post-conferences, and 4 Certification Courses, the educational opportunities were infinite! Keep your eyes on our [Facebook page](#) as images and videos of our anniversary event will appear throughout the year.

With the 25th Annual International ACCT Conference and Exposition behind us we are already well underway with our planning efforts for our 26th Annual Conference at Hyatt Lost Pines Resort in Austin, Texas, next January 28th—31st, 2016. This is going to be an exciting event as we are partnering with McKinney Roughs Challenge Course to host hands-on workshop sessions in conjunction with the standard conference offerings. We are also interested in hearing about what type of Pre-cons, Post-cons, and Certification courses you might like to see offered at their facility.

We've been fortunate enough to have some of the industry's best present at our events and we'd love to have you join our group of presenters in Texas! The ACCT workshop **Call for Presenters** is NOW OPEN! [Click here](#) to submit your proposal today. The deadline to submit is Friday, May 29th 2015.

Having access to McKinney Roughs opens so many new windows for us and we'd like to ask you to join us in the fun! We are now seeking applications for our 2016 Service Crew. [Click here](#) to apply to be a part of this awesome team!

The heart of the networking is in the Exhibit Hall and it's not too early to be planning ahead for 2016! Businesses searching for creative and interactive ways to reach new, loyal and active customers are invited to take part in the upcoming Expo. By joining us in the Exhibit Hall you can increase your business exposure within the Zip Line, Ropes Course and Aerial Adventure Park community as well as enhancing your customer base. The cross-marketing opportunities will benefit your business and strengthen your roots in the industry both in the U.S. and abroad, as well as gaining exposure for you with more than one thousand new customers! The 2016 Exhibitor Prospectus will be available soon!

Please check the [ACCT conference website](#) often for conference updates, deadlines, and information. If you have any ideas, feedback, or suggestions you would like to share with the Conference Committee for this event or upcoming events please forward that information to Melissa Webb, Events Manager for ACCT, at melissa@acctinfo.org.

Challenge Course, Canopy/Zip Line Tour and Aerial Adventure Park **EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES**



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ACCT Research Grant

released by
Research Advisory Committee

The Association for Challenge Course Technology and the Research Advisory Committee are now accepting proposals for the annual ACCT Research Grant. This grant was created to further research in the challenge course industry by providing financial assistance (up to \$1,500) to individuals conducting challenge course research. Proposals for the 2015 year will be accepted through May 30th, 2015. Submissions should be sent to the Membership Manager, Trudy Robbins, at trudy@acctinfo.org.

Proposals should not exceed five (5) pages and are expected to include the following:

- Title of the research project
- Purpose of the research (including how this is related to the challenge course industry)
- The problem or issue of focus and the research questions being asked
- The research methodology being used
- The proposed budget for the research project
- Project timeline
- List of relevant documented references/works cited (may include those used to justify proposal and potential references). These are not personal references.

Submissions will be reviewed by the Research Advisory Committee and applicants will be notified by the end of June. All grant awardees will be expected to present their research at a future ACCT conference. Specific questions about the research grant can be sent directly to Liz Speelman, Chair of ACCT's Research Advisory Committee, at liz.speelman@gcsu.edu. [Click here](#) for more information on the rubric used to assess the grant.





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ACCT Logo Usage Policy

by the ACCT PR & Marketing Committee

The Association's logo is a trademark and the property of the ACCT. However, ACCT may grant a license to use the ACCT member logo to specific members that are in good standing.

To use the ACCT logo, Organizational and Professional Vendor Members must receive written consent from ACCT's Main Office. Permission may be granted for use on business cards, letterheads, websites, and brochures.

When using the logo on printed material and websites, please consider including the following statements that are appropriate to explain your relationship to ACCT.

Organizational Members

We are an Organizational Member with the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) and our products and services are independent from those offered by the ACCT. We are not an agent of ACCT nor does the ACCT warrant, endorse, or approve any product or service offered by us.

Professional Vendor Members

We are an Accredited Professional Vendor Member (PVM) of the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT). Our company has undergone an extensive peer review process and has been accredited to provide practitioner certification trainings, course installation, and course inspections. Insert the option(s) that is appropriate for your company.

If permission is granted to use the member logo, the ACCT member logo should be printed using the ACCT member logo received from the ACCT and not a newly rendered logo. The logo can be used in black and white or grayscale. The right to use the ACCT member logo shall terminate and be revoked upon the authorized member's failure to remain in good standing, in the event of misuse by the member as determined by the ACCT, or any other breach of this Policy for Use. Upon such termination and/or revocation, the unauthorized member will remove the ACCT member logo from all materials, products, and services, regardless of whether such materials, products, or services are preprinted or preexisting at that time.

Legal action can be taken against anyone who uses the ACCT member logo in violation of the above policy. For permission to use the ACCT member logo, please contact the ACCT Business office.

ACCT MEMBERSHIP

Student/Senior Membership

Any individual participating in full-time studies at a recognized educational institution. Proof of student status required. Senior status applies to individuals who provide proof they are 60+ years old.

Membership period: 1 year
Annual Membership dues: \$65 USD

Individual Membership

Any individual interested in being connected to the ACCT community and gaining access to the professional challenge course industry and its resources. Membership benefits apply to one person.

Membership period: 1 year
Annual Membership dues: \$85 USD

Organizational Membership

Any organization interested in being connected to the ACCT community and gaining access to the professional challenge course industry and its resources. Membership benefits apply to the organization and its employees.

Membership period: 1 year
Annual Membership dues: \$275/USD \$200 Non-Profit USD
(Must provide proof of non-profit status)

Professional Vendor Member

Companies who have successfully completed an ACCT application for Professional Vendor Member status. Membership benefits apply to the company and its employees.

Membership period: 1 year
Annual Membership dues: \$1,800 USD

ACCT Membership Office

The ACCT Membership Office handles membership services, conference coordination, registrations, standards sales, and general office duties for the ACCT.

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Facilitators Toolbox: Building a Strong Foundation for Learning

Key Ingredients for Optimal Group Building Experiences

Excerpt from *The Inspired Educator, The Inspired Learner*
by Jen Stanchfield

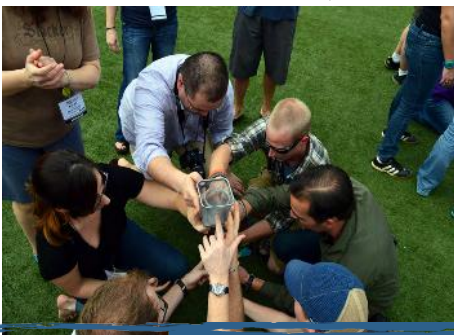


Thank you to everyone who joined me for the Facilitator's Toolbox Live workshop in Palm Springs. I appreciated your positive energy, willingness to share and play outside in the California sun. During the session we engaged in discussions comparing cooking to the art of experiential group facilitation and explored "key ingredients" for effective facilitation. Here is an article I shared with participants that explores this idea:

Building a Strong Foundation for Learning: Key Ingredients for Optimal Group Building Experiences

Excerpt from *The Inspired Educator, The Inspired Learner* by Jennifer Stanchfield

In group facilitation there is a great deal of room for adaptation, experimentation and adjustment of ingredients to fit different groups and different learning situations. Though there is opportunity for creativity and innovation, it is important to remember that there are key ingredients from the science of teaching, including educational neuroscience,



educational psychology and social-emotional development research that will help us maximize these learning outcomes with our groups. Here are some of those key ingredients that will help you build a positive and supportive learning environment.

The Experience Starts the Moment Learners Enter the Room (or Even Before)

The first few minutes of a session are your opportunity to draw learners into

"When you have to explain your ideas and plans with someone else, it helps you reflect on your rationale and provides insight into your practice as an educator."

a positive learning experience and increase engagement. Welcome group members into the classroom/meeting space and focus their attention on the tasks at hand. Reflective practice to increase meaning, retention and transfer can begin in these very first moments.

You will find that time spent at the beginning of your program building relationships, ownership and reflective skills pays off later in many ways. Think carefully about using appropriate beginning activities that build rapport and trust in incremental

ways. It takes time to sequence and build healthy trust within groups. Sharing commonalities builds trust and empathy. This is the foundation that will allow you to engage learners in more challenging activities, foster more responsibility and control over learning, and increase the participant's ability to move learning forward.

Make Thoughtful Activity Choices

When choosing introductory activities, find those that build rapport, camaraderie, connections, shared understanding, commonalities and goals in an enjoyable and nonthreatening way.

Beware of the Icebreaker

An icebreaker is meant to "break the ice" — to build respect and a willingness to share, both of which are essential to a productive and supportive learning community. When people are put "on the spot" too early in the group process, however, icebreakers can do the opposite of what was intended. Many people have negative connotations with team-building and icebreaker activities because they have been put in situations where choice and control were taken away. Although people do learn from challenges, there is a fine line between a challenge that helps move learning forward and what the educational philosopher John Dewey (one of the earliest proponents of the philosophy of experiential education) would call

Continued on page 18 . . .

Facilitator's ToolboxContinued from page 17

a miseducative or potentially damaging experience. There are still educators who believe that stress can increase our ability to learn and be creative. There are icebreakers, games, and initiatives used in group work that were designed to quickly push people out of their comfort zones in order to initiate learning. Though we learn from novelty and from being challenged, it needs to be the right amount of challenge at the right time. Brain research is validating John Dewey's observation about miseducative experiences by showing that stress can inhibit learning.

Begin with partner sharing activities. This gives participants an opportunity to warm up by interacting with just one or two others at a time before sharing with the larger group. By building trust in this way, group members start to share and engage at their own pace and become more willing to push their comfort zones later on when it really matters.

Choice and Control are Essential

People learn best when they perceive a sense of control and have choice and ownership over their learning experiences. Think about creating opportunities that build this sense of choice and control from the very beginning of the program or school year. Empowering learners to set reasonable parameters around their participation creates an atmosphere of healthy trust and will increase involvement from reluctant participants.

Learn and Honor Names

Knowing and using each other's names in a respectful way builds trust and positive communication, establishing a supportive group environment. Activities that clarify names can be helpful even to groups that you might think already know each other. A person's name is important to them and should be honored with correct pronunciation and proper use. Weave name activities and practice into introductory activities, starting with simple partner greetings and sharing before engaging participants in a whole group name activity. Avoid contrived name activities that put people on the spot or require them to feel under pressure to memorize. We will explore a number of ways to help groups learn and remember names in a palatable way.

Establish and Reflect on Healthy Group Norms

Help group members create an environment in which they feel responsible for themselves and each other. A supportive atmosphere will allow them to speak up when there is a breakdown in communication or an issue that affects the safety or potential experience of the group. It is ideal when

the group takes that responsibility rather than the facilitator or teacher.

One benefit to using play and healthy competition in teaching and group facilitation is that the need to make decisions and work out conflict organically arises, and groups have to find ways to figure out how to address these issues in order to go on. When these natural conflicts, arguments or negative, hurtful behaviors arise in the midst of an activity, it can become a teachable moment if facilitated carefully. This is a perfect time to explore meaningful and relevant group norms with groups. Teacher or leader-imposed ground rules or expectations should be put forward on day one, but participants should be increasingly involved in defining group norms as they move forward and encounter challenging situations together as a group.

Reflect and Check In

Reflection brings learning to life. Intentionally making time for the group to reflect and check in with each other is integral to group process. In this way, experiences can be built upon one another and related to real life and future learning. The educational philosopher John Dewey (1933) believed that in order to truly learn from experience, there must be time for reflection. Modern-day brain research validates Dewey's belief that reflection help learners to find relevancy and meaning and to make connections between their educational experiences and real-life situations. Reflective practice plays an important part in the development and strengthening of neuronal pathways to enhance retention and the ability to recall and apply lessons. Regular "check-ins" create a forum or opportunity for participants to share what is working, what they need from each other, and for celebrating successes along the way. Reflective practice is best when it is a dynamic, ongoing part of your lessons, not just something facilitated at the end of an experience or as a follow-up.

Ownership and Buy In

One of the tenets of experiential education is that people learn best when they perceive a sense of control, and have choice and ownership in their learning experiences. Think about creating opportunities that build this sense of choice and control for participants or students from the very beginning of the program. Empowering learners to set reasonable parameters around their participation creates an atmosphere of healthy trust and will increase involvement from reluctant participants.

Continued on page 19 . . .

Facilitator's ToolboxContinued from page 18

Create opportunities for participants to make choices within an experience. Consider some of the following techniques:

- Add rules to an icebreaker that allow the "it" person a way out or an option to participate at their own pace.
- Invite participants to volunteer rather than calling on them to share.
- Allow participants to pass during group discussion.
- Help learners understand the purpose of the activity and why the lesson is relevant and useful to them.
- Make time for both the teacher/leader and students/participants to share their expectations, requests and goals for the class or lesson and regularly check in throughout.

Involving Reluctant Group Members

- Find something that will intrinsically motivate group members and increase buy-in. Some people will jump at the opportunity to help set up equipment or be involved in some supportive role such as group photographer.
- Focus on positive participation. Give those who are opting out the opportunity to participate passively or in an alternative way (which does not mean distracting the group). Once you draw a critical mass into the group activities, more will follow.
- A successful educator has flexible expectations. Remember that sometimes it is appropriate to acknowledge the need for taking "baby steps." Group work is a process, not an event. It is a practice. Learning to play and be part of a group often takes practice.
- Recognize that people learn and are more comfortable interacting in different ways.
- It is essential to differentiate the way you present material and engage group learners.
- Take brain research into account and design lessons that use multiple senses and involve movement and social interaction. Activities that use different senses and require different skill sets will reach more learners and increase

attention and retention and create multiple neural pathways to learning.

- Keep it interesting: Props, humor, and relating activities to popular culture are useful strategies for increasing involvement.
- Use peers as role models and leaders where appropriate.

Many times participants who were initially hesitant, resistant, or "too cool for school" at the beginning of an activity or program eventually become the stars of the show. Over and over, I see learners who did not engage in class or perform well in previous group situations excel in experientially-based group work. This is especially evident when they feel empowered by having choices about their participation and are motivated by intriguing challenges. Allow participants to sit out of an activity as long as they are passively involved by watching. Giving them this control and choice empowers them to eventually join in despite themselves! It seems that it is harder to sit and watch peers enjoy an engaging activity than to join in.

Some of the participants were attracted by the offer of helping me with equipment, or by the possibility of being "judge" during a game. Some of the students who were initially the most reluctant and resistant are now the students volunteering to facilitate in extracurricular programs with younger students. I couldn't count the times I have heard teachers/group leaders say something like, "I can't believe how well he participated on the challenge course today; he is never like that in class" or "She never talks in class; I couldn't believe she actually led that activity!" The lasting lesson for facilitators is to find ways to help participants and group leaders to transfer these successes back to day-to-day participation in school, work, or other life activities.

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Get Involved!

ACCT Committees

Would you like to be a part of an ACCT Committee? We are currently taking applications for various committees, work groups, and task forces. Please see the ACCT website or contact the ACCT office for an application.

Other Opportunities

There are many ACCT committees that could use volunteers to help accomplish specific tasks, such as creating a brochure for a certain subject matter, helping to obtain auction items for the live auction at the conference, and many, many others. We are looking for various types of skills and people who want to be involved without the same level of time commitment as being involved on a committee. If this is something that interests you, please contact Membership Manager Trudy Robbins at membership@acctinfo.org.

Did You Know?

The Challenge Course/Adventure Industry has grown by leaps and bounds over the last ten years. A person had to be part of a group and have prior arrangements to walk onto a challenge course. Courses were only found at places like schools, camps, and outdoor education programs.

Now an individual can drive by a sign, feel inspired to try some adventure, pay a fee, and they are on their way! They can do it at places like a museum, zoo, ski resort, or RV park. Even cruise ships have jumped onboard the adventure craze!

From structured small groups venturing into the woods to discover themselves and their teammates to families spending an afternoon at the zoo checking out animals while riding or partaking in some adventure course or zip line, the Challenge Course/Adventure Industry is alive and well...just a lot bigger than it used to be.

Fun Facts

by Trudy Robbins

APRIL

- APRIL is Jazz Appreciation Month – Set up in 2001, Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM) sets out to promote jazz both as an historical and a contemporary art form. If you really want to live it up and can get there Washington D.C is JAM's main home with an extensive program of events, however it's celebrated in 40 nations, and every state of the USA, so wherever you are there should be something exciting to do.
- Tuesday, April 7th is "World Health Day."
- Sunday, April 12th is "Walk on Your Wild Side Day."
- Wednesday, April 29th is "International Dance Day."

MAY

- MAY is Photo Month. Digital cameras, instant printing and powerful software have made photography widely available and accessible; some cameras on mobile phones have more power than commercial cameras from less than a decade ago, and the pace of improvement continues. Photo Month encourages you to use all of this technology and power, and to take some incredible photographs.
- Saturday, May 2nd is "Join Hands Day."
- Sunday, May 12th is "International Nurses Day."
- Saturday, May 30th is "Neighbor Day."

JUNE

- JUNE is Country Cooking Month. If you love traditional home cooking, Country Cooking Month is the perfect month to try something new. This special month was created to promote simple, healthy home cooked meals. You could even try growing some herbs or vegetables in your own garden and then using them in a meal. It's a very satisfying experience, and the food is much more tasty when it's something you've grown yourself.
- Sunday, June 2nd is "Leave the Office Early Day."
- Thursday, June 7th is "Cancer Survivors Day."
- Thursday, June 18th is "Dump the Pump Day."

Parallel Lines Ad Space

Advertise Your Products & Services in Parallel Lines

Parallel Lines (ACCT's Quarterly Newsletter) circulates to all ACCT members and customers quarterly. This communication tool keeps recipients up-to-date on educational opportunities and industry happenings.

	1 Issue	2 Issues	3 Issues	4 Issues
Back Cover	\$550	\$1000	\$1400	\$1600
Inside Front Cover	\$450	\$850	\$1225	\$1400
Inside Back Cover	\$450	\$850	\$1225	\$1400
Full Page Ad	\$350	\$600	\$875	\$1150
Half Page Ad	\$175	\$325	\$475	\$600
Quarter Page Ad	\$150	\$300	\$450	\$550

Additional Advertising Opportunities

Showcase Your Products & Services on the Zip Line List Serve

The Zip Line List Serve website is not only an information source, but also provides an opportunity for networking and purchasing. Banner ads throughout the site connect buyers to your products at the click of a button.

www.ziplinelistserve.com

	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months
Position 1	\$400 per month	\$375 per month	\$350 per month
Position 2	\$350 per month	\$325 per month	\$275 per month
Position 3	\$300 per month	\$275 per month	\$250 per month



Founded in 1993, The Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) is the world's leading and largest American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Accredited Standards Developer focused specifically and solely on the challenge course industry. It is the mission of the organization to establish and promote the standard of care that defines professional practice and effective challenge course programs.

The Association for Challenge Course Technology is a non-profit trade association with a main office in Illinois and satellite offices in Maryland and Washington. Parallel Lines is the organization's publication sent to all of our affiliates and friends. With member organizations across the United States, Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, Canada, Japan, Korea, Central America and worldwide, ACCT is the leading organization dedicated to supporting professionals in the challenge course industry.

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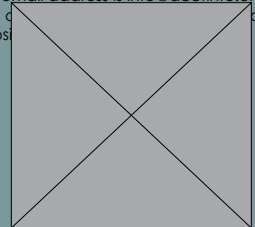
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