

parallel lines

A Resource for Challenge Course Professionals | Vol. 17 No. 1

Spring 2017



Welcome to Parallel Lines!

We are pleased to present this online and user-friendly newsletter to our members. Our goal is to provide our members with an easy-to-read periodical with the latest association and industry news.

In this edition of Parallel Lines, you will find a President's Report from our new Board Chair, Ben Kopp, regarding the future of ACCT, along with informative articles by Jen Stanchfield, Reb Gregg, Lee Kerfoot, Patrick Ferebee, and Jenna Standsvold. You will also find a message from Events Manager, Melissa Webb, 2018 conference Keynote Speaker Nate Regier, 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.

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Important Dates

May

17
ACCT Board Conference Call

26
Submission for pre-conference, post-conference and general conference workshop proposal deadline

June

21
ACCT Board Conference Call

30
End of the ACCT Fiscal Year



Letter from the Executive Director

by Shawn Tierney

ACCT Executive Director

Happy Spring! I hope you're all gearing up for a busy and productive season ahead. If you joined us at this year's conference in Savannah – thank you! The conference was a tremendous success largely due to the sheer amount of hard work and planning behind the scenes by numerous individuals such as the conference committee, staff, and other volunteers. I also wanted to acknowledge the service crew for all of their essential on-site support and assistance. Thank you everybody who contributed to the success of the conference! If you were not able to join us this year, make sure to attend next year's conference in Fort Worth, Texas. It's sure to be a great event.

Please join me in welcoming our newest Board members Bahman Azarm and Carson Rivers. Bahman will serve as our Vice-Chair and Carson is now our Treasurer. I'm also pleased to announce that Ben Kopp was re-elected for another term, and Ben is now our Chair. You can read more about Bahman and Carson in this issue, along with a report from Ben. The Board will be meeting face-to-face in Fort Worth, TX in April.

By the time you read this the Accreditation and Certification Committee will have met in Atlanta for two days at the end of March to determine the next steps with respect to launching program accreditation. Because this is a major initiative for the association (and the industry) there has been a lot of healthy internal debate and discussion regarding the future direction of the program and the details related to how the program will be structured. Look for more information about the program in the months ahead, but rest assured we are moving forward and the program will launch this year, starting with a pilot program to "field-test" the accreditation process, our procedures, and to gather feedback from operators and other stakeholders.

There has been a fair amount of activity on the regulatory front in the past few months, and a number of our key volunteers have been actively involved by engaging with legislators and regulators to represent stakeholder and industry interests. As it stands, regulations are being proposed, have been approved, or are in process of being developed in Michigan,

Kentucky, Iowa, Tennessee, North Carolina, New Mexico, and Kansas. Our government relations committee has a new chair (Don Stock), and the committee is in the process of being populated with new members. Future goals include developing a proactive strategy to engage with regulators around the country, and providing guidance, tools and resources on our website that can assist local stakeholders.

Finally, I want to remind you to visit our website on a regular basis for the latest news, Board meeting minutes, monthly financial statements, Executive Director reports, our revised volunteer chart, career center for job postings, the calendar of events, and more!

Lastly, please don't hesitate to reach out if there's anything on your mind that you would like to share or discuss with me!

All the Best,

Shawn Tierney
Executive Director



Board Chair Report

by Ben Kopp
Board Chair

The Future...

As I am writing for this Spring edition of parallel lines, a massive mid-March snow storm is in the process of covering much of the country. Meanwhile I, and I am sure many of you also, am dreaming of the Spring that is around the corner. I trust that all of you are looking as eagerly towards the future of the Association, as much as we all are, to the promises of warmer weather and beautiful days ahead.

I do, however, want to spend just a moment talking about the past. First, I would like to thank everyone who attended the ACCT Conference in Savannah. Thanks to you, the folks who attend and support our organization, it was a great success. Also, thank you to the amazing people who make that conference happen for us. Those staff and volunteers who put in many hours throughout the year and then, even more hours during the conference to make it fun, informative and exciting every time, a gigantic thank you!

Second, I want to give a huge thank you to my predecessor, Micah

Henderson, the ACCT Board Chair for the last three years. Under her leadership, we have walked a path as an organization that was trying at times, unclear for many, but most of all; filled with growth for many of us and our organization. Due to that strong leadership, we have grown and changed as an organization, for the better. Now, we are much stronger and prepared for the next steps of the path before us. Thank you, Micah, for your service and leadership.

Given this is the first time connecting with you, as the new board chair, I wanted to take a brief moment to introduce myself. I have been serving on the ACCT Board of Directors for the past 3 years, having just completed my first three-year term on the Board. Over the past year, I have served in the position of Board Treasure, and prior to my time serving on the Board, I was a member of the ACCT Government Relations Committee. I have been in our industry, now, for sixteen years. Starting as a facilitator for Clemson University, in their summer programs, and becoming a full time facilitator, following that. Moving from that perspective into the industry to working now for a PVM

company since 2004, was certainly a valuable transition phase. Having seen so much of our amazing industry over the years, it is exciting to see the growth and future that is emerging. Also, having been given so much by the great people who make up our industry, I am grateful for the continued opportunity to serve you on the ACCT Board as Chair. When not working in our company or on an ACCT project, I enjoy spending as much time as possible with my family, growing my tropical fish and coral tank, or flying the small Cessna at the local airport.

I am filled with excitement about the future. I am excited about our industry, and, even more so, about our association. In talking to, and meeting with, the great volunteers at the conference about their roles in different committees, panels, taskforces, workgroups and affinity groups; it is hard not to be excited when you see their energy and passion for the industry and association. As our role as the Board of Directors continues to evolve, we are learning to get out of the way of the great experts in our midst and let them get real work done on projects they are passionate

about. As a Board, we will continue to provide governance and leadership, while also providing the support and resources to these different groups of people and allow them to make progress on the many ongoing projects within the association.

As your new 2017 board supports

the many initiatives ongoing, we are planning on meeting face to face in April on the 24th and 25th. During that meeting, we will be working through the completion of our current fiscal year and planning for the next fiscal year. We will not only cover budgeting, but also in laying out goals for both the Board of Directors and our organization.

As always, we are looking for great people who are passionate about our industry to help in the many facets and initiatives, so please, if you are interested in volunteering connect with us and let us work towards the future together.



New Board Members

We are excited to announce that Bahman Azarm (Vice-Chair) and Carson Rivers (Treasurer) have been newly elected to the Association for Challenge Course Technology Board of Directors.

It is also with our pleasure to announce that re-elected 2017 board member Ben Kopp will continue serving on the ACCT Board as the newest Chair.

Voting in the general election was held online between December 12th 2016, and January 13th 2017. The PVM-elected voting was held at the ACCT conference February 1-4th 2017. ACCT was fortunate to have many highly qualified and experienced candidates for the positions, and we would like to thank the other candidates who ran in each of these elections – Melanie Wills, Mike Smith, Bill Carlson (General Election) Mandy Stewart and Matt Andrews (PVM Election).



Bahman Azarm, Vice Chair – Newly Elected

Bahman has been the President of Outdoor Ventures, LLC since 2008. He is the owner of nine aerial adventure parks, and has designed, built & trained over 25 aerial parks since 2008. He also established the first Swiss Style aerial adventure park in the U.S. Bahman has also been active at the ACCT committee level, and was the founding member of the ACCT Aerial Park Operations Task Force, a member of the ACCT International committee, and a committee member of the accreditation task force.

After living in both Europe and the U.S. for many years, Bahman has become well acquainted with both the U.S. and the European Aerial Park Industries. As a certified construction professional and President of a construction company for over 25 years, he has gained valuable experience with various aspects of the industry such as safety, permitting, design, and best practices.



Ben Kopp, Signature Research Inc.

Ben Kopp is the president and owner of Signature Research, Inc since 2011. He has worked in the Challenge Course industry for the last 16 years; constructing, training, facilitating and consulting, serving over 15,000 participants or trainees throughout the United States and internationally; including camps, churches, conference centers, hospitals, schools, state, federal and outdoor programs. Ben has worked in general construction for over 20 years. He has served on the ACCT Board of Directors, for the past three years and also serves as treasurer for CAYA (Come As You Are) Ministries in Paulding County, GA. He is an avid proponent of missions and community services, donating time, labor and finances to various organizations, both domestically and internationally



Carson Rivers, Challenge Towers

Carson grew up around the outdoor industry as his father owned and operated a canoe and kayak outfitter. Carson also had an extremely active youth scouting career. He began working as a camp counselor 20 years ago and has since worked for a wide variety of camps, university outdoor programs, non-profit outdoor education centers, outdoor outfitters, commercial guide services, experiential education providers, wilderness orientation programs, expeditions, and other outdoor related organizations. He started out part time at Challenge Towers in 2007 splicing nets on nights and weekends to pay his way through grad school and over the last 10 years has grown into a Vice President role within the company and its affiliates. He currently oversees much of Challenge Towers (a professional vendor member of ACCT) operations, High Gravity Adventures (a commercial Aerial Adventure Park), Blue Ridge Learning Centers (an Experiential Education provider), and provides advisory support and financial assistance for Aerial Adventure Tech (equipment and technology sales and distribution).

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KOALA EQUIPMENT is the trademark of **ALTUS** which has over 20 years experience in the field of high wire rope courses.

KOALA EQUIPMENT is located in the heart of the French Alps where the research, development and manufacturing take place. The intention is to deliver products with a high level of requirement based on **ALTUS'** unique experience.





28th Annual ACCT Conference & Expo

by Melissa Webb

ACCT Events Manager

On behalf of the ACCT Board of Directors, ACCT Work Group Staff, and the Conference Workgroup I would like to thank each and every person that contributed to the success of our 27th Annual International ACCT Conference & Expo! With record breaking numbers it is fair to say the event was a HUGE success with over 1130 attendees and over 100 vendor booths! Attendees had 9 pre-conference sessions, 1 post-conference session, and a variety of certification / training courses to choose from in addition to the 110+ general session workshops.

A sincere thank you to everyone that presented at the 2017 event! Whether a Certification Course, Pre-con, Post-con, Training or General Session workshop the conference wouldn't be complete without you! We had an overwhelming response to our call for presenters this year initially receiving significantly more submissions than we had space for.

You are the experts in the industry and without these submissions we wouldn't be able to offer the educational component that we do! In the future, if you notice that there is something that might be beneficial for the industry I encourage you to submit your topic. The call for presenters for our 2018 event is [LIVE](#) and we look forward to seeing the submissions come rolling in!

The 28th Annual International ACCT Conference & Expo will be held in Fort Worth, TX February 1st – 4th, 2018. The Omni Fort Worth & Sheraton Fort Worth Downtown will be our host hotels with the majority of our events held at the Fort Worth Convention Center just steps away from either hotel. Additionally, we are thrilled to announce Dr. Nate Regier as our 2018 Keynote Speaker. Nate's mission is to shift the balance of energy in the world by spreading the message of compassionate accountability—a message that is

resonating loudly with audiences across the globe, in every industry and profession. Registration for the 2018 event will be live this fall and we hope to see y'all there!

The ACCT will be partnering with HPN Global again to manage our tradeshow and assist us with our Advertising, Exhibitor, and Sponsor Registration. We are currently reviewing our advertising and sponsorship packages to make sure that there is something for everyone! We will be sending out notifications when exhibitor registration opens and will also be posting a link directly on our [conference site](#).

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 Work Group for this event or upcoming events please forward that information to Melissa Webb: Events Manager for ACCT at melissa@acctinfo.org.





Keynote Speaker 2018 Conference Nate Reiger

I am stoked to keynote the 2018 ACCT conference in Fort Worth! It's been a while since I've been with my challenge course family and I miss you! I speak for our whole team at Next Element when I tell you we are looking forward to reconnecting in Fort Worth.

I wanted to give you a sneak peak into what I plan to talk about. My working title is Compassionate Accountability And The Art of Struggling With. The topic is based on my new book, [Conflict Without Casualties: A Field Guide For Leading With Compassionate Accountability](#) (Berrett-Koehler publishers).

I first got involved with experiential learning and challenge course facilitation almost 15 years ago. These days I don't use challenge courses, but I facilitate a lot of experiential learning. Throughout my career, and through my work with Next Element, I have spent a great deal of time exploring the role of conflict. What is it? How does it work? What is its purpose? What

can it do? How should we use it?

A few things have become clear. First of all, conflict is pure energy. Neither good nor bad, it is simply the gap between what we want and what we are experiencing at any moment in time. This energy can be used destructively, and we call that drama. Or it can be used constructively to create amazing things. I think the experiential world gets this. You've been playing around with this for decades. One of the main mechanisms of action for change is "facilitating" conflict and then working with people to negotiate that conflict to learn and grow. And, it is an art that threads the needle between drama and compassion. Getting it right is a knife-edge challenge.

I've experienced the whole gamut of philosophies on how conflict is used in experiential learning. Some facilitators go for the jugular and stoke levels of conflict that I would assess to be unsafe and unethical. Some facilitators go too far to promote harmony and miss

out on the creative potential of conflict. Some have mastered the art of what we call Compassionate Accountability™.

How do we know? How should we assess, second by second, whether conflict energy is being used productively or not? How do we avoid the casualties often associated with conflict without losing the energy? How should facilitators self-assess and self-regulate? The answer lies in the true definition of compassion. This is what I'll be exploring with you in Fort Worth.

In the mean time, I'd love to reconnect and start to rekindle relationships. Will you e-mail me at nate@next-element.com? Connect with me on Twitter @NextNate. Follow Next Element on Facebook, and follow my blog at <http://next-element.com/blog/>

See you next year!



Operations Department Update

by Bill Weaver

PVM Applicants:

The Operations Department would like to introduce and welcome the following company's who are currently engaged in ACCT's Vendor Accreditation process as Official Applicants for Professional Vendor Membership (PVM):

- Adventure Korea
- American Adventure Park Systems
- Arboreal Edge, LLC
- Ropes Courses, Inc.

Please take a moment to read each of the introductions provided by our applicants. In addition, may I encourage our members to drop our applicants a greeting and

welcome to the ACCT community.

In addition, to our Official Applicants, we have six companies who are in various stages of completion and submission of their PVM Preliminary Application. I look forward to introducing each of them as Official Applicants in future issues.

Inspector Certification Testing:

The 2017 Inspector Certification season kicked off in Savannah Georgia with 77 attending the one day Prep Course; 113 tested during the Savannah round and 11 more tested on March 2nd at the Pennsylvania Amusement Ride Safety Seminar in Harrisburg.

The next scheduled opportunity for testing is November 8-9th at the Pennsylvania Amusement Ride Safety Seminar in Harrisburg, followed by the ACCT Annual Conference in Fort Worth Texas, February 1 – 4, 2018.

The Operations Department is currently exploring scheduling additional Prep Course and Testing opportunities. Continue to monitor the ACCT website, ACCT Certifications website and future issues of Parallel Lines for postings.

New PVM Member Applicants



Adventure.KR

Adventure.Kr, based in Seoul, South Korea, is a leading builder in zipline, climbing walls and adventure park design and construction with 25 years of experiences. We, a group of 22-highly skilled full time builders, successfully completed more than 154-challenge courses and zipline project including some of the most creative and challenging projects such as 1.43km long, single span ziplines, a round trip, over-the-lake ziplines from two 92m high towers and 115-element treetop walks and aerial ropes course. We also provide the training and the inspection services in compliance with current ACCT standards.





American Adventure Park Systems

American Adventure Park Systems (AAPS) came about to fit the needs and demands of the growing Aerial Adventure Park Industry. Focusing in on high standards and safety, owner operator, Mike Holder draws from extensive years of experience ranging from residential construction and commercial building projects to the US Army who developed Mike's skills in mountaineering, river and ravine crossings with ziplines and ropes (bridges).

AAPS designs, consults, constructs, inspects and trains for all parts of the Aerial Park industry. AAPS is focused on safety and is the proud distributor of the patented closed belay system called Quick Trekker by Vertical Trek Systems. Making Fun Safer is the key goal for AAPS.

Proud builders of the largest zipline canopy tour in the world and the tallest free standing climbing wall in the world as verified by Guinness World Records.



Arboreal Edge

Arboreal Edge is a ropes course vendor specializing in Installation, Training and Inspection. Based in Connecticut owners Kevin and Kim Lawrence have been directly involved in the adventure business since the mid nineties. Kevin has a construction background, and was the director of an outdoor center/camp in NY before founding the business in 2010.

Kim was the Director of Recreation and Recreation Therapist for a non profit school in New York for 20 years. Kim joined the business full time in 2014. With their team they strive to better programs through innovative design, high level of training and education of compliance.



Ropes Courses Inc.

Ropes Courses, Inc. has been manufacturing, installing and servicing adventure course products since 1989. Their premiere product, Sky Trail® ropes courses, entertain guests in 24 different countries across 5 continents. In fact, 11 million people annually experience the hands-on fun Sky Trail® ropes courses provide. These attractions suit a wide range of indoor and outdoor venues including amusement parks, zoos, family entertainment centers, malls, resorts and cruise ships. They are engineered with patented integrated systems that maximize safety and throughput, minimize staff and increase participant age range.





Facilitator's Toolbox

by Jen Stanchfield of Experiential Tools

jen@experientialtools.com

Know the Why Behind What You Do Excerpt from *Tips & Tools for the Art of Experiential Group Facilitation, Second Edition*

Take time to study the theory behind what you do. Reflect and observe what works in your groups, and consciously develop your own philosophy of facilitation. Reading about theories of experiential education, facilitation, and learning helps refine your practice and develop clear purpose. In my own practice I've found that engaging in the study of theoretical foundations of experiential education from Greek philosophers to John Dewey during graduate school added a lot of depth to my work. My introduction to Taoist philosophy with Steven Simpson and his book, *The Leader Who is Hardly Known* (2003), changed my perspective on my role as a facilitator.

The philosophy of experiential education combined with systematic research on my own facilitation gave me clarification about the choices I make as a facilitator and why I gravitate toward particular activities and methods. Donald Schön (1983) in his book, *The Reflective Practitioner*, refers to this as one's "theory in use" or the theories that drive our actions. This theory in use is the set of concepts by which one

works—it helps define our goals and objectives, influences how we choose to design experiences, explains the why behind we do, and pushes us to be more intentional in the practice of facilitation.

Keep up with new trends in education, psychology, brain research, and other related fields. This information can inform and improve your work, providing insights into why certain practices work well and why some old methods should be replaced. It also provides rationale and validation for experiential approaches that can generate buy in from managers, school administrators, and others who want to know the value of experiential education. Being able to articulate why and how experiential methods work makes a more effective and credible practitioner.

Research from the field of educational neuroscience is especially compelling. The brain-based approach to teaching and facilitation supports experiential philosophy and style and helps validate and explain the approach to stakeholders. Delving into this research has given me new ideas on how to better meet the needs of participants. It has increased my awareness of the effect of environment on learning; the importance of taking time up front

to promote buy-in, ownership, and emotional safety; and the value of intentionally using a variety of methods to engage groups in learning. Brain research supports the tenets of experiential education, confirming the importance of emotional engagement and use of symbols and metaphor to enhance learning outcomes.

Susan Cain's work on temperament and the power of introversion validates the importance of giving choice and control in group situations and recognizing that social, outgoing character traits are not the only ones we want to value and cultivate in group work and leadership training. Her book, *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking* (2013), and website, quietrev.com, challenge societal assumptions about leadership and success in interpersonal situations. She suggests being aware of and considering different social styles when planning a program and including opportunities for deeper thought and solo reflection as well as interactive group work. You don't have to be an outgoing, charismatic "edutainer" to be an effective facilitator or leader. This information reminds me to balance kinesthetic activities with quiet reflection and small group dialogue with whole group activities.

It is an exciting time to be an educator, information on advances in neuroscience, new research in pedagogy, reflection, motivation and human performance are readily available to the thoughtful practitioner. Paying attention to new research keeps us fresh and inspired. Being able to articulate the why behind what you do creates intention and a thoughtful, deliberate, and goal-directed approach to your work.

Resources:

Schon, D.A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in Action*. New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Simpson, S. (2003). *The leader who is hardly known: Self-less teaching from the Chinese tradition*. Bethany, OK: Wood N Barnes Publishing.

Stanchfield, J. (2006) *Tips & Tools for the Art of Experiential Group Facilitation*. Bethany, OK: Wood N Barnes Publishing.



Hot Spots in Your Release Document

by Rebb Greg

The past year has produced some interesting developments in the law around exculpatory documents. "Exculpatory" (from the Latin word for "free from blame" – think "not culpable") documents include the agreement on which you rely to reduce your exposure to legal liability.

Here are some of the more important issues recently raised:

Title: The title of your agreement should properly inform the reader/signatory of its purpose and scope.

If you will require signatures of or on behalf of only active participants, you might title the agreement "Participant Agreement". If, on the other hand, you want protection from claims of others on site – observers, coaches and the like – you'd best expand the scope and call your agreement "Visitor Agreement", or something similar.

Parties: Identify your organization, including its full legal name, which should reveal its status as a limited liability, or not-for-profit entity. If, in addition to adult visitors, you are

inviting parents or legal guardians of minor visitors to sign, say so; and state that the parent or guardian will sign for themselves and, if applicable state law permits, on behalf of the minor.

Activities and Risks: Describe both with enough specificity to avoid surprises. Be sure you leave some wiggle room for unscheduled activities and other risks. Describe the risks as inherent, but make clear that other risks may be encountered, inherent and otherwise.

Assumption of the risks: Have the

adult/parent acknowledge the risks and assume them -- all the risks, inherent and otherwise. A common error, readily pounced on by the courts, is confusion about whether the parties intend to assume (and release) only the inherent risks of the program. You should eliminate any chance of confusion. A minor is not legally competent to agree to anything, but he or she can be found to have assumed a known risk. So, have the parent/guardian state that the minor has read and understood the activities and risks and chooses to visit/participate anyway. Some organizations will require a minor of a certain age (14 and older typically) to sign the document, for the announced purpose, only, of reflecting her or his understanding of the risks.

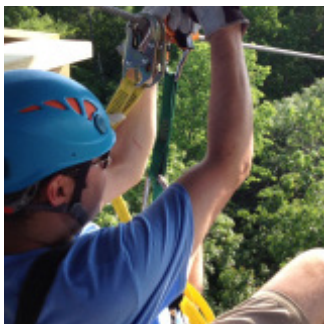
Release and indemnity: This is the most delicate part of the agreement and must be specific as to who is doing the releasing and indemnifying, for whom, and for what claims. The attorney preparing your document must know the applicable laws of

your state pertaining to , among other matters, 1) a parent's (or guardian's) right to waive a minor's claim (no more than 20 or so states allow this; 2) whether negligence must be expressly included within the scope of the released claims; and 3) who, or what entities, other than the named party (your organization) is to be included as a Released and Indemnified Party (for example, your organization's owners, directors and staff, independent contractors, and land owners). References to "everyone associated with...", or "agents" may be too vague to be enforceable.

Other: Some organizations are allowing visitors to "opt out" of allowing the taking and use of photos or other images without additional consideration. Consider a description of your medical response capability, if any; and if your operation is so located that medical help may be delayed, say so. Make clear that emergency assistance is at the expense of the adult visitor or parent/guardian.

If you anticipate the use of the signed agreement for future visits, make clear that the agreement now about to be signed will apply to all visits, until a later form is signed for application to visits after that signing. Misrepresentations and forgeries: a misrepresentation about age, or a relationship (parent or guardian), weight or a medical condition can be dealt with in a variety of ways, depending on the laws of your state. You may be able to reduce the duty of care you owe to the "misrepresenter" or forger to that owed to a trespasser; or commit such an adult person to indemnify you against any claim of loss by, or caused by, him or her. Be sure to specify the agreed-upon law and venue (place of suit, mediation or arbitration).

Other issues exist, of course, and you must consult an attorney familiar with your operation and the laws that apply to it.



Benchmarking and why it is important in the zip line industry

by Lee Kerfoot

As the zip line industry continues to mature owners are looking at how to maximize revenues and minimize expenses. Without any comparable data owners can only look to historical numbers for guidance. The problem with this you do not know if your numbers

are good or not. When owners do share numbers, even then it is hard to compare the numbers on an apples to apples basis.

The following story perfectly conveys the challenge of comparing one tour to another.

One tour owner shared he does \$15,000 in picture revenue. Without knowing if that was a good number or not he asked another comparable tour owner to share their picture revenue, which was \$20,000. The first owner was inquiring how the second owner

was able to achieve such strong picture revenue. Eventually they shared the number of riders at each course. The first owner realized they had 1/2 of the riders as the second course. When you look at the revenue/rider this showed the first owner was doing better on a per rider basis and it changed the entire course of the conversation. Best practices were exchanged and now the second operator has pointers on what they can do to improve their picture revenue.

Costs are different need to be broken out into two different categories, fixed and variable. Fixed costs are not easily compared on a per rider basis because everyone has a different cost structure depending on many

factors. Are the owners having the company pay for their vehicle, is the owner the General Manager or are they paying someone to be the General Manager.

Fixed costs are costs businesses have to pay and generally do not change based on the number of riders. Examples of fixed costs include items like mortgage payments, salaries for year around employees like sales managers or general managers, owner's salaries, and utilities. If you use a vehicle to drive guests to the beginning of the course, then the vehicle payment would be fixed cost.

Variable costs are costs that fluctuate with business. When business is slow these costs are low.

As business picks up these costs increase with each rider. Variable costs include guide payroll, complimentary items like snacks or water, and gas used to drive the ATV to the beginning of the course. Marketing can be looked at like a variable cost because as you get busier you spend more on marketing.

Looking at revenues and costs on a per rider basis allow different owners to have a meaningful conversation about how they are doing on an apples to apples basis without sharing their gross revenue,



Adventure Play: The benefits of Risk Taking

by Jenna Standsvold

Jenna Standsvold - Content Marketing Coordinator with Head Rush Technologies

Which are you? Someone who loves scary movies and is always in line for the latest release? Or someone who considers The Nightmare Before Christmas to be more nightmare than holiday? Why is it that some people love to scare themselves while others don't enjoy the same thrill? Some of the reason may have to do with our experiences as kids. New research is exploring how adventure or risky play, including the element of fear, can benefit kids in the long run.

"The dangers of life are infinite, and among them is safety."

-- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
Adventure as Play

Play has been called the work of children and is an important part of their development. It helps introduce kids to the world and to each other while also helping them build skills and confidence. In fact, play is such a critical part of childhood that the United Nation's recognizes leisure, play, and recreation in the "Convention on the Rights of a Child. Where does risky play or adventure play fit in?

The research is still developing, but

it appears that risk taking and fear are an important and natural part of childhood play. Researchers have observed that all kids push their boundaries and take part in some level of risky play, such as climbing up high or going fast. It appears that kids have an understanding of their own boundaries, though, and will attempt risky play that just reaches those boundaries. (1)

"If you risk nothing, then you risk everything."

-- Geena Davis

Benefits of Risk Taking for Children

Ok, so kids will push their boundaries and attempt risky play. Why do they do this and are there benefits to risk taking during play? To start, Ellen Sandseter, a professor of early childhood education in Norway, defined six categories of risky play: play at heights, play with high speed, play with dangerous tools, play near dangerous elements, rough-and-tumble play, and play where kids could become lost (2). These are areas that kids will explore through play as they build confidence and increase their skills.

In one study, classrooms of children between the ages of 4 and 6 were exposed to these categories of risky play during school (all categories except for exposure to play near dangerous elements) while other classrooms were not exposed to risky play. After 3 months, the results showed that the kids given an opportunity to partake in risky play had improved risk perception and competence compared to the other kids. That means that these skills can be improved over time and these improved skills are a benefit of risky or adventure play. (3)

"I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it."

-- Pablo Picasso

Advantages of Fear

So kids who experience risky play are better at perceiving risk and have higher competence at navigating these risks (3). What about the times when that is not true and kids get hurt? How are we supposed to let kids take risks with the worry of injury looming overhead?

Part of play and adventure for kids is trying new things and learning to test your limits, and sometimes kids may go beyond their limits and fall. Turns out this is also a natural part of childhood that actually provides some benefits of its own. Research found that kids who actually experienced an injury due to falling before the age of 9 did not have a greater fear of heights when they were older (4). In fact, these kids who had injured themselves falling had less fear of heights later, indicating that these experiences actually had an anti-phobic effect.

"Prepare the child for the path, not the path for the child."

-- Betsy Brown Braun

Learn and Improve

The goal in life is not to be fearless; fear is a natural part of life if you have a functioning amygdala in your head. Through adventure play, kids can improve their skills for dealing with risky situations and reduce their likelihood of developing fears that could hold them back. Luckily, there are many opportunities for adventure play these days.

For example, rock climbing gyms are growing in popularity across the country and adventure activity destinations, like ropes courses or adventure parks, are popping up in many locations. These provide controlled environments to test your limits and face your fears. So regardless of whether or not you like scary movies, how about when it comes to adventure activities like rock climbing, jumping off 80 foot towers, and zip lining; are you in or are you out?

"Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far it is possible to go."

-- T.S. Eliot





Equipment Management Practices

by Patrick Ferbee

Ariel Adventure Tech

Equipment management is essentially asset management. The aerial adventure products in your inventory are assets for your organization. This equipment is likely the most important asset because it is directly involved in employee and participant safety. A solid equipment management system can serve as the asset and safety management system for your entire organization. Allowing you to track maintenance on vehicles, inspections of the physical activity or structure, staff trainings, and a host of other items requiring records. To some, a management system seems like unnecessary

administrative work but developing one creates real world value.

A management system will:

1. Serve as part of your organizational operating procedures to train your staff and improve the daily efficiency of your operation.
2. Allow cost predictions for periodic replacement of equipment and activity components.
3. Reduce the likelihood of an injury or death due to

misuse of equipment or lack of inspection.

4. Demonstrate that your organization utilizes best practices in risk management.
5. Ensure compliance with laws and regulation.
6. Show your due diligence should an incident occur and a lawsuit be brought.

A well-developed management system should include the components below. This list is not exhaustive and every organization will have to meet specific needs.



Remember, whatever service you utilize or system you develop must be both usable and intuitive. Overly complicated systems and procedures fall to the wayside all too quickly.

For your management system, outline:

A METHOD STATEMENT

Sort of like a mission statement for your gear inventory. A brief summary of what you are trying to achieve with your management system and how you are going to achieve it.

THE ACQUISITION PROCESS

How do you purchase equipment? How do you rotate in spare equipment? How do you get approval for equipment purchases?

APPROVED SUPPLIERS

Who do you buy equipment from?

AN APPROVED EQUIPMENT LIST

What equipment is approved for use in your organization? Be sure to specify alternate options in case a product is unavailable.

THE STORAGE OF NOTICES AND MANUALS

Where do you store manufacturer provided information and how is it accessed? Manufacturer notices, manuals, and Declarations of Conformity should be available for the end user for the lifetime of the equipment.

TRACEABILITY AND MARKING STANDARDS

How do you mark and label your equipment? What is your schema for unique identifiers that your staff recognize? How are these unique identifiers tied back to product serial numbers?

AN INSPECTION REGIME

What types of inspections do you perform and how often do you perform these? What is

the maximum period between inspections? What is the process and criteria for the inspections you perform?

INSPECTION RECORD KEEPING

Who is responsible for inspection records? How are these records stored (digitally or physical copies)? How are records accessed in case of a lawsuit or third party inspection?

A QUARANTINE PROCESS

What is the process for quarantining an item if a defect is found? Who determines if the item is fit for use, needs repair, or must be destroyed?

A MAINTENANCE REGIME

How do you clean and maintain your equipment?

What is the schedule for this maintenance? How do you log maintenance?

RECURRING PROBLEMS AND FAULTS LOGS

How do you record defects found and actions taken to address these? When do you look at overall trends in damage or wear?

STORAGE METHODS

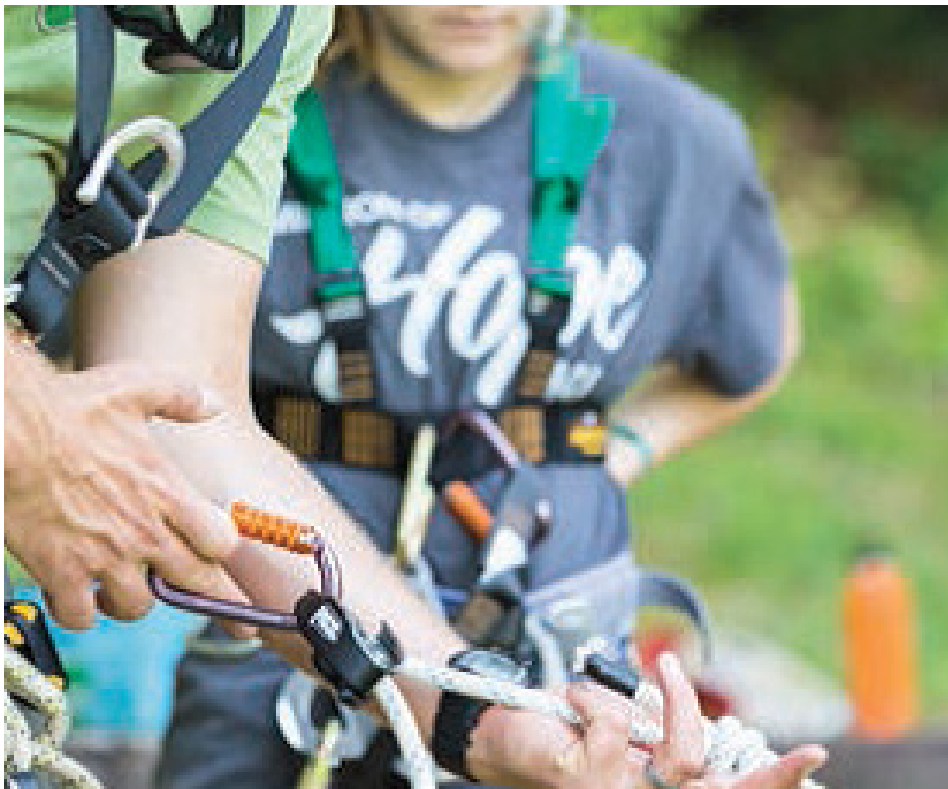
How is your equipment stored both daily and seasonally?

A REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE

How often do you replace items in your inventory? What are the lifetimes of certain products?

TRAINING RECORD KEEPING

How are staff trained in the use, care, and inspection of equipment? What is the process to ensure they understand your policies and procedures? How are they trained in the application of your management system?



Free Online Workshop: Training Extraordinary Guides - 10 Shortcuts to Success

ACCT has partnered with Kelsey Tonner, the founder of Be A Better Guide, to bring you a FREE online workshop this Spring. Kelsey hosted a number of live sessions at this year's conference, including a full-day session on mentoring and inspiring your staff during the pre-conference. If you did not have a chance to participate in Kelsey's sessions in Savannah, this LIVE online workshop is a great opportunity to expand your staff training toolbox.

This workshop will focus on the customer service and "soft skills" that transform good guides into great guides! The online session is not intended to provide technical skills instruction, but will offer strategies that trainers and guides can use to consistently provide incredible experiences to guests. See below for details and to get registered!

[Training Extraordinary Guides - 10 Shortcuts to Success](#)
Tuesday, May 23rd 2017 at 8:30 am (Pacific)

Here's what you will discover in this free online workshop:

- The most important soft skills you need to teach new guides
- The real reason why many guides fail to meet their guests' expectations
- Industry secrets to wowing and delighting your guests
- 5 common mistakes companies make when mentoring new staff
- The most important characteristic of a world-class training program
- How to use a 'Coaching Card' and inspiring excellence in your team

Register now to receive a copy of the workshop replay! All registrants will also receive a complimentary PDF of Be A Better Guide's simple and elegant Tour Leader Coaching Card.

In addition, we will host a live Q & A at the end where participants can ask questions related DIRECTLY to your individual hiring and training needs!

[CLICK HERE](#) to register OR get a copy of the replay

About the Presenter

Kelsey Tonner is an experienced, global tour guide and founder of the Be a Better Guide Project, a movement that brings together tour guides and tour operators from around the world to learn from one another. His mission is to help anyone, anywhere, create extraordinary experiences for travellers. With over ten years experience in the industry, he has led trips in over fifteen different countries from Europe to the Americas and from Asia to North Africa. He has been a wilderness trip leader, a dog-sledding guide, a volunteer coordinator in an Inuit community and spent five years leading hiking, biking and multi-sport trips with Backroads Canada. He has visited over sixty countries and set foot on all seven continents. In 2015, Kelsey was chosen from thousands as one of eight shortlisted guides for the Wanderlust World Guide Awards. With practical yet wisecracking advice, Kelsey inspires a global community of professional tour leaders and businesses to give people memories of a lifetime and helps them earn more money while doing it.



ACCT Program Accreditation

An ACCT Accredited Program is a company which has successfully completed the Program Accreditation Application, including the Accreditation, process. The process includes a review by qualified parties which determines an applicant's adherence to ACCT Program Accreditation Policies and Procedures and its commitment to ACCT Standards. Successful completion of this process distinguishes an Accredited Program from other challenge course program and operation, identifying the Accreditor Program as having been found to be highly experienced and competent.

On February 5, 2017 the ACCT Board approved an accreditation policy that defines the purpose, policies and procedures for ACCT accreditation programs.

Policy:

ACCT develops and administers Accreditation Programs for ACCT Member Organizations recognizing qualifications in defined areas.

Please click [here](#) to read more about the policy.

Purpose:

To verify and recognize organizations that demonstrate qualifications and compliance with accreditation program requirements and standards to offer a particular service.

ACCT Accreditation Programs should benefit the industry by:

- Elevating professionalism.
- Establishing minimum benchmarks.
- Maintaining a list of accredited organizations.
- Promoting increased industry involvement and knowledge sharing.
- Promoting continued organizational development.
- Recognize the commitment of accredited organizations toward industry excellence.

Latest Developments:

On March 27 & 28, 2017 the Accreditation & Certification committee, the Board liaison Sara Bell, and staff members Shawn Tierney and Bill Weaver met in Atlanta to chart the path forward with respect to launching ACCT's program accreditation. A large part of the immediate work ahead will involve updating and revising existing documents that had been created in the past year. This includes:

QCP Operation Reviewer

Includes: Guidelines for the Qualified Course Professional Operation Review

Program Accreditation Manual

Includes: Policies and procedures laid out in an easy-to-follow guide

Program Accreditation Application

Includes: Formatted application to be completed by the Applicant

Program Accreditation Application Checklist

Includes: Checklist to aid application organization and improve submission/review efficiency

Operation Review Report

Includes: Form to be completed by Qualified Operational Reviewer and submitted in coordination with the application.

Other processes and documents that will need to be developed in the months ahead include:

- Application process and procedures for qualifying an Operation Reviewer
- Client management system to coordinate communication and documentation
- Accredited member benefits and fees
- Billing and processing procedures
- Incident Report and reporting procedures
- Annual reporting requirements
- Developing Pilot program to launch August/September through November, 2017. We currently have 5-6 companies interested in going through a pilot program to test the process, procedures, and to gather feedback from the operators.
- Vetting the program to internal stakeholders such as PVMs, gathering feedback, etc.

Another immediate task will involve populating a program accreditation panel. Panels are responsible for ensuring compliance with policies and procedures that have been developed for the program, and for recommending any future procedural changes to the accreditation & certification committee. We have received a good number of applications from individuals who expressed an interest in serving on the panel but we will still be accepting applications until the end of April/early May. If you are interested in serving on the panel you can find the volunteer application [here](#).



PEACE OF MIND

As defined by Meg, Customer Service Supervisor at Mount Hermon Adventures

noun

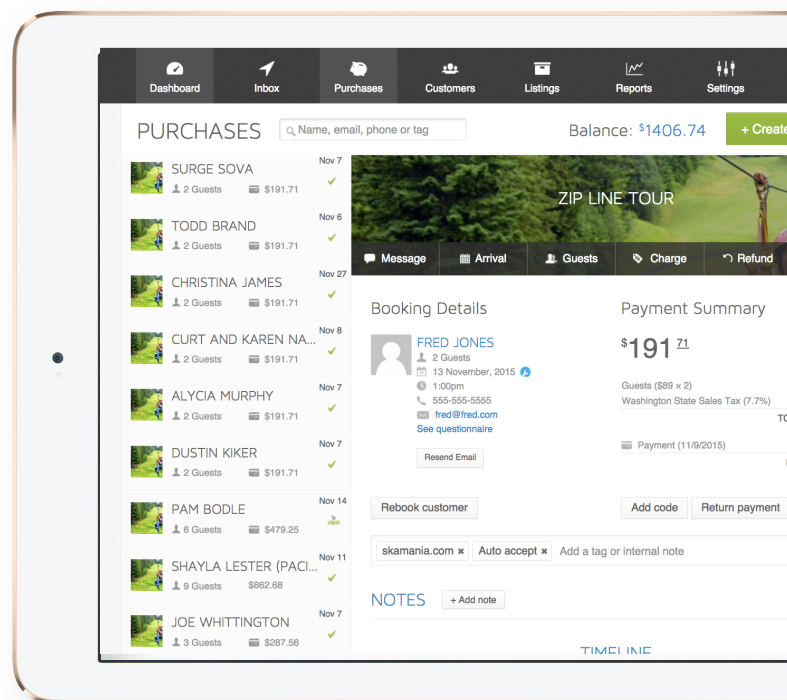
1. The feeling you get when you grow online bookings 60%, increase online revenue 20%, and say 'Yes' to the love of your life, all in one summer.
2. Having confidence in your present and your future.

"Xola gives zip lines and challenge courses peace of mind."

RATED 5-STARS BY ZIP TOURS & CHALLENGE COURSES



The official booking software of ACCT



Government Relations Updates

Recent regulatory efforts have been, or are currently underway in a number of states. Thanks to ACCT volunteers, the Government Relations Committee, and PVMs who have been actively involved with these efforts by representing stakeholder and industry interests.

Tennessee

Here is an update on where things stand in Tennessee regarding zip line, challenge course, and adventure park regulations.

Inspection Form

As of March 15th the online inspection form for third party inspectors went live. This is the universal form that will be used to send an inspection report to the state for a client's permit. So inspectors / companies can still provide their own inspection reports in whatever format they like to the client, but inspection info to the state must go through the online form.

Here is a link to the form. <http://tn.gov/workforce/article/amusement-inspection-form>

Another change to note is that as of December 2016, the state permit is being issued to the operating company, rather than to each device. HOWEVER, each device must have a separate inspection report filed, so it matters what you and the client designate as a device. For example, under the current law (which is likely to change in this next year) if you have an aerial adventure park with 50 elements composed of 5 different courses, you could designate the entire park as one device, or each of the courses as a single device. The caveat is that if there is a serious accident requiring the device to be closed, then an inspection report that lists the whole park as one device could mean that the entire park would have to be closed until the investigation was complete, rather than just the course where the incident occurred. Much of this remains a moving target and I think it will continue to be for some time.

Legislative Update

There are three Bills related to amusement safety that have popped up in this legislative session. They were not widely publicized and the only reason they came to our attention is because they were mentioned at the close of the March Amusement Safety Board meeting. They don't deal directly with zip lines / challenge courses / adventure parks, but because if you're operating as an amusement device at any part during the year, these bills may affect you.

The Bills are:

HB 191 (House Bill), SB 457 (Senate Bill) and SB 215

You can search for the Bills via <http://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/billsearch/BillSearchAdvanced.aspx>

HB 191 and SB 457 are pretty much the same. There is some problematic language that needs to be

addressed, particularly the language around operator qualifications.

If you are a Tennessee resident or a legal foreign entity in Tennessee it would be prudent to contact your Representatives and Senators to provide your input regarding these Bills.

Don Stock, Chair
Government Relations Committee

North Carolina

Update on Legislation

Senator Lee filed, Senate Bill 100, Aerial Adventure Financial Responsibility on February 15, 2017, and the Bill was approved in March and sent to the house for consideration. We had been in direct contact with Senator Lee and had input and we are supportive of this bill. There are two other co-sponsors on the bill along with Senator Lee: Senator Meredith (R-Cumberland) and Senator Ford (D-Mecklenburg). Senator Lee's bill was considered and approved without opposition by the Senate commerce committee. Senator Lee mentioned several times that the bill was supported by NCAAA.

House Bill 196, Zip Lines/Challenge Courses/Sanders' Law, introduced by Representative Davis, was scheduled for consideration in the House Judiciary I Committee on Wednesday March 22 at 1pm.

Michigan

The State of Michigan announced on February 8th that all zip lines in the State of Michigan will need to be licensed. There is very little information on the state site regarding the requirements.

Announcement: http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-10573_11472-404222--,00.html

This is a work in progress. For challenge courses with zip lines, only the zip lines will need to meet the requirements.

You can look through the laws here:

[http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(otzhiwkq3t50qrhw5wxmw24d\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=GetObject&objectname=mcl-Act-225-of-1966](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(otzhiwkq3t50qrhw5wxmw24d))/mileg.aspx?page=GetObject&objectname=mcl-Act-225-of-1966)

Current laws do not specify a specific standard for amusement code but include requirements for signage, operations, etc.

Here is what is required in addition to the requirements of the law:

http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-61343_35414_60647_35456-114272--,00.html

Kansas

A new Bill is being drafted in Kansas. It's a result of a death on a water slide last year. It doesn't specifically mention zip lines, but it may be applicable to any pay for play or zip tours. You can view the Bill here:

http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2017_18/measures/hb2389/



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 Fax: 631 982-5031

Installation, Inspection, Training

daniel@visionaryadventure.com
www.visionaryadventure.com

Charlie Williams
WingSpeed Adventures
 808 Russell Station
 Francestown, NH 03043
 Phone: +1-603-547-8822
 Fax: +1-603-547-8833

Full Service PVM

wngspdadv@aol.com
www.wingspeedadventures.com

ACCT Membership

Individual Member

A practitioner, student, or interested party who is not directly affiliated with an organization which delivers challenge course programming or provides services to the marketplace, or a person who is employed by an organization which offers programs and services in the challenge course industry representing less than 15% of the organization's annual revenue.

Membership period: 1 year
 Annual membership dues: \$85.00/year
 Student or Senior dues: \$65.00/year

Business to Business (B2B)

An organization that provides services or products to operators, vendors, or manufacturers. Common services offered by Vendors include but are not limited to design, installation, inspection, training and certification, operational reviews, engineering and business consulting. Many vendors also provide products direct to operators, and on occasion, direct to consumers.

Membership period: 1 year
 Annual membership dues: \$400.00/year
 NFP: \$295.00/year

Industry Stakeholder

An organization or entity that has interest or concern in the Challenge Course and Aerial Adventure Course market. Industry stakeholders and affiliates can affect or be affected by the ACCT's actions, objectives and policies. Included in this category are organizations that are involved in standard setting, regulation and policy making, other trade associations, law firms, supplemental service providers, and amusement park device operators that do not currently provide Challenge Course services.

Membership period: 1 year
 Annual Membership dues: \$299.95/year

Professional Vendor Member (PVM)

A PVM of ACCT is a company which has successfully completed the Professional Vendor Member Application, including the Accreditation, process. The process includes a stringent review which determines an applicant's adherence to ACCT Accreditation Policies and Procedures and its good faith commitment to ACCT Standards. Successful completion of this process distinguishes a PVM from other vendors, identifying the PVM as having been found to be highly experienced and competent.

Membership period: 1 year
 Annual membership dues: \$1800.00/year

Business to Client (B2C) Service Provider

An organization offering challenge course/aerial adventure course programs or services direct to the public at a specific site or location. Most operators manage challenge courses that may include but are not limited to low elements, high elements, climbing walls, zip lines, zip line tours, canopy tours, aerial trekking courses, adventure parks, or zip rides or provide experience-based training and development to end users.

Membership period: 1 year
 Annual Membership dues: \$400.00/ year
 NFP: \$295.00/year

ACCT Membership Office

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

Contact information:
Membership@acctinfo.org
 Tel: 1800-991-0286 Ext. 1

New ACCT Mailing Address - Please Update Your Records

The Association for Challenge Course Technology has a new office location and mailing address.

Effectively immediately, all mail should be sent to:

Association for Challenge Course Technology
PO Box 19797
Boulder, CO 80308

Please note that ACCT has also moved its office location to Boulder, CO. Items that need to be shipped can be sent to:

Association for Challenge Course Technology
4770 Baseline Rd., Ste. 200
Boulder, CO 80303

Please update all of your records with our new mailing and office address.

Thank you!



ACCT Mission Statement

The Association for Challenge Course Technology establishes and promotes the standard of care and measure of excellence that defines professional practice and effective challenge course programs. ACCT develops, refines, and publishes standards for Installing, maintaining, and managing challenge courses; provides forums for education and professional development; and advocates for the challenge course and adventure industry.

ACCT Vision Statement

The Association for Challenge Course Technology is the undisputed industry leader, advancing the industry and enabling members' on-going success.

ACCT Board of Directors

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All parties interested in submitting materials for publication in Parallel Lines are encouraged to send them to the Main Office, Attention: Editor. We reserve the right to refuse or edit any materials submitted. Photos should be submitted with article submissions. For more information contact us at +1-800-991-0286 between 9:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m., CST. Our 24-hour fax number is 4169295256.

Our email address is info@acctinfo.org We are also accessible through our website at: www.acctinfo.org