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Participant on a challenge course at Tigertail Lake Recreational Center.

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Do you have a solid release agreement?

ACCT Association for Challenge Course Technology®

Letter from the Executive Director

The Greek philosopher Heraclitus is noted for saying that “change is the only constant in life.” If we can embrace change, then life becomes less of a struggle. Easier said than done.

ACCT is going through its own changes and transitions. We have recently undertaken a major organizational restructure that has led us to replace our operations department with a program department. This change meant eliminating two positions, while subsequently seeking to fill two new positions, both to be based in Colorado. We are hiring a Program



Manager who will oversee all of our credentialing programs, and a Policy Director who will focus on government relations and advocacy for our standards. We have also recently added a Business Manager, Heather Brooks, who joins us from Royal Gorge Zipline Tours where she was a course manager and an office staffer. Heather will be overseeing membership, among other duties. By bringing this position in-house, we’ll provide better service, support and value to our members. You can [read more](#) about Heather in this issue.

The overarching goal with our restructure is to ensure greater financial stability for the association and provide better, more efficient services to our members. Along with that, we wanted to centralize our staffing in Colorado to build a high performing team based in one office location.

The other opportunity we saw with the restructure was to add the full-time position dedicated to government relations that I mention above. This position has been long overdue at ACCT. One of the central functions of a trade association is to take a proactive stance in dealing with regulatory issues. We see this as a major membership benefit and we look forward to making a substantial impact in this area in the years ahead.

As with any restructure, there will undoubtedly be bumps in the road, so we are asking both for your support and your patience as we move into the future.

As always, please feel free to [reach out to me](#) if you have questions, comments or anything else on your mind that you would like to share or discuss.


Shawn Tierney
shawn@acctinfo.org



parallel lines

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We Need Volunteers!

The ACCT Leadership and Nomination Committee is actively seeking three to four volunteers to assist with committee functions, which include the following:

- Recruiting volunteers for leadership positions within ACCT.

- Identifying and developing the leadership skills of volunteers.

- Assisting the Board Vice Chair in managing annual elections.

- Ensuring that there are qualified candidates for all elected positions in the organization.

Interested candidates are encouraged to fill out the ACCT volunteer application and return it to ACCT. You can download the volunteer application [here](#):



ACCT Hires Business Manager

Heather Brooks joined the ACCT staff team April 30, 2018. Brooks will manage and grow membership, social media, communications, and handle office responsibilities. We spent a couple minutes chatting with Brooks to find out about her background and goals she has for her new role.

Where did you work before coming to ACCT?

I worked at Royal Gorge Zipline Tours in Canon City, Colorado, as their course manager. I had been with their company for seven years. I started as a guide and worked my way up to course manager. As a course manager I oversaw the operations, making sure trips got out on time, did the scheduling, the payroll, the office side of managing, and I also did the course maintenance. I have my Level 1 In-House Inspector certification as well. I was able to do the inspection on our courses, in addition to the PVM course inspection which was done by Bonsai Design Inc. Pretty much anything that needed to be done with the courses, I was doing. We were a year-round course, however, during the slower season I worked in the office taking reservations, reaching out to groups to come and enjoy our course, working on our Facebook page, doing anything related to operations for the zipline and the payroll.



HEATHER BROOKS

What do you hope to accomplish at ACCT?

I hope to reach out and tap into members that we may not have been able to reach in the past. I am hoping to really engage the members that we have now, make them feel like they are validated for being a member since there are some conversations happening that question being a member of ACCT. I want to reiterate why it's a good thing, what membership can do for people and businesses, and bring back that sense that it's important to be involved as a member. I'd like to help some of those smaller companies see the benefit of membership.

What do you like best about the industry?

The conferences. I've been to three now. I like how inviting the industry is as a whole. It's not just for PVMS, or challenge course or zipline operators. There are

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a lot of supportive groups out there. As one of the smaller members, to be a part of, and getting to see, how big the industry really is, has been great. To see beyond our own corner of the industry. To see all the different classes, the different training methods. And now I get to help Melissa, our Events Manager, a bit to put it all together, so I'm excited for that.

You moved to Longmont, Colorado to work in the ACCT office. Where did you move from, and do you have a family?

I was born in Pueblo and raised in Canon City, so I'm a Colorado native. I have two boys, they are six and eight, they are a handful, but they are amazing. I have a husband who is in Canon City now but will move to Longmont soon. He works for the prison system, which most people in Canon City do.

Now for a few fun get-to-know-you questions. What was your first concert?

I think it was Diamond Rio. A country group, at the state fair in Pueblo, and I think I was 12.

What was your first one without parents?

Either George Strait or All-American Rejects.

What do you do when you need to relax?

I go through a car wash. The water is relaxing. In Canon City, I walk the river walk, listening to the river, gathering my thoughts and regrouping.

What's your morning wake-up beverage?

Normally, it's from Starbucks, and it's an Americano with a little bit of cream. If I make it on my own, I still use the Starbucks brews you can buy in the store.

What else do you want people to know?

I promise I won't be boring on the phone. I have a wonderful repertoire of jokes from being a zipline guide, so if anyone calls and needs a joke, I've got you covered. ■



Join our 2019 Yellow Hats Service Crew

Service Crew is a fantastic opportunity for people seeking a way to get connected at the annual conference. Service Crew members, called the Yellow Hats, are the first faces conference attendees see as they come to registration to check-in. Yellow Hats greet you at receptions, as you enter workshops, and so much more. In addition, you'll see Yellow Hats floating around to assist attendees with any questions they may have. If they don't know the answer, they'll find it. What better way to interface with folks in our industry than to serve them at our international conference!

If connecting with others in a large group setting isn't your thing, that's ok. Many Yellow Hats find community amongst other Yellow Hats. Yellow Hats have made new friends and networked with other members of the crew. The opportunity to serve the association with another fellow industry professional is a bond that lasts, even after the conference is over. "Being on the service crew was an amazing and rewarding experience," says 2018 Yellow Hat member Ashley Abair. "You all were so welcoming and kind. I cannot thank you all enough for making my first year at this conference something I won't forget." Ask any Yellow Hat alum about their experience serving and they'll be quick to share the many perks of being part of the crew, including the amazing people they have met.

One of the great things about volunteering is that you'll receive half off your registration cost for the conference. In exchange, you donate up to 17 hours of your time at the conference. What a deal! If that doesn't catch your eye, how about being able to attend the exclusive Service Crew Social where Yellow Hats get to interact with each other to have fun and build community. During the social, Yellow Hats will get to connect with industry leaders like our Executive Director, Shawn Tierney and our board members.

We'd love to share more about being on Service Crew. Reach out to us at acctcrew@gmail.com and we'd be happy to chat. We hope to see your application soon! ■

New Law Governs Puerto Rican Industry Safety Standards

Puerto Rico has adapted a new law that establishes clear rules and regulations to legislate safety standards for the country's adventure park and challenge course industry, thanks to advocacy work by a team of volunteers, and supported by the Spanish translations of standards. Law No. 65, approved January 30, 2018, establishes the Secretary of the Department of Recreation and Sports as the governing body authorized to enforce the rules and regulations, and covers the operation and installation of equipment for high-risk recreational practices related to ziplines, canopy tours, and more.

The law states that companies must comply with standards set by the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) or by the Professional Rope Course Association (PRCA). The law governs standards related to the design, structure, administration, and maintenance of equipment; certification and training of company personnel; record keeping; and inspection schedules.

The new law covers the operation and installation of equipment for high-risk recreational practices related to ziplines, canopy tours, and more.

A version of the law was first proposed in 2010. Luis Acevedo, Ed.D., of the Corporación Educativa Aire Libre, proposed a new version of the law for the Tourism department in 2013. After several additional proposals between 2014 and 2017, working with Representative Urayoan Hernandez Alvarado, Acevedo and Alvarado were successful. "I hope this helps my country reach the next level of excellence and risk management," says Acevedo. The law was added as a new subsection to Article 13 of the Law No. 8 of 2004, Organic Law of the Department of Recreation and sports, and was deemed effective immediately. ■



New safety standards in Puerto Rico

ACCT has a new office and phone number

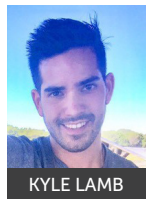
OUR PHYSICAL OFFICE ADDRESS IS:
1079 S. Hover Street Suite 200,
Longmont, CO 80501

OUR MAILING ADDRESS IS:
PO Box 19797, Boulder, CO 80308

OUR PHONE NUMBER IS:
(303) 827-2432
(1-800 number is no longer in service)

Four 2019 Conference Scholarships Available

Four ACCT-sponsored scholarships are available for people wishing to attend the 2019 Annual International ACCT Conference & Expo February 7-10, 2019 in Denver, CO. Each scholarship will cover conference registration fees. Meals, lodging, and travel are not included, and will be the responsibility of the attendee. The scholarship selection will be done by the Conference Work Group.



KYLE LAMB

Applications are due by Friday, October 12th, 2018. To apply, include information about the following:

- How your education, experience, or goals demonstrate an intention for a continued career in the challenge course field (programming, training, building, etc.).
- Your interest in projects or other activities that contribute to the challenge course industry (above and beyond employment in the field).
- Any past experiences you've had that demonstrate your passion for the challenge course industry.
- Why you need financial assistance.

"It was so helpful to connect with all the bright minds of the challenge course community and brainstorm new innovative ways to create adaptive programming to make challenge courses available to individuals with special needs," says Kyle Lamb, an assistant camp director at [Camp John Marc](#) in Dallas, Texas, and a 2018 conference scholarship recipient.

Click [here](#) to find out more about application requirements and to apply. All applications must be received by Friday, October 12th, 2018 to be considered. ■



FEATURE PROFILE

Tips to Keep Seasonal Staff Trained within Compliance Guidelines

Q&A with Natalie Justice, Manager, Tigertail Lake Recreational Center, Broward College

By ACCT

NATALIE JUSTICE manages the Tigertail Lake Recreational Center at Broward College. The facility is on the eastern coast of Southern Florida outside of Fort Lauderdale and serves a student population upwards of 45,000, plus additional clients from the community. The recreation center began in the early 1970s and includes a five-acre lake, so many of the programs involve team building on the water, and most of the staff is cross-trained as facilitators and lifeguards. The program started as a sailing center, then added a ropes course, which in 2004 was updated and designed by Cornerstone/CDI. Now the center offers sailing, a ropes course, scuba diving, kayaking, paddle boarding, canoeing, a recreational aqua glide

inflatable water park, and a conference room for different programs and activities. Justice, who has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Youngstown State University, and a Masters of Science in Sports and Recreations from Florida International University, is respected among peers for her staff training methods and programs. We recently had the chance to tap her for advice about how she stays within compliance guidelines as she handles training both her seasonal and permanent staff.

ACCT: For starters, can you tell us how you got into the industry?

JUSTICE: Way back in 1998, I was working at a shelter for battered women in Youngstown, Ohio. A letter came in the mail offering a chance to experience a ropes course. I volunteered, along with other people from different non-profits, and it was a powerful and memorable experience. Six months later, when I got laid off from my job, I thought, 'I want to go work at that ropes course.' The program was a therapeutic tool for a locked mental health unit for children, run by the Youngstown hospital. The course was built by Project Adventure. Luther Stubbs, my mentor and first facilitator, still holds a soft spot in my heart.

ACCT: What do you love the most about this type of work?

JUSTICE: Watching people have that 'aha' moment and leave here feeling as if the experience really meant something to them. Watching groups come in the morning as individuals and by the end of the day leave as more of a connected unit. Offering people an opportunity to grow and learn about themselves.

ACCT: Let's talk about training staff. First, what type of staff do you have?

JUSTICE: We have three full-time people—my position and two other staff—plus 15 to 20 part-time folks. The majority of our part-time staff is year-round, however we do get a big influx of staffers in the summer.



The staff at Tigertail Lake Recreational Center at Broward College in Southern Florida offers team-building programs on the water.

ACCT: How do you stay current with staff training compliance guidelines?

JUSTICE: Obviously, through ACCT. I also do one or two trainings a year for Ropeworks. That yearly training gives me a little more insight and helps me stay up-to-date with industry standards and anything else that's going on.

We have a PVM vendor come annually to Tigertail. If I have a question about a grey area or am not sure about something, I can reach out by phone to the PVM or send an email for clarification.

Another great tool is the challenge course pros Facebook page. I've never used it myself, but I see people on there asking programming questions, facilitation ques-

tions, equipment questions. Professionals from all over the industry can chime in and offer their assistance. If you are looking for guidance, that's a very inclusive and supportive community.

ACCT: How do you navigate compliance training for full-time and part-time annual staff, plus your seasonal staff?

JUSTICE: I do two trainings a year. Typically, I offer a 40-hour training in the spring with a PVM who does the training with our core staff a month before it gets crazy. Then when things slow down in the fall, we do an in-house training refresher that I lead with another person here who is a certified trainer.

ACCT: What happens if staff can't attend the official training sessions?

JUSTICE: Ideally, the trainings happen with my entire staff, but that doesn't always work out because the bulk of our staff are part time, they go to school, have other jobs, and commitments. I try to work around their schedules but it's difficult. If I bring someone into the fold in-between those two trainings, I'll either go in and do a 1:1 training, or have a more seasoned facilitator go out and show them how to set up, co-facilitate, or shadow.

ACCT: What are some of your other strategies for ensuring the success of new staff?

JUSTICE: I'm always checking in with the staff, especially with my new folks, asking if they have any questions, asking how it went, asking if they need any additional training. It's important to have that open line of communication. I'm also big on giving them the tools to enhance their craft. I offer debriefing props like thumbballs, postcards, and wheelies. I keep books on site that people can borrow. The facilitation piece, the soft skills, can be intimidating, so again I give them the resources and the time they need to be able to lead a group by themselves. I'm big on co-facilitating. We have a lot of seasoned facilitators, who work with and groom our new facilitators.

ACCT: Once staff is trained, how do you manage quality control?

JUSTICE: I go out throughout the season and work a course alongside the staff. I hang out, make sure they are wearing their helmets, wearing close-toed shoes instead of flip flops—because we do live in South Florida—make sure they are doing everything that they would do in a training. Make sure they haven't gotten sloppy about their technique. If we get somebody new, or someone misses a major training, I'll do that training on my own, share the technical parts, then have them shadow a seasoned facilitator until they are up to speed. I have some very experienced facilitators, so when I'm not out on the course with them I make sure those people are out there as a mentor or lead facilitator.





ACCT: What are some other strategies that have improved facilitation?

JUSTICE: I like it when my facilitators get an opportunity to work at another course. We share facilitators with programs at Florida Atlantic University and Florida International University. This exchange lets staff see other facilitation styles or programming styles, see other ways of doing things. I like to have a well-rounded

If we get somebody new, or someone misses a major training, I'll do that training on my own, share the technical parts, then have them shadow a seasoned facilitator until they are up to speed.

facilitator, who doesn't get stuck in one way of doing things. Each course has its own core set of facilitators, but many of us will go work at the other courses when they are running a big program. This helps enhance our skills and learn about the little nuanced things that make for an exceptional facilitator.

ACCT: Any final words?

JUSTICE: Embrace the training. I put a lot of importance into training and I pay people an hourly rate because I want them to understand it is an investment. If we have a big group coming in but had to cancel last minute because of bad weather, instead of sending staff home with half-pay, we'll do an impromptu training for a couple hours, to give people the opportunity to try a new activity with a friendly crowd before they take it on the road. It gets tricky because of budgets but investing in training at the beginning has worked out for us. We don't have a lot of turnover here. Sometimes I'll put money into training and the person works a couple weeks or a month and then they are gone, but most of the time the training pays off. Some of my best staff are people that came to me with no experience but had the basic desire to become a good facilitator. ■



FEATURE PROFILE

No More Glove Braking, if Inventor Has His Way

Q&A with Mike Seper Founder, Zipline Innovations LLC Owner, Eco Adventure Ziplines

By ACCT

WHEN ACCT OWNER/OPERATOR member Mike Seper started his first zipline facility in New Florence, Missouri in 2010, he quickly noticed how awkward and potentially dangerous it was for clients to have to put their hand on the cable in an attempt to slow down before arriving at the end of the zipline. Seper, an inventor since childhood, began designing a gadget that eliminated the need for clients to touch the cable to slow down. He formed a com-

pany called Zipline Innovations LLC, with his patent pending Zip 360 safety system, and soon realized his invention could be applied to the zipline and challenge course industry in other beneficial ways. Seper is a recent graduate of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, MBA program, and he, his wife, and their 18-month-old son split their time between Missouri and Hawaii, where he completed his undergraduate studies. We recently caught up with him in Missouri, to learn more about the invention process, and his technology, which holds promising implications for the industry.

ACCT: How did you get interested in the industry?

SEPER: I grew up in Missouri, then went to the University of Hawaii, in Manoa, Oahu for college. I was exposed to my first zipline in 2004 in Maui, and that's when I fell in love with it. It was an amazing experience. I had dreams about it for nights afterwards. It was the neatest thing I'd ever done. I was an adrenaline junkie. I had done skydiving and other extreme sports, but ziplining was something that was very easy. The freedom and the flying experience was unlike anything I'd ever done before. There was no learning curve. I loved how you could just fly effortlessly, you were strapped in, you felt secure, you could relax and feel like a bird. I realized I could give somebody an adventurous outdoor experience that was safe. I loved that I could share with others my passion for adventure and the outdoors.

ACCT: How did you make the leap to owning your own zipline?

SEPER: I developed a major in entrepreneurship at the University of Hawaii, and after graduating from college, moved to Japan, taught English over there for about six months. Then I came back to the US and worked a couple corporate jobs where I was stuck in a cubicle, which was not the best fit for my skills. I still had a passion burn-

ing inside of me to do something different, something special and have fun outside. I wanted to show people what an amazing experience they could have with experiential learning. I wanted to be a teacher of sorts, but in a unique way. There was only one zipline in Missouri at that point, and I was determined to bring the excitement of zipping to Mid-Missouri. When I was 28, I went all in. I didn't have much savings, but invested everything I had, leveraged everything I could, maxed out credit cards, with the hope that this industry would take off. I was fortunate that this huge risk paid off and allowed me to find happiness in providing every guest an amazing zipline experience. My wife and I built a new zipline facility last season, Eco Adventure Ziplines, and offer a family-oriented business, focused on guest safety and customer service that has been awarded a five-star rating by guests and review websites.

ACCT: How did you get the idea for your product?

SEPER: We were helping a client learn hand braking. He had zipped across and in the process spun around, so now was coming in backwards toward me. He wasn't able to hear my instruction and reached up and put his hand on the wrong side of the trolley to slow himself down. He didn't get injured, but I realized that if we were experiencing this problem, others were experiencing it too. Another problem is that some people get scared, and don't want to get their hand up there to slow themselves down, which becomes an unsafe situation for the guide who is assisting them as they come in. Our goal is to have a safe landing speed with a controlled primary brake for smoother landings and a better guest experience.

ACCT: What did you invent to change this?

SEPER: I developed a deceleration system for the ziplines. The braking mechanism pivots within a trolley system and enables the guest to safely decelerate for a smooth landing. Many facilities are still using glove brakes, which means the guest must reach up on the zipline. People are supposed to reach up behind the trolley, but after spinning, the location of where you grab can become confusing for someone who has never had to grab a steel cable at 40 miles an hour. With our Zip 360 system, the guest easily pulls down on a safety strap, causing the mechanism to pivot back to add friction to the zipline, and this creates a controlled deceleration over a distance, so the rider has a smooth way to slow down and approaches the landing area at a safe speed.

ACCT: You created a mechanism to reduce speed, but then realized there were other implications for the ACCT community. Can you tell us more?

SEPER: Yes, I mounted a camera on top of the hardware, which now meant it could be used for safety inspections, for monitoring guests on a daily basis, for marketing, and for selling videos to guests. Zip 360 can help owner/operators do their own full 360-degree video inspection of ziplines, platforms and potential hazards. This saves operators time while making the inspection documentation process easier and more complete. Zip 360 can improve training for guides, lead to a better guest experi-



Zip 360 will be rolled out this summer across the United States.

ence, and help create the highest level of safety and service to customers. Builders and inspectors can do their yearly inspections with this technology and capture everything, to show owners exactly what they are seeing—from a trip hazard to a broken fiber in the zipline, to tree health assessments. The video can be uploaded and saved as a record that can be accessed online by all stakeholders. Our goal is to work with insurance carriers to reduce insurance premiums for operators by utilizing our technology. Zip 360 is the ultimate risk mitigation tool to show that operators are doing everything possible to offer the safest adventure to customers.

ACCT: How does it help with marketing and revenue?

SEPER: You can start making money immediately by selling your guests a Zip 360 video of their experience. If facilities choose to sell Zip 360 videos to their guests, they can be cash flow positive with less than ten rentals. Operators can also use the Zip 360 video to market what

makes your course unique, in person or on your website. I can't set up a zipline everywhere we go, but I can offer an immersive 360 virtual zipline experience to people sitting at their desk, in a classroom, in an auditorium or even while sitting on their couch trying to decide where they want to go for a weekend adventure.

ACCT: Have you always been an inventor?

SEPER: My mom tells me about the various inventions I came up with as a child to try to make her job as a mother easier. When I was four, apparently, I came up with the concept to create a vacuum system that centralized suction to the middle of our house, so she wouldn't have to carry the vacuum up and down the stairs. Now of course, someone has invented that. During college I created an instant cold pack that would change color as it changed temperature, identifying when the cold pack was in the therapeutic range, which was useful to athletes healing from injury. I won an invention competition at the University of Hawaii for that concept and made enough money selling my invention to fund college, which ulti-

mately led me to Maui to try ziplining for the first time.

ACCT: Can you tell us about your participation in the National Science Foundation program to create a safer zipline experience for facilities around the world?

SEPER: We just completed our National Science Foundation (NSF) I-Corps program requirements and received a STEM grant. The NSF Innovation Corps program walks you through the science behind product development, guides your efforts to market, and makes sure you end up with a product people will benefit from purchasing. Now that we have completed the I-Corps site program, we are being considered for the National I-Corps program to further explore the commercial potential of our technology. This product development process requires us to evaluate where we fit, know how our product solves problems for our customers, and figure out uses of our technologies in a broad range of industries. We are focused on ziplines for our first phase because we feel we can help make an industry we love, safer and more accessible for guests. ■

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CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Updates Following a Busy Board Season

By Ben Kopp

Greetings from your Board of Directors. It has been a busy few months. The Board of Directors spent two days together working prior to the Annual Conference in Ft. Worth, as well as a short meeting at the conclusion of the conference. The work completed during these meetings is outlined in the published [minutes](#); however, here are the details of several of the outcomes from that meeting.

As the Board of Directors is preparing to conclude this current fiscal year, I would like to update you on the organizational goals for the year. One goal was the implementation of new Board of Director members, staff and, ultimately, volunteer tools and file management systems. This includes the review of our current tools, as well as the use of new tools such as Google Drive for file management and storage. Included in these new tools will be communication solutions, additional file management and project management solutions. All of these are designed to meet the growing and changing need of the Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers, to assist in completing the work of the association. For updates on other 2017/2018 priorities please see other board [minutes](#).

In looking towards the future, the Board of Directors spent considerable time at these recent meetings on the 2018/2019 fiscal year goals. While the board, in conjunction with the staff and volunteers, will continue to refine and update these, the following items are the primary goals for the upcoming fiscal year.

- A continued effort related to the ongoing program

accreditation process. This includes the completion of the pilot site reviews and the eventual rollout of the program.

- The review and updating of the current vendor accreditation process that began this year and is being spearheaded by a taskforce created at the recent conference.
- A complete update and restructure of how the association functions, at a staffing level, as well as staff responsibilities and roles serving the industry.
- Focus on both membership, as well as on the value provided to current and future members of the association.

A specific effort regarding government relations through the organizational restructure, with dedicated staff to work with the volunteer groups and regulatory bodies.

All of these priorities have specific goals and targets related to their overarching targets. These specifics are used in measuring the forward progress of the association, the staff and the Board of Directors.

For [additional information](#) on the many initiatives that your Board of Directors is engaged in, please contact any of the board of director. ■



LEGAL

Are These Provisions in Your Release Agreement?

By Reb Gregg

Tucked away at the bottom of many good “release” agreements (“climbing,” “visitor,” etc.) is a group of provisions which deserve your attention and understanding. Protections provided by your description of activities and risks, assumption of risks and release/indemnity are important but these “other” items can make or break a season for you. Always consult with

counsel familiar with your operation and the laws which apply to it, as you consider these matters. Here are some common provisions to consider including in your release agreements.

Consent to Medical Care

This consent allows you, in the event of a medical emergency, to provide directly or summon such medical care as you deem necessary. It places the responsibility for payment for such care, including transportation, on the participant or parent/guardian. Participants should be advised if your staff is not trained to respond to a medical emergency, or if, because of distance, care might be considerably delayed. These consents often include a requirement that the organization make an effort to advise and seek the consent of an emergency contact, if the injured participant is a minor or an incapacitated adult. Consider a level of medical training for your staff—first aid, wilderness first responder—appropriate to your activities, location and population served.

Media Consent

Your participants are advised that they may be included in images and voice recordings taken by you, and that such items may be published or otherwise used as you see fit and without compensation to the participant. In light of recent disturbing stories about the misuse of social media, an increasing number of participants are complaining about these media consents. Be prepared to deal with such complaints. If you are confident you can accommodate a withholding of consent administratively, you might provide a “yes” or “no” check-off on your form, or require that an unwilling participant advise you in writing of his or her objection. (You might also advise that you are not responsible for images taken and used by others.)

Applicable Law and Venue

Identify which state’s laws will be applied to a dispute arising out of the agreement (or any dispute between the parties), and the place (state or, better, county within a state) where legal proceeding must be filed and main-

tained. You are best served if *you* make that choice, and if the place of mediation, arbitration, or trial, and laws applied serve your interests well. Ordinarily, you’d prefer to be sued in a neighborhood where you are favorably known and a judge or jury may be inclined in your favor. If you have a strong visitor population of minors, for example, you’d be unwise to choose a state’s laws which prohibit a parent from signing pre-injury releases on behalf of his or her child. The laws and venue chosen should have some relationship to the parties and the controversy. Organizations usually choose the place of their formation or principle operations. A dispute involving a Colorado limited liability company operating a Park in Oklahoma might specify the courts and laws of either. In some rare cases, issues of convenience of the parties and availability of evidence may affect a court’s willingness to grant a venue choice. And, also rare, a court in “State A” may refuse to apply the laws of sister “State B” which materially conflict with the public policy of “State A.”

Duration

If you expect a signed agreement to apply to future visits to your facility, you should say so, to avoid any misunderstanding of the terms of that later visit. Such a provision would advise that the agreement will apply to all future visits unless and until it is replaced by a later agreement *which will apply to visits thereafter*. The underlined phrase is important, for it makes reasonably clear that the original agreement will continue to apply to future claims arising from visits covered by that original agreement, even if a new agreement has been signed for subsequent visits. You must not inadvertently lose your right to rely on that earlier agreement in defending claims arising under it.

Other Provisions to Consider

Other provisions that are sometimes covered in this section of a release agreement include penalties for forgery, consent to mediation and/or arbitration as alternate means of resolving disputes, the waiver of a jury trial and a limitation of damages (e.g., to your insurance limits). We will cover those matters in a future issue. ■

Protections provided by your description of activities and risks, assumption of risks and release/indemnity are important but these “other” items can make or break a season for you.



FACILITATOR'S TOOLBOX

Create Lasting Lessons with Meaningful Reflection

By Jennifer Stanchfield

Reflection brings learning to life. It is the essential ingredient in education, training, therapy, and team building that makes lessons more meaningful, and promotes growth and change in learners.

Reflection has many different names in the experiential education field, including processing, reviewing, and debriefing. I have moved toward referring to this key ingredient in teaching and group facilitation as “reflection” or “reflective practice.”

Using the skill of reflection can help learners connect and transfer what they’ve learned in a contrived environment (a classroom, a challenge course, a corporate training, a therapeutic group session) to real life issues, such as resolving conflicts with peers, dealing with frustration, expressing their opinions, and setting goals and priorities. Reflective practice fosters an emotional connection to the material being learned. It helps the learner internalize the lesson, creating ownership in learning and developing insight, a critical and beneficial lifelong skill to acquire

Facilitators recognize the value of reflection and processing, but often find that facilitating it is one of the most challenging aspects of teaching and group work. Many report that teaching reflection sometimes feels like a chore, or like pulling teeth—they receive blank stares, the same group members always speak, or the answers are what learners think the facilitator wants to hear. Others share that they run out of time to cover reflection despite their best intentions

I believe these difficulties in facilitating reflection arise for two reasons: One, in Western culture, reflec-

tion and time for introspection aren’t emphasized in our “just do it” or “get it done” mentality. People don’t often just sit and think quietly and journal or draw. TVs are generally on from the moment people come home from work till they go to bed. Outside information comes in through our smart phones all day long. We are bombarded with outside information and often overscheduled. Because many people are not accustomed to reflection, when they enter a challenge course program and are asked to reflect, they find it awkward or difficult. And two: Many facilitators rely on one method for facilitating reflection, the traditional, and didactic Q&A session led by the facilitator with directive questions that often put people on the spot before they are ready to share, causing them to disengage or share superficial answers. Facilitators need to remember that reflection takes practice. Just as we think about sequencing other program activities to match participant growth and development, we need to think the same way about processing and reflection.

I have experimented with innovative ways to engage groups in dialogue and reflection—kinesthetically, emotionally, metaphorically and socially—that aren’t dependent on the facilitator leading a didactic question-and-answer session. It has become my professional mission in the field to develop and share a wide range of participant-centered techniques that



add depth, increase engagement, and promote ownership and buy-in on the part of learners.

These varied methods include movement, metaphor, reflective games, art, and interactive dialogue to increase relevancy, depth of understanding, and connection to real life and future learning. A facilitator's attitude toward reflection and flexibility around when and how it happens also makes the difference. If a facilitator sees it as an engaging, dynamic, and enjoyable part of group work, rather than a chore, it is likely their group will experience it that way too.

Reflective practice allows individuals to accept responsibility for their learning and apply it to future situations.

When we engage learners in ongoing reflection in our programs we not only help them retain and apply or transfer lessons learned to other areas of their lives, we promote their ability to become more reflective, introspective learners in the future. The neuroscience field reinforces view that reflection is key to learning, confirming that reflection creates context, promotes the development of multiple pathways to learning, and facilitates meaning-making from lessons. Our brains search for patterns and relationships in experiences. Patterning is the term neuroscientists use to describe this process in which the brain searches for patterns to construct meaning from input received. Learning takes place when the brain uses these patterns and attaches meaning to them. Reflective practice allows individuals to accept responsibility for their learning and apply it to future situations. When participants reflect on their role in an activity, they learn to recognize their skills and strengths by naming them. Through the formal recognition of their skills and strengths they become more aware of their inner resources and more likely to all upon them in future life situations. ■

Article adapted from "Tips & Tools for the Art of Experiential Group Facilitation" by Jennifer Stanchfield.



Tips for Facilitating Reflection

- Reflect throughout the experience. Reflection can be woven into an activity itself, or intentional reflection time can be taken in the midst of the activity or lesson to maximize learning outcomes.
- Mix up your methods. Variety is not only the spice of life but, according to scientific brain research, novelty, and the use of different learning tools and methods, facilitates learning, too.
- Remember that reflective discussions take practice. They will become more meaningful and rich as time goes on.
- Take advantage of breaks, meals, and traveling from one place to another to weave in opportunities for reflection.
- Offer private opportunities for participants to re-reflect including self-reflection, partner share and other strategies besides the whole group-sharing circle.
- Allow group members to pass during discussions. This empowers them to have control over their learning and practice sharing at their own pace. When participants are given the power to pass, they learn to trust the facilitator and group and often end up offering a great deal to the group at their own pace.
- Know that silences are okay. They are even necessary. Allow group members to think and formulate their ideas before rushing on to the next topic. Participants can be experiencing valuable reflection even if they don't share it with the group.
- Use open-ended questions. Summarize or restate what was said, or, even better, have a group member restate it.
- Give responsibility to your group. When questions come to you as the facilitator, try to direct them back to the group, allowing group members to help each other. ■

EVENTS: MELISSA WEBB

2018 Conference Wrap Up and Info for Denver 2019



On behalf of the ACCT board of directors, ACCT staff, and the conference workgroup, I would like to thank each and every one of you that contributed to the success of our 28th Annual International ACCT Conference & Expo! We ended up with 1,140 attendees (a record attendance!) as well as a sold out expo with 78 different companies represented at 110 booths. We had 360 people attend pre-cons, post-cons, and training courses in addition to the 110-plus general session workshops that were offered. Another sincere thank you to everyone that presented at the event. Whether you helped with a certification course, pre-con, post-con, training course or general session workshop, the conference would not have been the same without you. You are the industry experts and these presentations allow us to provide the educational components necessary for the industry to grow and thrive.

Next, it's time to get ready to take over the Mile High City in 2019! The 29th Annual International ACCT Conference & Expo will be held in ACCT's back yard, in Denver, CO February 7-10, 2019. The Hyatt Regency Denver at the Colorado Convention Center will be our host hotel with the majority of our events held at the Colorado Convention Center just steps away from the Hyatt. The host hotel is in the heart of downtown Denver with easy access to the 16th street mall where there's a free city bus service, walking distance to many popular venues, and spectacular views of the Rocky Mountains from some of the hotel windows. The Mile High City is known for its warm hospitality and over 300 days of sunshine a year.

Mark your calendars now and prepare to come early or stay a little late as Denver is a mecca for outdoor activity and there is much to explore! If you're up for adventure, why not plan a short road trip to the mountains to enjoy some of the best ski slopes in the U.S? If you're into the craft beer scene, check out the 90-plus pubs in Denver's LoDo historic district. Or, plan a tour of the Coors Brewery in Golden, CO, and check out the famous Red Rocks Amphitheatre afterwards.

ACCT's Conference Work Group has been busy securing the framework for our 2019 event and we are excited about what we have in store for you! We are making some structural and schedule changes in an effort to improve your overall conference experience, so please keep an eye out for any conference communication through ACCT newsletters, emails, and in each issue of *Parallel Lines*. We're restructuring the keynote address as well as the awards ceremony in an effort to foster an environment that is even more inclusive and allows for additional opportunities to network. The Workshop Review Task Force has begun vetting all 2019 workshop submissions and we look forward to providing you with another top notch event. Registration for the 2019 Conference & Expo will be live this fall and we hope to see you there!

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

Please check the [ACCT conference website](#) often for conference updates, deadlines, and information as this is the best place to see the most updated information about the 2019 event as plans evolve. 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.



ACCT Professional Vendor Member Directory

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ACCT CONVERSATIONS

What's the most useful gear you use?

TODD E. MANTON, Operations Manager/Owner
Kokanee Mountain Zipline, Ltd. Nelson,
British Columbia, Canada
ACCT Owner/Operator



"As basic as it may sound, our most useful gear are our participant harnesses. The tour begins with guests putting on the harness and ends with them taking off the harness.

The harness itself can set the participant up for a sense of success or failure. We stress to our guides to select the proper harnesses for each participant's body size because we know this creates a more enjoyable experience for our guest. I usually make my guides wear the wrong sized harness for a few moments to help them understand the effect the wrong-sized harness can have on our participants. Selecting harnesses is equally as important as harness care. The harness is the first piece of equipment the participant sees and having a well-maintained harness instills confidence in the participant. Although minor fraying may be considered "fine" and safe for running tours, the average participant sees fraying as a major safety concern. We replace a frayed harness, rather than trying to extend its life, realizing this could be the difference between a positive review to a mediocre review on social media."

RHET EIKLEBERRY, Director of Operations
Alaska Canopy Adventures, Ketchikan and Juneau, Alaska
ACCT Operator



"The most useful piece of gear is the unassuming prusik loop. It is extremely simple, versatile, and cheap! I use it on tour with clients, working on construction projects, to hold tools or clients cameras, when I rappel or ascend, it really can do it all. I never go on course without a couple on my harness! "

LAUREN STOVER, Leadership Challenge Course Coordinator
Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia
ACCT Non-Profit Operator



"The most useful piece of gear I use is webbing because it's extremely versatile. I never leave the ground without it. Webbing can be used to extend an etrier during maintenance or as part of a teambuilding initiative during a program. There are thousands of uses for webbing for both facilitating programs to use as a key piece of safety equipment."