
FINDING YOUR TRIBE

This interactive session will allow participants to be exposed to networking by reviewing networking tips, understanding why it is important for human connections and finding your tribe!

Learning Objectives:

- **Review effective networking tips**
- **Recognize the importance of why human connections are so important**
- **Learn the impact of the personal and professional impact of joining – or creating – a tribe.**



VONDA MARTIN

Vonda Martin has over 35 years as a parks and recreation professional and has developed an extensive portfolio ranging from corporate recreation, non-profit management, state and local government. She currently serves as the Grants and Outreach Manager for the State of North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation. She previously worked as a Park Planner for the City of Greensboro. During her tenure, Greensboro received the 2020 National Gold Medal of Excellence in Parks and Recreation Management Award, and the North Carolina Marvin Collins Planning Award – Innovations in Planning Services, Education, and Public Involvement (Large Community) category for Plan2Play Greensboro’s Master Plan. She contributed to the LEED Silver certification for the City as the originator of the Piedmont Discovery regional park and trail locator mobile app. Prior to working in Greensboro, she served as a Parks and Recreation Consultant with Recreation and Recreation Resources Service.

Vonda obtained a Master of Science in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management from NCSU, a bachelor’s degree in Recreation from Catawba College and is a graduate of NRPA Director’s School and Green School. She currently serves the profession as the co-founder of the NC Women’s LeadHERship Workshop, and a member of the North Carolina Recreation and Park Scholarship Foundation. She is married to her wife Dale Smith and they live in Chapel Hill, NC.



THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD

The emphasis in this session is that your career path doesn't always work out exactly the way you plan it, how to cope with those curveballs, and how cultivating you is the primary factor in success.

Through discussion and interactive exercise, participants will learn to:

- Discern the difference and benefits of vertical v. horizontal career development
- Identify ways in which their development as a leader influences career development
- Develop their own personal career development plan
- Identify strategies for putting their personal career development plan into action



CAROLYN MILLER

Carolyn Miller is an assistant county manager in Chatham County and is one of the principal instructors in their comprehensive in-house training curriculum on leadership, management, and supervision. She is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Pennsylvania State University, and East Carolina University. She also works with the Center for Public Leadership and Governance at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government, and the NC State and University of Kentucky continuing education programs for local government employees.



BECOMING A LEADER: THE GROWTH MINDSET

To grow as a leader can take time, patience and hard work. Recognizing and understanding how your context changes when you become a leader will allow you to grow and really thrive in your role. By developing the capabilities and disciplines, you'll be able to navigate transition thoughtfully and be able to lead a team with success.

In this session, participants will learn:

- What change may happen when becoming a leader.
- Various steps to become a leader.
- Leadership Styles and how to find yours.
- Putting your leadership to the test.



CINDI KING

A Parks & Recreational Professional of over 25 years, Cindi King has been termed as a true “Parks and Rec Kid”. Having grown up on a farm in a small town in Tennessee, she played baseball on the local little league field, ironically the only girl in the league, and was the pool rat at her local pool. In her teen years, she worked at the city pool as a cashier, obtained her lifeguarding certification and then managed the pool for a couple of summers. She loved sports, played all through high school, as well as a year of college volleyball. Prior to attending college, she knew that sports and recreation would be in her future. She obtained her Bachelor’s degree from Carson–Newman University and her Master’s in Education from East Tennessee State University where she worked as a graduate assistant in Campus Recreation and Intramural Sports. She obtained her first municipal job with Lexington County Leisure Services in South Carolina and eventually made her way to North Carolina. She started her NC career in Roanoke Rapids as the Aquatics Director for the department. She contributes her leadership growth to her mentor and former Director in Roanoke Rapids, as well as her career of 16+ years in Cary NC where she was promoted in several different positions. She is currently the Director of Parks & Recreation in Southern Pines NC. She lives in Wake Forest with her husband and is the proud mom of two sons, Perry 23 and Sawyer 18.



RISKY BUSINESS: MOVING FORWARD IN YOUR CAREER

Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of our session, attendees will be able to:

- Explain the benefits of risk-taking**
- Determine their personal capacity for risk**
- Discuss the concept of agency and why they need it**
- Explore why career risks are worth taking**



KRISTEN M. HESS, AIA



JENNIFER WARNER

Kristen M. Hess, AIA, is an architect, businessowner, international fellow, and community organizer. Driven by her passion for sustainable design and an advocacy-centered approach to working with clients, Kristen started HH Architecture in 2005. Since then, her business has grown to nearly 50 employees, designing major landmark projects like the Steve Troxler Agricultural Sciences Center and countless Parks & Recreation projects. HH Architecture was named Firm of the Year by the American Institute of Architects NC in 2022. Kristen supports women- and minority-owned businesses through her position on the NC Governor’s Council on Historically Underutilized Businesses. As a Gold Award Girl Scout, Kristen creates opportunities for young women through her involvement on the Board of the Girl Scouts North Carolina Coastal Pines and related volunteer endeavors. Kristen is a graduate of the NC State University College of Design and has resided in North Carolina since childhood.

Jennifer Warner is a creative professional with expertise in marketing, social media, web, email communication, and public relations. She began her professional career as the marketing manager for the Carolina Student Union and then Carolina Performing Arts at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. When the North Carolina Museum of Art sought to expand and renovate, Jennifer jumped at the chance to lead marketing and communications for museum, increasing their digital presence and engagement substantially, and successfully opening the new gallery building and expanded collection. She added parks and recreation to her portfolio when she transitioned to build and lead a marketing team for Cary Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources. This role grew to include overseeing all marketing and communications for the Town of Cary. After 23 years serving the citizens of North Carolina, Jennifer left the public sector behind and joined HH Architecture where she brings the client perspective to the lead the marketing team and help grow the firm through business development. A passionate storyteller and creative maker, Jennifer works to build girls of courage, confidence, and character as a Girl Scout troop leader and service unit volunteer.

MOVING ON UP

We all know the saying that sometimes you have to “move out to move up.” But when is the best time to move? How do I move and maintain relationships? Will I burn bridges? Is the grass really greener over there? Is this change truthfully going to put me on the path to the success I am looking for?

In this session, Emily will share her professional profession, leadership development, and the role the LeadHERship Workshop has played in that process. The workshop portion of this session will result in tactics for knowing when it is time to move out and how to professionally navigate a career change.

Learning Objectives - Attendees of this session will be able to:

- Cross-evaluate personal and professional goals with the values and opportunities within an agency.
- Develop strategies for departing a role or agency in a professional manner
- Assess next steps for personal development towards achieving ones goals



EMILY HSIAO

Emily Blackwell Hsiao, ASLA, PLA, CLARB, is leads the Charlotte office for Pond & Company and serves as the PLACE (planning, landscape architecture, civil engineering) Practice Lead in North Carolina. She manages business, operations, and project development activities for Pond’s North Carolina which opened in early 2024. Hsiao earned a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture with minors in Horticulture and Design Studies from North Carolina State University. She is an advocate for the practice of Landscape Architecture, serving as the 2017-18 President of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects and continuing to serve on the national Government Affairs Advisory Committee. Presenting at conferences for engineers, parks professionals, and landscape architects, Emily shares her passion for parks and open space, inclusive design, and leadership with audiences across the southeast.



YOU BELONG IN THIS ROOM

In this session empowerment takes center stage in your professional journey. Dive into strategies that cultivate a sense of value and excellence in your chosen path, revealing the secrets to unlocking your true potential. Participate in open dialogue to confront barriers hindering professional contentment, working collaboratively to dismantle obstacles. Explore an array of tools to craft a roadmap for your future, overcoming challenges and defining a personalized strategy for growth. Embrace your role as a powerful architect of your destiny in this transformative space – collaborating with other women – and leave with renewed empowerment and excitement for the possibilities that lie ahead



LISA PARADIS

Lisa Paradis, MBA, CPRP is a Senior Manager and Business Development Strategy Lead for the Parks, Recreation and Libraries practice national consulting firm BerryDunn. She is based out of Saint Petersburg, FL. Until 2018, Lisa was a Park and Recreation Director for 26 years in Massachusetts. She is the founder of the national park and recreation thought leader group Agents of Change. In 2018 she left the public sector to join 110%, Inc., focusing on financial sustainability and cost recovery consulting and then in 2019 she joined the consulting firm BerryDunn to help start the Parks, Recreation and Libraries practice. As a leader, mentor, and often provocateur, she leads a team of consultants helping organizations and communities to be bold, courageous and action-oriented through master and strategic planning, and financial and organizational management. Lisa is nationally known as a consultant, speaker, trainer, and facilitator, working with dozens of organizations and individuals annually. She has been a featured guest on both local and national radio and has published several industry articles in national publications. She was inducted into the American Academy of Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA) in 2018.



I CAN SAY HARD THINGS™

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand how to have necessary conversations with less fear and more freedom to move your life forward
- Learn what hinders people from using their voice to share what's important to them
- Gain greater confidence and a system of practices to help with more effective communication



ANDORA HINTON

Andora Hinton is committed to giving leaders and teams the tools, resources, and support they need to meet and exceed their personal and professional development goals. She is proud to put her skills and expertise to work to achieve the goal of helping and serving others.

With 25 years of experience in sales, sales management, training, coaching, and leadership development, Andora specializes in helping people figure out how to maneuver through their learning journey to get to a place of satisfaction and fulfillment.

Andora is a graduate of The University of Alabama and a national member of the Association of Talent Development (ATD). She currently sits on the board for the National Sales Network – Raleigh Chapter, a member of the International Society of Female Professionals, member of the National Association of Women Sales Professionals, member of Association of Executives of North Carolina, a Blanchard Channel Partner, an I4 Neuroleader, & a Make-a-Wish Wish Granter.

Andora is certified in Emotional Intelligence EQ-i 2.0, Inside Out Coaching, LEAD NOW! and Relationship Intelligence.

Andora lives in Chapel Hill with her husband, “bonus” daughter, and dog (Duke), and enjoys pilates, life changing books, and amazing restaurant experiences.

