

Cathi McMahan, Ph.D.  
Arkansas Recreation and Park Association Conference and Trade Show  
Rogers, AR  
November 1-3, 2017

Cathi McMahan, Ph.D.  
Arkansas Recreation and Parks Association Conference and Trade Show  
Rogers, AR  
November 1-3, 2017

Abstract:

The Arkansas Recreation and Parks Association (ARPA) Conference and Trade Show is an event that is held every fall. The event was attended by well over 150 recreation and park professionals, students, and faculty. It served as an excellent opportunity to network with recreation and park professionals in the field and faculty from fellow recreation and park programs in the state. This conference provides the opportunity to recruit potential work experience and internship sites for the ATU Recreation and Parks Program/students. There were also a number of educational sessions that focused specifically on topics of interest to those in the Recreation and Park profession. These educational sessions were very much of interest and importance to me as it is information that I can bring back and share in the classroom with students. I presented a session in internships and also took a group of 7 RP students to the conference; this allows the students to gain knowledge about their chosen profession and seek opportunities for work experience and internship.

Restatement of problem researched, creative work, or professional enhancement opportunity:

The Arkansas Recreation and Parks Association is a membership organization for recreation and park professionals, students, and university/college faculty throughout Arkansas. The Conference and Trade Show is an annual event offering over 30 educational sessions, numerous networking opportunities, and boast an expo hall with a number of vendors with the latest and greatest in parks and recreation supplies, equipment and technology. The purpose of this trip was to attend educational sessions to gain knowledge of today's happenings in the field, to network with professionals, to present a session, to engage with practicing professionals and secure work experience and internship sites for ATU RP students, and to recruit for and promote Arkansas Tech University.

Brief review of the professional enhancement opportunity, creative work, or research procedure:

I attended the 2017 Arkansas Recreation and Park Association (ARPA) Annual Conference and Tradeshow for a number of reasons. First and foremost; I attended all educational sessions that focused on topics that I could share with students and knowledge that could be passed along in the classroom. Secondly; I attended the ARPA Conference and Trade Show to seek information pertaining to the latest trends and issues in the Recreation and Park profession. And last but not least; I had the opportunity to network with professionals in the field and secured a number of contacts for potential work experience and internship opportunities for our RPA students. All in all, the trip was very successful!

Summary of findings, outcomes, or experiences:

Attend and participate in the 2017 ARPA Conference and Trade Show in Rogers, AR.

Attend all educational sessions focusing on topics pertinent to the field.

Attend social events in order to meet professionals in the field to talk about work experience and internship opportunities for our students.

Met RP faculty and administrators from other programs in Arkansas.

Promote the Arkansas Tech University Recreation and Park Administration Program.

Present on the topic of Internships (Importance of and the "ins" and "outs" of internships)

Conclusion and recommendations:

I utilized the information and knowledge gained from attending the 2017 ARPA Conference and Tradeshow in a number of ways: first and foremost, I utilized the information and knowledge gained to stay current with issues and trends in the Recreation and Park profession. I feel the knowledge gained from attending the educational sessions contributes to keeping our RPA Program current. I also feel that by attending the ARPA Conference and Tradeshow I was able to promote ATU and our RPA Program and to promote our internship program.