

Cathi McMahan, Ph.D.  
National Recreation and Parks Association Congress and Expo  
"Great Ideas Start Here"  
Charlotte, NC  
October 13-16, 2014

Cathi McMahan, Ph.D.  
National Recreation and Parks Association Congress and Expo  
"Great Ideas Start Here"  
Charlotte, NC  
October 13-16, 2014

Abstract:

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Congress and Expo is an annual conference and trade show. The event was attended by well over 4,000 recreation and park professionals, students, and faculty members. It served as an excellent opportunity to network with professionals in the field and to recruit potential internship sites for the ATU Recreation and Park Program. There were also a number of educational sessions that focused specifically on the COAPRT Accreditation Standards. These educational sessions were very much of interest and importance to me as our RPA program is an accredited program and it appears that the accreditation standards are changing rapidly.

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

The National Recreation and Parks Association is a membership organization for recreation and park professionals, students, and university/college faculty throughout the United States and abroad. The Congress and Expo is an annual event offering over 250 educational sessions, numerous networking opportunities, and boast an expo hall with 500 to 600 vendors with the latest and greatest in parks and recreation supplies and equipment. The purpose of this trip was to attend educational sessions (especially sessions focusing on COAPRT accreditation), network with professionals, engage with practicing professional 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 2014 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Annual Congress and Expo for a number of reasons. First and foremost; I attended all educational sessions that focused on the COAPRT Accreditation Standards – which was imperative due to our RPA Program being the only accredited program in the state of Arkansas. Secondly; I attended the NRPA Congress and Expo to seek information pertaining to the latest trends and issues in the Recreation and Park profession and also in higher education. 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 2014 NRPA Congress and Expo in Charlotte, NC from October 13-16, 2014.

Attend all educational sessions focusing on COAPRT Accreditation Standards and network with others while attending these sessions.  
 Attend social events while at the Congress in order to meet professionals in the field to talk about work experience and internship opportunities for our students.  
 Promote the Arkansas Tech University Recreation and Park Administration Program.

Conclusion and recommendations:

I utilized the information and knowledge gained from attending the 2014 NRPA Congress and Expo in a number of ways: first and foremost I utilized the information and knowledge gained to stay current with COAPRT Accreditation standards and to improve the ATU RPA Program. I feel that the knowledge gained from attendance at the educational sessions assists with keeping our RPA Program current. I also feel that by attending the NRPA Congress and Expo I was able to promote ATU and our RPA Program and to stay current with happenings in the field.

NRPA Congress and Expo  
 Charlotte, NC  
 October 13-16, 2014  
 CEU Transcript

NRPA Congress 2014	University Accreditation 2014: A Mark of Excellence!	Charlotte, NC	0.30
NRPA Congress 2014	Recreation 2025: A Roadmap To Position your Agency for Survival	Charlotte, NC	0.10
NRPA Congress 2014	LRS: Gender Research Studies II	Charlotte, NC	0.10
NRPA Congress 2014	LRS: Care Giving, Disability and Quality of Life	Charlotte, NC	0.10
NRPA Congress 2014	Additional CEU sessions	Charlotte, NC	0.40