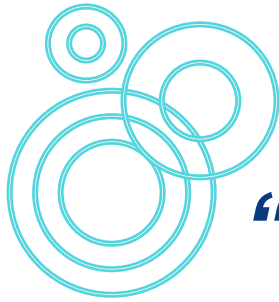




SOUTHEAST RECREATIONAL  
**THERAPY** SYMPOSIUM

## 2026 Symposium Program



# *“Inter-Professional Collaboration Throughout the Lifespan”*



Southeast Recreational Therapy Symposium  
March 26 – 27, 2026  
Virginia Beach, Virginia  
Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront

Session CEU's Approved by ATRA and NCTRC



## SOUTHEAST RECREATIONAL THERAPY SYMPOSIUM

The SRTS Board of Directors would like to welcome you to the 2026 Southeast Recreational Therapy Symposium (SRTS). We hope that this symposium will provide you with an opportunity to connect with recreation therapist from across the southeast and beyond.

Be sure to stop by and visit with our exhibitors and thank them for supporting the symposium.

If you should need assistance, please stop by the registration table and talk with a board member.

We hope that you enjoy the symposium,  
*~ SRTS Board of Directors*

**ATRA** will be the host platform that will be used for this year's track your CEU credits. You will need your **ATRA username**, **password** that you registered with and a mobile device to view all conference information.

***Session CEU's have been approved by ATRA and NCTRC  
Up to 1.0 credits can be earned***

## SRTS CEU PROCESS

### To receive CEU credit for a session:

- Attendees will need their **ATRA sign-on** and **password** used when registering for the symposium.
- Attendees must “**sign-in**” at the beginning of the session using the QR Code provided by the presenter. (instructions below)

#### **Attendee Sign-In**

- To check in to each SRTS session, please scan the QR code provided by the presenter.
  - Each session is provided with a unique QR code for both check-in and the check-out process.
  - Begin by opening your camera (photo button) on your smart device.
  - Focus the camera on the QR code by gently tapping the code.
  - Follow the instructions on your smart device screen to complete the action. You will be redirected to the ATRA login page to sign in.
- Attendees must “**sign-out**” by using the QR Code provided by the presenter **and** complete a short session evaluation following the end of the presentation. *Each attendee’s response is necessary to meet the interactivity requirement required for CEU’s.* (instructions below)

#### **Attendee Sign-Out**

- To access the survey at the end of each session, attendees may scan the QR code provided.
  - Begin by opening your camera (photo button) on your smart device.
  - Focus the camera on the QR code by gently tapping the code.
  - Follow the instructions on your smart device screen to complete the action.
  - You will be redirected to the ATRA login page to sign in.
  - Submit the short session survey.
  - CEUs will be available upon successful completion of each session via ATRA’s website.
- **Review your CEU Transcripts upon successful completion of each session via the ATRA platform to ensure you received credit.**
  - CEU transcripts will be available upon successful completion of the course evaluation(s). To view your CEU Transcript, click on your name in the top right corner of the screen, and view your “certificates.” Feel free to print your transcript for your records. ***CEU Transcripts will not be mailed by ATRA.***
  - SRTS Board Members are available for assistance.

# Thank You to Our Exhibitors

**Mountain Peak Level**

**St. Mary's Home - Norfolk, Virginia**



**Grassy Meadow Level**

**SMART Hub CEU's**



**Sandy Beach**

**Temple University**



# 2026 Symposium Schedule – NEW FORMAT

## Wednesday March 25

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm Registration  
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm Welcome Meet-Up

## Thursday March 26

7:00 am – 4:00 pm Registration  
8:00 am – 9:15 am Announcements & Concurrent Sessions (3 Concurrent – 60 minutes) 0.1 CEU  
9:15 am – 9:30 am Break  
9:30 am – 10:30 am Concurrent Sessions (3 Concurrent – 60 minutes) 0.1 CEU  
10:30 am – 10:45 am Break  
**10:45 am – 12:00 pm** **General Session** – (60 minute Keynote Speaker and Announcements) 0.1 CEU  
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm Lunch Networking w/ Exhibitors  
12:15 pm – 12:45 pm **Student Welcome Session**  
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm Concurrent Sessions (3 Concurrent – 60 minutes) 0.1 CEU  
2:00 pm – 2:15 pm Break  
2:15 pm – 3:15pm Concurrent Sessions (3 Concurrent – 60 minutes) 0.1 CEU  
3:15 pm – 3:30 pm Break  
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm Concurrent Sessions (3 Concurrent – 60 minutes) 0.1 CEU  
4:30 pm – 4:45 pm Break  
4:45 pm – 5:45 pm Concurrent Sessions (3 Concurrent – 60 minutes) 0.1 CEU

## Friday, March 27

7:30 am – 11:00 am Registration  
8:30 am – 9:30 am Concurrent Sessions (3 Concurrent – 60 minutes) 0.1 CEU  
9:30 am – 9:45 am Break  
9:45 am – 10:45 am Concurrent Sessions (3 Concurrent – 60 minutes) 0.1 CEU  
10:45 am – 11:00 am Break  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm **Closing Session** – (Keynote speaker) 0.1 CEU

**Up to 1.0 CEU's available - CEU's have been approved by ATRA and NCTRC All session are 60 minutes**

**Wednesday, March 25, 2026**

**6:00 – 8:00 pm Registration Open – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Outside of the Peacock Ballroom**

**6:30 pm STRS Meet Up – Catch 31 Restaurant first floor of the Hilton**

## **SRTS Meet Up**

**6:30 pm at Catch 31**  
(hotel restaurant & bar)

**Start the symposium off by  
catching up with your fellow  
attendees.**

**Food and Beverage on Your Own**



**Thursday, March 26, 2026**

## **8:00 - 9:15 am Announcements & Concurrent Sessions**

### **Growing Collaborations: Connecting Recreational and Horticultural Therapist Using Plants and the APIED process (Part I)** you must complete both parts to receive CEU's

- Salon A

Derrick Stowell, PhD, CTRS, HTR

Alice Dupree, MS, CTRS

This two-part session will focus on developing horticultural therapy interventions for recreational therapy practice. Session one will provide a brief introduction to horticultural therapy. Participants will explore evidence-based practices related to the implementation of horticultural therapy programs for a variety of populations. An initial outline of a program plan utilizing horticultural therapy will be introduced. Session two will take information learned from session one and give participants an opportunity to create a program plan for implementing a horticultural therapy program at your facility. Details about risk management and connections to the APIED process will be utilized to give participants the tools necessary to apply knowledge learned in this session. The session will end with a brief discussion of next steps and ways to collaborate with horticultural therapists as well as additional specialized training opportunities for recreational therapy practitioners.

#### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify three benefits of using horticultural therapy as a RT intervention.
- ≈ Participants will be able to discuss at least three populations that can benefit from horticultural therapy programs.
- ≈ Participants will be able to list at least four elements to include in a program plan using horticultural therapy.

### **SCARF Model, Driving Human Behavior in Therapeutic Recreation Group Interactions** - Salon B

Kelsey Resnick

Susan Lynch, PhD, CTRS

What drives social behavior? Can a Recreational Therapist direct client behavior in social situations? The SCARF (Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness, and Fairness) Model is a framework that identifies five social domains that drive human behavior in social interactions. These domains are triggered by threats or rewards, similar to how the brain responds to physical survival needs (avoidance-approach). The model explains how to minimize threats and maximize rewards in social situations, particularly with clients and other therapists to improve collaboration and engagement. Come join us in an interactive session on how to use the SCARF Model to teach clients to reduce conflicts by increasing ways to maximize rewards.

#### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify the difference between approach and avoidance social interactions in the recreation therapy setting.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify the 5 SCARF Model domains that can enhance recreational therapist interaction skills with other professionals and clients.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify one's threat responses that are triggered in social situations and use the SCARF domains to proactively minimize common social threats.

## **Building Bridges: Advancing Recreational Therapy through Interprofessional Education with Speech-Language Pathology in Long-Term Care - Salon C**

Shelly Beaver, MS, CTRS

Rachel Johnson, Ph.D. CCC-SLP

Interprofessional education (IPE) enhances collaboration and person-centered care across health professions. This session highlights a successful IPE initiative between Recreational Therapy (RT) and Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) students designed to improve understanding of interprofessional collaborative practice (IPCP) in long-term care. Through a four-phase model incorporating didactic, service-learning, and experiential components, students learned to integrate communication and leisure-based interventions to enhance social engagement among residents with neurocognitive disorders. Attendees will explore practical strategies for implementing similar IPE experiences in RT education and practice, understand the benefits of collaboration with SLPs, and discuss lessons learned from seven years of program development. This session offers insight into preparing future RTs for effective teamwork and holistic service delivery in aging and long-term care contexts.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- ≈ Participants will be able to describe the structure and goals of the four-phase IPE model between RT and SLP students.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify a minimum of three benefits and challenges of interprofessional collaboration in long-term care settings.
- ≈ Participants will be able to apply strategies to integrate IPE and IPCP principles into RT education and practice.

## **9:30 – 10:30 am Concurrent Sessions**

### **Growing Collaborations: Connecting Recreational and Horticultural Therapist Using Plants and the APIED process (Part 2)** you must complete both parts to receive CEU's

- Salon A

Derrick Stowell, PhD, CTRS, HTR

Alice Dupree, MS, CTRS

This two-part session will focus on developing horticultural therapy interventions for recreational therapy practice. Session one will provide a brief introduction to horticultural therapy. Participants will explore evidence-based practices related to the implementation of horticultural therapy programs for a variety of populations. An initial outline of a program plan utilizing horticultural therapy will be introduced. Session two will take information learned from session one and give participants an opportunity to create a program plan for implementing a horticultural therapy program at your facility. Details about risk management and connections to the APIED process will be utilized to give participants the tools necessary to apply knowledge learned in this session. The session will end with a brief discussion of next steps and ways to collaborate with horticultural therapists as well as additional specialized training opportunities for recreational therapy practitioners.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify three benefits of using horticultural therapy as a RT intervention.
- ≈ Participants will be able to discuss at least three populations that can benefit from horticultural therapy programs.
- ≈ Participants will be able to list at least four elements to include in a program plan using horticultural therapy.

## **Interprofessional Collaboration Between Recreational Therapy and Speech-Language Pathology to Support Social Interaction and Engagement Needs of Adolescents and Young Adults with Disabilities – Salon B**

Kristen Fedesco, PhD, LRT, CTRS

Joan Esse Wilson, PhD, CCC-SLP

Interprofessional collaboration between Recreational Therapists (RTs) and Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) plays an important role in supporting social interaction, communication, and overall well-being for individuals with disabilities across the lifespan. This session highlights how these two professions can work together to address social engagement and communication needs, with particular emphasis on adolescents and young adults. Through examples from practice, presenters will demonstrate how collaboration between RTs and SLPs can promote generalization of skills in natural settings such as schools, recreation programs, and community environments. Attendees will gain practical ideas for building interprofessional partnerships that enhance services, incorporate communication and social interaction strategies into meaningful leisure experiences, and support inclusion, engagement, and quality of life for individuals with diverse needs.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify two ways to incorporate communication and social interaction strategies into meaningful, activity-based leisure experiences.
- ≈ Participants will be able to explain two ways interprofessional collaboration can enhance inclusion, participation, and quality of life for individuals with diverse developmental and psychosocial needs.
- ≈ Participants will be able to describe two ways Recreational Therapists and Speech-Language Pathologists can collaborate to address social communication and engagement needs across the lifespan.

## **The Role of Recreational Therapy in Community-Based TBI Rehabilitation – Salon C**

Laura Holmes

This session explores the holistic role of recreational therapy in supporting individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI) in community settings. Participants will learn how recreational therapists foster professional relationships with clients, caregivers, and interdisciplinary teams while promoting functional independence, social engagement, and overall quality of life. The session emphasizes education for caregivers on TBI management and strategies to support meaningful participation in leisure and community activities. Attendees will explore evidence-based interventions that enhance physical, cognitive, and psychosocial outcomes, with practical guidance on safety, risk management, and adapting programs to diverse community settings. Real-world case examples will illustrate successful strategies for community reintegration and sustainable support for both clients and caregivers.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify 2 evidence-based recreational therapy interventions that address the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social needs of individuals with TBI in community settings.
- ≈ Participants will be able to educate caregivers on 2 ways to support meaningful participation in leisure and community activities.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify and apply 1 method for documenting client progress and outcomes to promote RT's impact on community reintegration after TBI.

## Breaking Silos: Advancing Recreational Therapy Through Interprofessional Collaboration

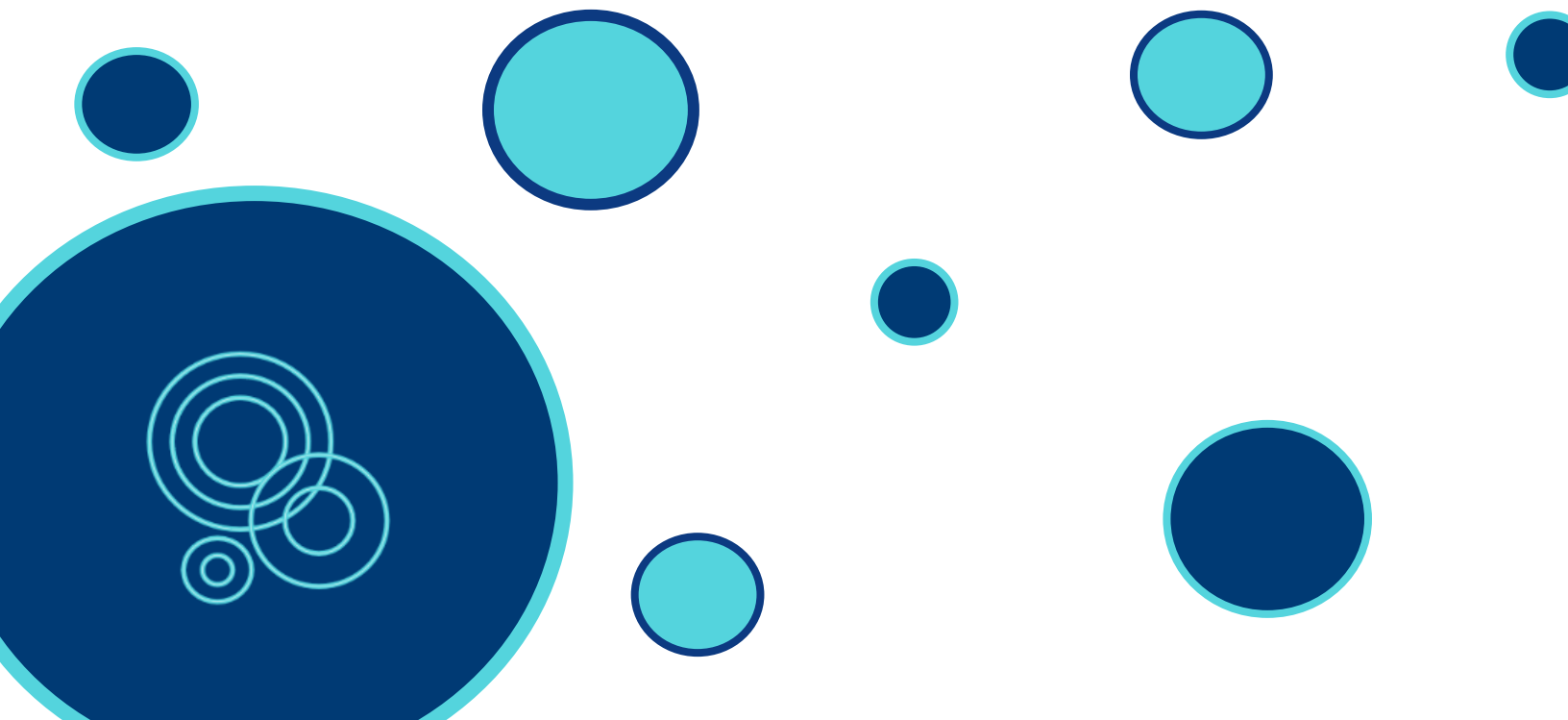


**Jennifer Piatt, CTRS, PhD**

As recreational therapy has evolved in today's complex healthcare system, effectively collaborating with colleagues in occupational therapy, physical therapy, and nutrition and dietetics, as well as many others is essential to deliver high-quality care. Recreational therapy, with its holistic and client-focused approach is positioned to be a leader bringing all disciplines together to form positive and productive interprofessional healthcare teams. This keynote will explore how collaborative partnerships among healthcare professionals within various settings can launch recreational therapy as a pivotal player in improving health outcomes, and the overall quality of life for our clients. Utilizing personal stories and evidence-based practice, this talk will highlight what leadership techniques work effectively when breaking the silos in occupational therapy, physical therapy, social work, nursing, physicians, as well as other community stakeholders while advocating for recreational therapy services.

### Learning Outcomes:

- ≈ Participants will be able to describe how recreational therapy can successfully collaborate with other disciplines.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify 3 different ways clinical outcomes can be addressed through interprofessional collaboration.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify at least 2 strategies that position recreational therapy as the leader in developing effective interdisciplinary teams.



**12:00 pm – 1:00 pm Lunch/Networking/Exhibitors**

**Box lunches will be served outside of the ballroom.**

**Please visit with our exhibitors and poster sessions during this time as well.**

## **Poster Sessions**

**Please stop by to view the poster sessions in the ballroom during lunch**

**12:00 -1:00 pm**

### **Poster 1:**

#### **Research Title:**

**Psychological Health Outcomes Associated with Structured Forest Therapy Intervention: Nature Connection, Mood States, and Life Satisfaction of People with Burnout**

**Authors:** Namyoon Gil (PhD, LRT, CTRS), Kibum Kim (PhD, CTRS), Alexis Clark, Winston-Salem State University, and Junhyoung Kim (PhD), Texas A&M University

### **Poster 2:**

#### **Research title:**

**Short and Long-Term Psychosocial Outcomes Associated with Recreational Therapy Programming for Military Veterans with Disabilities**

**Authors:** Brent Hawkins, PhD, LRT, CTRS, FDRT (University of North Carolina Wilmington); Jasmine Townsend, PhD, LRT, CTRS, FDRT, CARSS-II (Clemson University); Yishi Wang, PhD (Kennesaw State University); Alaina Wilson, CTRS (Higher Ground, USA), Brienne Costa, CTRS (Higher Ground USA), Justin Rujawitz (Higher Ground USA)

# Student Welcome

12:15 – 12:45 pm

Princess Anne Room

Pick up your box lunch and join fellow students for the  
Student Welcome Session

## 1:00 – 2:00 pm Concurrent Sessions

### **RT2GO: Expanding Access to Recreational Therapy Through Mobile and Community-Based Services – Salon A**

Jaehyun Kim, Ph.D., LRT, CTRS   David Loy, Ph.D., LRT, CTRS, CARSS, FDRT  
Cari Autry, Ph.D., LRT, CTRS   Lindsey Oakes, LRT, CTRS  
Matthew Fish, Ph.D., LRT, CTRS, BCB

RT2GO is an innovative service delivery model that provides high-quality, accessible recreational therapy interventions to underserved populations across communities, schools, and clinical settings. By mobilizing services, RT2GO addresses barriers such as transportation limitations, geographic isolation, financial difficulties, and institutional constraints. This model directly reflects the NCTRC Job Analysis: Task 3.02: Design program services – RT2GO enables recreational therapists to develop and adapt interventions tailored to client needs and environmental contexts, ensuring flexibility and cultural responsiveness. Task 4.01: Deliver program services – RT2GO facilitates direct implementation of therapeutic activities in real-world settings, expanding reach and ensuring inclusivity where traditional infrastructures are limited. Presenters will share practical examples and outcomes, highlighting how RT2GO bridges gaps in access and reimagines service delivery to extend the therapeutic impact of recreational therapy.

#### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify at least three key benefits of mobile recreational therapy in expanding access to care for underserved or hard-to-reach populations.
- ≈ Participants will be able to describe two or more strategies and potential barriers to adapting recreational therapy interventions for delivery in mobile, community-based, clinical, or other settings.
- ≈ Participants will be able to demonstrate an understanding of a basic implementation plan for launching or expanding RT on Wheels, a mobile recreational therapy program, including practical and managerial considerations related to logistics, safety, and ongoing maintenance.

## **Adventuring together: An Introduction to Tabletop Roleplay Gaming as a Recreational Therapy Intervention – Salon B**

Kathryn Creveling, MS

The recent surge in the popularity of tabletop role playing games (TTRPGs) has left recreation therapists in a variety of settings interested in utilizing them in interventional contexts, but those unfamiliar with the genre may find themselves wondering where to begin. This session will provide an introduction to the world of TTRPGS and how these games might be used in therapeutic recreation and recreational therapy settings. Participants will learn about the mechanical aspects of TTRPGs, review the current literature on therapeutic use of TTRPGs in various populations and treatment contexts, and learn strategies for selecting gaming systems based on client goals. Strategies for adapting and modifying games for client accessibility and resources for further learning will also be provided.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify three mechanical aspects of TTRPGs.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify three client outcomes that may be associated with TTRPG interventions from the research provided in the session.
- ≈ Participant will be able to provide an example of two strategies for adapting TTRPGs for clients with disabilities.

## **Beyond Recreation: Strengthening Therapeutic Impact Through Competency and Collaboration (Part 1)** you must complete both parts to receive CEU's – Salon C

Laura Kelly, MS, CTRS, FDRT

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, approximately 23% of U.S. adults experience a mental health condition each year. The CDC also reports that 1 in 4 adults live with a disability, with cognitive and mobility impairments being the most prevalent. As patient acuity rises across the lifespan, the role of recreational therapists has never been more critical. While recreation and leisure remain the core of our profession, this session challenges practitioners to deepen competencies beyond traditional recreation to address the complex needs of today's clients. The session will focus on several health domains—physical, emotional, cognitive, and social—highlighting specific competencies within each to enhance therapeutic impact in both clinical and community settings. Participants will engage in interactive activities and demonstrations to apply concepts such as neuroplasticity, dual tasking, and crossing the midline. Attendees will learn strategies to strengthen evidence-based, person-centered approaches and enhance service delivery across all health domains, improving outcomes for the populations they serve.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- ≈ Participants will be able to recognize and analyze at least 3 current issues and emerging trends within the industry and assess how these factors impact operations and/or service delivery in your work setting.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify and utilize at least one practical application of learned concepts, such as neuroplasticity and dual tasking, to individual and group recreational therapy service delivery.
- ≈ Participants will be able to enhance their ability to identify and articulate implementation skillsets and will demonstrate growth in at least one relevant competency across several health domains.

## 2:15 – 3:15 pm Concurrent Sessions

### **Recreation Therapy's Role in Pain Management within a Correction Environment – Salon A**

John Rhodes, LRT, CTRS

This session highlights the contributions of recreation therapy programming in a comprehensive pain management program. This session will highlight the diagnosis, planning, and implementation of interventions, such as meditation, stress management, and leisure resources, used in these sessions. In addition, this session will cover the challenges of managing pain in a correctional environment.

#### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify two diagnoses that can benefit from pain management
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify two interventions used in pain management technique
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify two benefits of leisure education in pain management.

### **NCTRC Overview of Services – Salon B**

Noelle Molloy, MEd, CTRS, FDRT, ICE-CCP

This session will focus on various aspects of the NCTRC Certification Program including applying for professional eligibility, recertification requirements, and specialization area designations. In addition, the speaker will provide an overview of special projects and NCTRC news from the past year.

#### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to describe the certification standards for Professional Eligibility.
- ≈ Participants will be able to describe the NCTRC standards for Recertification and the Specialization Area Designations.
- ≈ Participants will be able to discuss special projects and news from NCTRC.

### **Beyond Recreation: Strengthening Therapeutic Impact Through Competency and Collaboration (Part 2)** you must complete both parts to receive CEU's – Salon C

Laura Kelly, MS, CTRS, FDRT

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, approximately 23% of U.S. adults experience a mental health condition each year. The CDC also reports that 1 in 4 adults live with a disability, with cognitive and mobility impairments being the most prevalent. As patient acuity rises across the lifespan, the role of recreational therapists has never been more critical. While recreation and leisure remain the core of our profession, this session challenges practitioners to deepen competencies beyond traditional recreation to address the complex needs of today's clients. The session will focus on several health domains—physical, emotional, cognitive, and social—highlighting specific competencies within each to enhance therapeutic impact in both clinical and community settings. Participants will engage in interactive activities and demonstrations to apply concepts such as neuroplasticity, dual tasking, and crossing the midline. Attendees will learn strategies to strengthen evidence-based, person-centered approaches and enhance service delivery across all health domains, improving outcomes for the populations they serve.

## Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to recognize and analyze at least 3 current issues and emerging trends within the industry and assess how these factors impact operations and/or service delivery in your work setting.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify and utilize at least one practical application of learned concepts, such as neuroplasticity and dual tasking, to individual and group recreational therapy service delivery.
- ≈ Participants will be able to enhance their ability to identify and articulate implementation skillsets and will demonstrate growth in at least one relevant competency across several health domains.

## 3:30 – 4:30 pm Concurrent Sessions

### **Gettin' Groovy with Recreational Therapy: The Development and Implementation of a Seated Dance Group in Physical Rehab – Salon A**

Olivia Cheskey, CTRS      Sarah-May Brooks, MS, LRT, CTRS

This session introduces the feasibility of designing, delivering, and improving a seated dance fitness group in an inpatient physical rehabilitation setting. Attendees will examine the process of developing and improving a seated dance group. Through dance moves and groovy music, participants in the group move their upper and lower extremities to promote the improvement of strength, endurance, coordination, and balance. By implementing the seated dance group and promoting transdisciplinary co-treatments within the group, participants are able to participate in therapy outside of traditional modalities. Implementing a seated dance group in an inpatient physical rehabilitation setting opens up the opportunity to deliver this intervention to individuals of all abilities and diagnoses in a variety of settings.

#### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify a minimum 3 benefits of seated dance fitness in physical rehabilitation.
- ≈ Participants will be able to provide a minimum of 2 examples of promoting a transdisciplinary approach for recreational therapy groups.
- ≈ Participants will be able to describe a minimum of 3 components of program development and improvement.

### **Trauma Informed Recreational Therapy and the NADA Protocol (Part 1)** you must complete both parts to receive CEU's - **Salon B**

Kari Decker, MS, CTRS, ADS, TICP

Participants will gain a better understanding of Trauma Informed Care (TIC) and how to adjust their approach with recreational therapy interventions to support those who have experienced traumatic experiences, including intervention space and additions to current interventions. An additional intervention, the National Acupuncture Detoxification Association (NADA) Protocol will be presented as a Trauma Informed Care intervention. Participants learn the history of the auricular acupuncture protocol, the NADA organization, and how it supports substance detox as well as the benefits for those who have experienced trauma as an adjunctive therapy.

## Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to give three examples of adaptations that can be made to current RT interventions to increase Trauma Informed Care (TIC)
- ≈ Participant will be able to find the five acupuncture/acupressure points in the National Acupuncture Detoxification Association (NADA) Protocol
- ≈ Participant will be able to understand the requirement to become a NADA Acupuncture Detoxification Specialist as well as the scope of the training, as an adjunctive therapy.

## **Building Bridges: Evidence-Based LEGO Therapy in Recreational Therapy Practice – Salon C**

Jason Page, Ph.D. CTRS

This evidence-based presentation explores LEGO-Based Therapy (LBT) implementation in recreational therapy practice through the Bridges project. Participants will enhance professional competency (Task 1.02) by examining therapeutic processes and outcome data from real-world LBT applications with diverse populations. The session focuses on conducting comprehensive assessments (Task 2.01) using LBT-specific protocols and analyzing assessment data to plan individualized care (Task 2.02). Content addresses developing individualized treatment plans (Task 3.01) and designing adaptive program services (Task 3.02) for various clinical settings. Participants will learn evidence-based strategies for delivering structured LBT services (Task 4.01) while adhering to essential risk management protocols (Task 4.02). The presentation emphasizes systematic documentation of client progress (Task 5.01) through validated outcome measurement tools. Rather than activity instruction, this session provides actionable strategies for integrating LBT as a therapeutic intervention across healthcare settings, with practical examples from successful Bridges project implementations demonstrating measurable client outcomes and evidence-based practice integration.

## Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify two theoretical foundations and two research findings supporting LEGO-Based Therapy.
- ≈ Participants will be able to describe the LBT therapeutic process and list four expected client outcomes.
- ≈ Participants will be able to outline the key steps in LBT program development including assessment, goal-setting, activity selection, and implementation planning.



## 4:45 – 5:45 pm Concurrent Sessions

### **Adaptive Gaming: Integrating Gaming Systems into Rehabilitation Programs – Salon A**

Kensley Armstrong, CTRS, CBIS

Elizabeth Montalban, CTRS, LRT

This session explores how adaptive gaming enhances engagement, motivation, and functional outcomes for individuals with spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, strokes, and amputations in inpatient rehabilitation. Attendees will learn how recreational therapists can integrate adaptive gaming technology—such as modified controllers and inclusive gaming systems—into treatment plans to promote physical, cognitive, and social recovery. Emphasis will be placed on interdisciplinary collaboration with physical, occupational, and speech therapy to achieve holistic patient-centered outcomes. Participants will also examine case studies, safety considerations, and documentation strategies to ensure ethical, evidence-based practice.

#### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify three potential adaptations for various gaming consoles.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify three physical, cognitive, and social patient centered outcomes.
- ≈ Participants will be able to demonstrate increased competency with three different interdisciplinary professionals

### **Trauma Informed Recreational Therapy and the NADA Protocol (Part 2)** you must complete both parts to receive CEU's – Salon B

Kari Decker, MS, CTRS, ADS, TICP

Participants will gain a better understanding of Trauma Informed Care (TIC) and how to adjust their approach with recreational therapy interventions to support those who have experienced traumatic experiences, including intervention space and additions to current interventions. An additional intervention, the National Acupuncture Detoxification Association (NADA) Protocol will be presented as a Trauma Informed Care intervention. Participants learn the history of the auricular acupuncture protocol, the NADA organization, and how it supports substance detox as well as the benefits for those who have experienced trauma as an adjunctive therapy.

#### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to give three examples of adaptations that can be made to current RT interventions to increase Trauma Informed Care (TIC)
- ≈ Participant will be able to find the five acupuncture/acupressure points in the National Acupuncture Detoxification Association (NADA) Protocol
- ≈ Participant will be able to understand the requirement to become a NADA Acupuncture Detoxification Specialist as well as the scope of the training, as an adjunctive therapy.



## **The Beat of Belonging: Using Hip-Hop Interventions in Recreational Therapy to Promote Wellness and Inclusion – Salon C**

Amber Alston      Shelly Beaver, MS, CTRS

Lack of diversity and representation is an ongoing issue plaguing the field of therapeutic recreation. Most recreational therapy interventions are based on European perspectives, which are not reflective of some clients' cultural identities. Though recreational therapists aim to provide client-centered services, the lack of representation can negatively impact client engagement, trust, and overall outcomes. This session will address this issue by proposing hip-hop as a potential solution to meeting clients' cultural needs and interests while promoting an inclusive environment and enhancing client outcomes. Because hip-hop originates from a diverse cultural background, it can be used therapeutically to promote resilience, self-expression, and a sense of community. Session participants will learn the foundations of hip-hop, explore strategies for implementing hip-hop as an inclusive intervention, and actively engage in a therapeutic hip-hop experience.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- ≈ Participants will be able to list and describe 3 ways in which diversity influences client outcomes in recreational therapy practice.
- ≈ Participants will be able to develop and integrate at least one hip-hop modality into their recreational therapy practice.
- ≈ Participant will be able to identify and mitigate a minimum of three potential barriers regarding the integration of hip-hop in recreational therapy practice.

**Friday, March 27, 2026**

## **8:30 – 9:30 am Concurrent Sessions**

### **Growing Beyond Walls: Implementing Therapeutic Use of Horticulture in Behavioral Health and Correctional Settings – Salon A**

Erika Akers      Hayden Loveday Person      Brooke Lacerte  
Kristen Fedesco, PhD, LRT, CTRS

This session provides participants with research evidence, core principles, and practical strategies for integrating therapeutic horticulture within recreational therapy (RT) practice for adults in correctional mental health treatment facilities. Attendees will examine evidence supporting horticulture as an effective modality to enhance wellbeing, promote rehabilitation, and reduce recidivism among adults with mental health conditions. Grounded in current research and real-world case examples, the session highlights best practices for designing, implementing, and evaluating horticultural programs that align with client goals, facility expectations, and professional standards of care. Participants will gain practical tools for addressing safety, accessibility, and individualized treatment planning. Designed for RT professionals seeking to expand their nature-based interventions, this session provides attendees with the knowledge and skills to incorporate therapeutic horticulture into diverse treatment settings.

## Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to define and describe the core principles and benefits of the therapeutic use of horticulture within recreation therapy practice.
- ≈ Participants will be able to analyze evidence-based research on therapeutic use of horticulture outcomes, including its role in reducing recidivism and improving mental health.
- ≈ Participants will be able to develop individualized horticulture program designs that address diverse client goals and settings.

## **NCTRC Recertification and Specialization Area Designation: Continuing Professional Competence – Salon B**

Noelle Molloy, MEd, CTRS, FDRT, ICE-CCP

This session provides an in-depth coverage of recertification standards and requirements for the specialization area designation. Continuing education, professional experience, and re-examination will be described in detail.

### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to define the NCTRC CTRS recertification standards including the two components, interpretive guidelines, necessary hours required for recertification and the requirements to obtain a specialization area designation.
- ≈ Participants will be able to describe how the 2021 National Job Analysis Study relates to the recertification process.
- ≈ Participants will be able to restate the two methods of the NCTRC recertification review process.

## **Principles of Neuroplasticity and the Brain – Salon C**

Carolyn Austin, LRT, CTRS, CBIS, MHA

After a brain injury, many individuals begin the task of relearning how to do simple tasks again. Neuroplasticity is the ability of the brain to do just that. This session will look at the 10 principles of neuroplasticity and how they can be used in recreational therapy practice to assist with returning functioning to those who have experienced a brain injury. We will also look at brain anatomy in order to determine how the brain functions and how to address specific issues seen during rehabilitation.

### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to name 2 specific functions of each lobe of the brain.
- ≈ Participants will be able to name the 10 principles of neuroplasticity.
- ≈ Participants will be able to name one implication for treatment for each neuroplasticity principle.



## 9:45 – 10:45 am Concurrent Sessions

### **The Role of Martial Arts in Supporting Neurodivergent Clients: Applications for Recreational Therapists – Salon A**

Sarah Hooker

Shelly Beaver, MS, CTRS

Though it began as training for combat and self-defense, Martial Arts has transitioned into a popular form of leisure for many populations, including individuals on the Neurodivergence Spectrum. Martial Arts has always been about an individual's inner self with a focus on emotional regulation, temper management, patience and kinesthetic movement. Martial Arts reflects many foundational concepts of leisure, making it an ideal therapeutic intervention for Neurodivergent individuals. This approach can assist in increasing focus, enhancing emotional regulation, improving physical and social skills, and developing coping mechanisms. Utilizing an interactive learning approach, this session will guide Recreational Therapy professionals on the integration of Martial Arts into their practices with Neurodivergent clients through the use of the Leisure Ability Model. The presenters will define Neurodivergence properly and demonstrate how RT professionals can support Neurodivergent clients using martial arts as a therapeutic intervention.

Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify and apply at least three concepts of Martial Arts to their practices with those on the Neurodivergence Spectrum.
- ≈ Participants will be able to accurately define Neurodiversity and why is it important to properly identify it's characteristics.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify a minimum of three ways Neurodivergence can be positively affected by Martial Arts and its specific use as a therapeutic intervention.

### **Keeping It Interesting: How to keep Community TR Programs fresh, focused and FUN! – Salon B**

Melody Beck, CTRS, AFP, NETA

Keeping community Therapeutic Recreation programs fresh and exciting while maintaining goal focused outcomes can be challenging. Even for the most seasoned practitioners, constantly coming up with engaging and fun programs can be daunting. Let's talk about how we can revitalize programs by working with other TR departments, TR students/Interns and interdisciplinary teams all while maintaining the A.P.I.E.D. Process! We will also discuss how to make the planning, implementing and evaluating process fun for everyone.

Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify at least one appropriate intake assessment and determine how to utilize the A.P.I.E.D. process in Community Therapeutic Recreation Practices.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify at least three resources you could use to generate new ideas/programs for the RT department.
- ≈ Participants will be able to provide an example of a new program that can be implemented within the next year in their RT department.

### **Pain Management Reimagined: The Power of Virtual Reality – Salon C**

Elizabeth Creasman, MS, CTRS, C-IAYT

Recreation therapy is uniquely positioned to advance pain management through the use of virtual reality. This presentation will highlight how recreation therapists led the design and implementation of a VR program that enhances patient outcomes at Sheltering Arms Institute, an inpatient physical rehabilitation hospital. Grounded in patient-centered goals, recreation therapists use VR to support

meaningful engagement, functional participation, and coping for individuals experiencing acute or chronic pain. Developed as a recreation therapy–driven complement to existing pain management interventions and pain neuroscience education, the program includes securing grant funding, identifying therapeutic needs, and providing recreation therapist–led training for interdisciplinary clinicians. VR is integrated into recreation therapy sessions and cotreatments with Physical, Occupational, and Speech Therapy. The presentation will also address evaluation and documentation practices, including use of the PROMIS Brief Pain Inventory to demonstrate outcomes and support clinical decision-making.

#### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify at least 2 key components of Pain Neuroscience Education applied in Virtual Reality.
- ≈ Participants will be able to identify at least 2 strategies to overcome challenges of implementing Virtual Reality in a healthcare setting.
- ≈ Participants will be able to describe at least 3 benefits of virtual reality initiatives led by recreation therapists.

**11:00 am – 12:30 pm Closing Keynote Session Peacock Ballroom**

## **We're Saying the Same Thing! The Language of Treatment Teams and How the CTRS Can be the Rosetta Stone**

**Warren Price, LMSW, MS, CTRS**

This presentation will help CTRS professionals enhance their professional relationships with members of multidisciplinary teams by helping them learn to speak the languages of other members of the treatment team. The presenter will discuss similarities and differences in how members of a multidisciplinary treatment team define, document, and discuss treatment goals, objectives, and outcomes. The presenter will illustrate three multidisciplinary team types, including an outpatient mental health clinic, a clinically managed high-intensity residential substance abuse facility, and a treatment court team. RT professionals will discover the similarities and differences and begin to understand how they can develop an action plan to synergize the efforts of multiple team members and improve professional competency by helping decipher the different treatment languages and serve as the Rosetta Stone for the entire team. Ultimately, this session will help the CTRS focus on meeting the client's needs while improving the quality of care and quality of life for their clients through developing individualized care plans that meet objectives for the various members of the multidisciplinary team. The speaker will discuss takeaways from conference presentations and offer encouragement to participants as they return to their agencies with a renewed passion for Recreation Therapy and all the good they do in the world.

#### Learning Outcomes

- ≈ Participants will be able to identify three similarities between the RT and Social Work processes.
- ≈ Participants will be able to provide three commonalities and differences between play therapy and recreation therapy.
- ≈ Participants will be able to discuss treatment planning language used by multiple different treatment disciplines and how they mirror RT goals and objectives.



## Congratulations to SRTS 2026 Scholarship Recipients



**Amber Alston**

Old Dominion University

**Rosa Lopez**

Florida International University

**Julia Brissie**

University of North Carolina Wilmington

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