



*“Summerama is an amazing opportunity for learning and professional growth at any level. It sets the tone for an awesome summer and the training was essential for me to become a better camp counselor.” - 2017 Attendee*

**Sunday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2018**  
**8:30-4:00<sup>PM</sup>**  
**Montpelier High School**  
 5 High School Dr,  
 Montpelier, VT 05602

# SUMMERAMA

For over 40 years, the Vermont Parks & Recreation Association has hosted Summerama, a camp-specific training program for new and seasoned staff. The purpose of this workshop is to supplement in-house counselor orientations with a robust schedule of hands-on education sessions led by regional camp professionals. Summerama is the first step toward training your counselors, initiating a strong team bond for the summer and developing resilient staff.

## Bring Your Training to The Next Level...

This year’s Summerama schedule includes sessions covering a variety of camp topics. With a mix of interactive and informational, long and short time blocks, and material suited for all experience levels, every member of your staff can customize their training with selections that peak their interest.

## Lasting Benefits...

Joining Summerama and the VRPA family will open your organization up to a vast network of opportunity. Connecting with neighboring camps is a great way to share resources and provide a sense of belonging in the greater camp community. Your staff will leave Summerama feeling empowered and eager to kick off a great season!

## Making The Most of Summerama...

For best results, we recommend splitting up to cover more ground. Debriefing as a team during your regularly-scheduled orientation following the event is a great way to share information and nurture team bonding.

All sessions are open to anyone! If you’re not sure where to begin, use this guide to understand the target audience for each workshop. Although



Entry Level/First Time Counselor



Mid-Level/2-3 Year Counselor



Upper Level/Management

content in most sessions could be relevant to all, some speakers have geared their discussions toward certain experience levels. The session guide is merely a suggestion, so please encourage your team to arrange their day in a way that best fits their personal and professional goals.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR...

Each year summer camps around the country have a unique opportunity to touch the lives of youth. Our duty as camp staff reaches far beyond the call to weave baskets and paddle boats. Every day of your summer season will be spent creating smiles, wiping tears and essentially shaping the world view for countless children in your community. Camp is a place where character is built, independence is found and lifetime memories are made. It's where carefully chosen staff receive the honor of filling the important shoes of a parent. We are witness to some of the most significant milestones of a person's life and have the privilege of watching our campers grow into young adults.

Moments at camp are filled with magic, fun and excitement, but they also bear great responsibility. Accepting the job of camp counselor means accepting the legacy of a child. It comes with the understanding that your everyday judgement and decisions will inevitably design their experience and could potentially change the course of a life. For that reason, the role of camp counselor is a trade to be cherished, appreciated and respected by all who answer the call.

And while you're out there creating their experience, don't forget to design yours. Make friends, learn things, and most importantly, GROW...

-Jessica Booth  
 Summerama Committee Chair

# THE PLAN

## 8:30-9:00<sup>AM</sup> REGISTRATION & REFRESHMENTS

Check-in and power-up with complimentary granola bars, yogurt and fresh fruit before sessions begin.

## 9:10-9:50<sup>AM</sup> PLAY NOTE

### Me, You, US: Let's Mix it Up

*Megan Meinen – Director, University of Vermont Adventure Ropes Course*

When you enter a room, what do you do? Sit quietly and look at your phone? Find someone you already know? Find someone who looks like you? Or do you find someone new and make a connection with them? Let's dig deep to form new connections and consider the challenges of forming those connections. Let's mix it up. Who knows - maybe you'll make a new friend (or five).



**Megan Meinen** has been an experiential educator for 10 years. After receiving a degree in Outdoor Education from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, she volunteered at an adventure camp in Honduras, directed a place-based summer camp in Massachusetts, led a preschool nature program and facilitated challenge courses with Project Adventure. As director of the UVM Adventure Ropes Course, Megan loves working with staff to develop programs that connect people to one another, challenge individuals to stretch their comfort zones and discover new things about themselves.

## SESSION ONE

### 10:00-11:30<sup>AM</sup>

#### Structure & Setting Clear Limits 🌱🌿

*Mellisa Cain – Trainer, Afterschool Inc.*

How do you prevent chaos in a youth environment without stifling youth's positive energy? Campers need structure and limits in order to feel safe. This interactive workshop helps participants analyze the level of structure in their programs and practice identifying and maintaining clear limits.

#### 10 Nature Activities and Resources to Find 1,000 more! 📖🌱

*Emily Boek – Program Director, Stowe Parks & Recreation*

Children love to play outside and explore nature. These hands-on activities will guide you to facilitate explorations, education and imagination in our natural environment.

#### Gamesmithing 101 📖🌱

*Megan Meinen – Director, University of Vermont Adventure Ropes Course*

Come and PLAY! Bring your gameface as we explore what happens when a bunch of strangers and a bunch of stuff get stuck in a space together! As we scan the room, we will discover what sparks fly as we build, morph, and develop games together, pausing to deconstruct the elements of a great game. No prior knowledge needed, just the desire to PLAY! This workshop will be entirely co-created and experiential.

### 10:00-10:40<sup>AM</sup> HALF BLOCKS

#### Becoming Your Team's MVP 📖

*Jessica Booth – Director, Newport Parks & Recreation*

*Kirsten Santor – Program Director, Essex Jct Recreation & Parks*

Being a camp counselor might be the first, and probably the best job you'll ever have. While spending your summer running, swimming and playing outside, don't forget to learn those all too important workplace skills. How can you be the M.V.P. of your camp staff and the best counselor you can be? We'll share pro tips to have you ready at the starting gate.

#### Waterfront Safety 📖🌱🌿

*Deb Fowler – Recreation Director, Town of Waterbury*

Ever wondered how you could be helpful during an emergency on the waterfront? When lifeguards activate action plans, counselors aren't just another bystander. Camp staff can be crucial in managing crowd control and keeping the environment safe for others. Understand your individual role and the role of lifeguards when working in a waterfront or pool environment at camp.

### 10:50-11:30<sup>AM</sup> HALF BLOCKS

#### Group Games on The Fly 📖🌱

*Brian Bevacqua, CPRP - Recreation Manager, Quechee Club*

Whether it's between activities, during drop-off or pick-up or just a rainy day, having a group game prepared at a moment's notice could make or break your camp day. In this interactive session, we'll explore the foundation of game creation, how to build on what you have available and how to always have a game at the ready. Bring your creativity, energy and a smile as we play classics and design our own unique games on the fly!

#### LGBTQQA and Beyond 📖🌱🌿

*Mara Iverson – Director of Education, Outright Vermont*

Camp is a place for all kids, including those in the LGBTQ+ community. What exactly is gender and sexual orientation and how can understanding make you a better counselor, friend and ally? During this workshop, we'll review LGBTQ+ vocabulary, untangle identities and brainstorm ways to create supportive camp environments for LGBTQ+ campers and questioning youth.

## 11:40-12:50<sup>PM</sup> LUNCH & ROUND TABLES

Lunch break is complimented by a 30-minute round-table experience. Participants engage in open conversation, share knowledge and pose questions on a variety of universal camp issues. Casually facilitated topics will include communication, parent relationships, gender identity and coping with staff burn-out.

### Director's Lunch

Camp Directors and Assistant Directors are invited to dine together and focus discussion on topics that matter to you! Trying something new this year at camp? Want ideas or solutions to a problem? Whatever your interest, bring it to the Director's Table!

## ON THE MENU

Cheese & Pepperoni Pizza  
Salad  
Juice/Water

*Gluten Free options available.  
If you have special dietary needs,  
please feel free to pack a lunch.*

# SESSION TWO

1:00-2:30<sup>PM</sup>

## Reframing Conflict

*Mellisa Cain – Trainer, Afterschool Inc.*

What role do you play in conflict situations with youth in your camp program? Do you know how to turn a conflict situation into an opportunity for growth? This interactive workshop introduces participants to the HighScope step-by-step model for framing conflict, as well as general principles of conflict resolution.

## 10 Camp Crafts and Resources to Find 1,000 More!

*Jessica Booth, CPRP – Director, City of Newport Parks & Recreation*

Back by popular demand, we're reviving the old craft closet! Sick of rock painting and friendship bracelets? Breathe new life into pompoms and pipe cleaners as we explore ten new projects created with supplies you already have on hand. Participants will leave with a resource list and tips on where to find an endless supply of kid-pleasing crafts to build your craft shack repertoire!



## American Red Cross CPR, First Aid & AED Certification Course

*Kirsten Santor, CPRP – Program Director, Essex Jct. Recreation & Parks*

*Deb Fowler – Recreation Director, Town of Waterbury*

Prepare yourself for an unexpected situation by learning to recognize and care for a variety of first aid, breathing, and cardiac emergencies in adults, children, and infants. This two-part course begins with an interactive online experience at home, followed by an instructor-led classroom skill session at Summerama. Upon successful completion, participants will receive a digital certificate for Adult & Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED, valid for 2 years. This course is for initial certification and recertifications. *Pre-registration and online course completion is required to participate. Additional course fee applies.*

1:00-1:40<sup>PM</sup> HALF BLOCKS

## Point A to Point B

*Todd Goodwin, CPRP – Director, Williston Recreation & Parks*

How do I get from Point A to B without losing my mind? Is transitioning your group getting you down? Learn how to move small and large groups from one location or activity to another without losing your mind, patience or a camper. Participants will leave with games, techniques, and no prop activities to get those groups moving with ease.

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## Group Games on The Fly

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## Camp Traditions – Memories For a Lifetime

*Harold Mitchell – Director, Camp Downer*

Traditions are an essential part of the camp experience. They are what define a camp. This session will explore how traditions are born and how they bridge the gap between generations. Participants will have an opportunity to share some of their camp's traditions and will leave with ideas for new traditions to introduce to their programs this summer.

# SESSION THREE

2:40-3:20PM

Gaga Madness 🏠🌱🌿

Brian Bevacqua, CPRP - Recreation Manager, Quechee Club

By now, most camp staff have heard of the “Gaga Craze” referring to a game sweeping summer programs across the country. If you’ve witnessed it in action or been lucky enough to play, you probably understand the obsession. This hands-on clinic is a quick crash-course on the basics of Gaga Ball, different game variations and pit styles including some DIY plans to help you bring Gaga home to your camp program this summer!



## Vermont

### Parks & Recreation Association

The Vermont Recreation and Parks Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion, development, and improvement of all recreation and park services within the State of Vermont.

400+ members strong, VRPA is committed to providing education, resources, and networking opportunities to professionals and citizen volunteers to assist with their role as advocates for parks and recreation services.

We pride ourselves on providing personalized service. We strive to continuously update services based on the needs of members and develop strategies to advance our field. Member benefits include:

- Continuing Education
- Networking Opportunities
- Membership Directory
- Weekly Check-in e-newsletter
- Event & Program Discounts
- Professional Assistance
- Access to VRPA Resources
- Legislative Advocacy

Executive Director Betsy Terry  
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www.VRPA.org



VERMONT  
RECREATION & PARKS  
ASSOCIATION

## Down Time, Fun Time 🏠🌱

Emily Boek – Program Director, Stowe Parks & Recreation

There’s fun to be had during every minute of camp - if you use your time wisely! This interactive session will demonstrate a variety of games perfect for unstructured down times or transitions. These activities and songs will keep your campers engaged and leave them feeling excited for a summer filled with non-stop fun!

## The Joys & Challenges of Supervising “Young” Staff 🌱

Jessica Booth, CPRP – Director, City of Newport Parks & Recreation

Highschool and college age counselors are full of energy and vigor. Kids relate to them on a level that is unmatched by seasoned “adult” staff. This workshop will help supervisors make the most of natural talents, develop learned skills and address challenges associated with young or unseasoned employees. Bring home tips for opening communication and creating a no-drama environment where growth is encouraged for all.

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## 3:30-4:00PM ENDNOTE & ICE CREAM

**We want your feedback!** Surveys are the primary tool we use to develop this program each year! Please take a moment to reflect on your day and leave thoughtful ideas and suggestions to help guide our program in 2019. Want to join the Summerama Committee? Contact Chair Jessica Booth at [JBooth@NewportRecreation.org](mailto:JBooth@NewportRecreation.org) or (802)334-6345.



# SPEAKERS

**Brian Bevacqua** has been working with youth in the outdoors since his early high school years when he became an outdoor guide and instructor. He is currently the Recreation Manager at the Quechee Club. Brian's qualifications and certifications include two undergraduate degrees in Adventure Education and Youth Development and Camp Management, ACA Kayak Instruction, Vermont Firefighter I and II, Wilderness First Aid, CPR for the Professional Rescuer, Leave No Trace Master Educator, and National Incident Command 200b.

**Emily Boek** has a degree in Therapeutic Recreation and over twelve years of experience working in the recreation field. She has worked at various day and residential camps as a counselor, life guard, assistant director, and inclusion specialist. She has also shared her passion for recreation by instructing canoe, kayak, and SUP paddling, as well as skiing and snowboarding for people of all abilities. Emily began working as the Program Director for the Stowe Parks & Recreation Department in 2014. She has developed, maintained and improved many programs within the department. Her goal is to provide recreational opportunities for all people to live, grow and play together.

**Jessica Booth** began working in Newport at the end of 2012 following her experience with the Stowe & Waterbury Recreation Departments. Born and raised in Vermont, Jessica has loved summer camp since childhood and began working in the field as a junior counselor in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. With a degree in Elementary Education from Castleton University, her creative spirit and extensive experience provides a great foundation for her position as Parks & Recreation Director in the City of Newport. Among other duties, Jessica handles most of the programming for Newport Parks & Recreation, including annual community events, school vacation camps and summer activities.

**Mellisa Cain** has worked as an educator, trainer and facilitator with youth and adults throughout the world as a classroom teacher, group facilitator, trainer of trainers and summer camp director for over ten years. She is the founder and director of Learning through Laughter, a staff development company based out of Burlington, Vermont. Mellisa has facilitated a variety of workshops throughout the United States and the world. She is known for her energy, positive outlook, her ability to think outside the box and to adapt to the needs of participants. Mellisa holds a masters degree in Conflict Transformation from the SIT Graduate Institute and a bachelors in Peace Studies from Manhattan College.

**Deb Fowler** has a diploma in Recreation from Conestoga College in Canada and has been working in the field for almost 30 years and at many facilities with pools and pool programs. She is also a certified fitness instructor, lifeguard and instructor, aqua instructor, Water Safety Instructor, First Aid and CPR Instructor and a member of the National Ski Patrol. Safety and teaching safety is a personal passion for her. At present, she is the Recreation Director for the town of Waterbury.

**Todd Goodwin** has more than 35 years of recreation and camp experience, from a counselor to a director. He is currently the Recreation & Parks Director for the Town of Williston. Todd has experience directing day camps to working for residential camps. In South Burlington and now Williston, he has been involved with running highly successful day camps for youth ages 3-15 since 1991. Todd also has taught PE and coached on the High School level for over 12 years.

**Mara Iverson** is Director of Education at Outright Vermont, a statewide LGBTQ+ youth advocacy organization. Mara's background is in Higher Education. She has worked at universities in Pennsylvania, Texas and Vermont and has 15 years of LGBTQ+ advocacy and education experience.

## THANK YOU SUMMERAMA COMMITTEE

Jessica Booth  
Brian Bevacqua  
John Leonard  
Betsy Terry  
Jay McDonough

Kirsten Santor  
Arne McMullen  
Alicia Finley  
Emily Boek



# SPEAKERS

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**Harold "Mitch" Mitchell** will celebrate his 45<sup>th</sup> year in camping this summer. He began working as a counselor in 1963 and spent the next eight years as the small crafts instructor and trips director for programs in Maine and Connecticut. Mitch moved to Vermont in 1970 to begin his 36 year career as an educator. During those years, he was a teacher, guidance counselor and principal. In 1980 he became Director of Downer 4-H Camp in Sharon, Vermont and this year marks his 39<sup>th</sup> year in that same position.

**Kirsten Santor** started working at Essex Junction Recreation & Parks in July 2016 and had worked as a Recreation Coordinator at a college prior to that. She attended a variety of camps as a child and credits those experiences with helping her find her career in recreation. She has experience leading trips with college students both nationally and internationally, including destinations to Hawaii and Scotland. She has a bachelors degree in Recreation, Adventure Travel, and Ecotourism and is currently pursuing a master's degree in Recreation Administration. Kristen is a certified Red Cross Lifeguard Instructor, Water Safety Instructor, Wilderness First Responder, and Maine Sea Kayak Guide. At EJRP she oversees program planning for the entire community and loves providing recreational opportunities to people of all ages.

# REGISTRATION



Registering your team online is easy!

[www.VRPA.Wildapricot.org/Courses-Workshops](http://www.VRPA.Wildapricot.org/Courses-Workshops)

- ✓ Log on to VRPA's website using the link above, select Summerama from the course offerings...
- ✓ Register your organization and participant information
- ✓ Pay with card or print an invoice to mail payment later!

	Early Bird	After 5/25
VRPA Member	\$20	\$30
Non-Member	\$25	\$35

ENROLL 10 STAFF  
**SAVE \$2**  
PER PERSON!



**American Red Cross CPR, First Aid & AED Certification**

Space is limited. Registrations are processed on a first-come, first serve basis. Participants are required to complete the online portion of the Red Cross course before 5/30/18 to be eligible for certification at Summerama. Additional Course Fee: \$40 per participant



## CONTACT US...

**Jessica Booth, Committee Chair**  
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**Betsy Terry, Executive Director**  
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