

## 2017 Presenter Biographies



**Thursday November 16, 2017**

**Alan Ewert, PhD.:** *Professor, Indiana University*

Alan Ewert, PhD. is a Distinguished and Titled Professor at Indiana University. He is the holder of the Patricia and Joel Meier Endowed Chair in Outdoor Leadership. To date, he has authored or co-authored over eight books including, *Behavioral and Group Management in Outdoor Adventure Education*, *Outdoor Adventure Pursuits: Foundations, Theory, and Research*, *Outdoor Adventure Pursuits: Foundations, Models, and Theories*, *Outdoor Education: Methods and Strategies*, *Natural Environments and Human Health*. He has instructed in a variety of programs including Outward Bound, NOLS, and Wilderness Inquiry and has served as a Survival Instructor for the US Air Force. In addition, he is co-owner of a guiding and consulting business called AlpenGlow, which focuses on the mountaineering, rock climbing, and white-water rafting experience for college students.

**Barrett Wood:** *Logistics, New Vision Wilderness*

Barrett is part of the field leadership team at New Vision Wilderness. His role at New Vision includes facilitating adventure education trips and training new staff. He has worked with youth since 2005 in a variety of settings. Barrett began in summer camps as a counselor, instructor, guide, and eventually director. He has coached junior high and high school sports and guided wilderness trips. Barrett is also a climbing guide and an EMT. He has a BA in Environmental Studies from Lake Forest College.

**Eric Barnard:** *NOLS Wilderness Medicine*

Eric Barnard is a lead instructor for NOLS Wilderness Medicine. He has taught courses across the country for NOLS since 2008. In addition to teaching NOLS courses Eric is the Director of the Winona State University Outdoor Education & Recreation program and is also the Owner and lead guide for Big River Climbing Guides, a Rock and Ice Climbing guiding business located in Winona, MN. Eric focused his graduate research on risk management in outdoor recreation with a specific focus on judgement and decision making in outdoor leaders.

**Joe Malhoit:** *All Points North*

After retiring from 20 years as a Special Agent with the FBI, Joe Malhoit formed a training / consulting business to make as many people as safe as possible. During his last four years with the FBI, Joe gave over 230 Active Shooter presentations to a large variety of groups and organizations. Before Joe joined the FBI he earned a BS in Pastoral Studies and a MA in Psychology. He worked as a Teacher, Pastor and in the medical rehabilitation field. This background combined with his experience as a Special Agent gives Joe a unique perspective. He utilizes these abilities to work with a diversity of individuals and organizations to increase their level of security. Joe continues to expand the mission of preparing individuals and organizations to respond to the challenges of violent events.

**Stephanie Gretsich:** *Minnesota Department of Health*

Stephanie Gretsich is an epidemiologist in the Waterborne Diseases Unit at the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). At MDH, she leads *Giardia* surveillance activities, conducts waterborne disease outbreak investigations, and coordinates surveillance for harmful algal bloom-related illnesses.

**Jenna Bjork:** *Epidemiologist, Minnesota Department of Health*

Dr. Jenna Bjork is an epidemiologist in the Vectorborne Diseases Unit at the Minnesota Department of Health where she works with diseases such as Lyme disease and West Nile virus. Prior training and experience within the veterinary field have given her a unique perspective on infectious disease and health education. Her professional interests include exploring the interfaces between environmental, human, and animal health.

**Tracy Knutson:** *Knutson & Associates*

Tracey L. Knutson is a multi-state licensed attorney whose primary practice involves working with recreation and adventure sports commercial operators, public land administrators and recreation oriented educational groups. An experienced trial lawyer, Tracey defends recreation companies and sports groups from liability claims, often negotiating pretrial conclusions that minimize time and expense. In addition, she provides risk management and training services.

Tracey's belief, when it comes to recreational endeavors, is that risk and opportunity exist simultaneously. Learning how to maximize the opportunities in your recreational endeavors by minimizing or mitigating the risks is a key component of operating a quality adventure sport or recreational endeavor or business.

**Abigail Lucas:** *Wilderness Inquiry, Sea Kayak Program Manager*

Abigail Lucas, CTRS, is a seasoned kayak enthusiast and outdoor adventurer. Her background is in recreational management and recreational therapy with a specialization in the outdoors. Previously, Abigail worked as an Adaptive Program Coordinator for a nonprofit in Minnesota, in addition to, working for the city of Chattanooga. She currently works as Wilderness Inquiry's Sea Kayak Program Manager. Abigail oversees Wilderness Inquiry's Little Sand Bay Base Camp near the Apostle Islands on Lake Superior while managing the Recreational Therapy Internship program and supervises other adaptive trainings. In her free time she can be found training for triathlons, cooking for loved ones, and spending time on Lake Superior.

## Friday November 17, 2017

**John Bussey:** *Program Director, YMCA Camp St. Croix*

John Bussey is the senior program director at YMCA Camp St. Croix and a former instructor with the National Outdoor Leadership School and YMCA Camp Widjiwagan. His B.A. is from Gustavus Adolphus College and M.S. in Natural Resource Management from the University of Minnesota. He loves making sure campers have a blast on the Camp St. Croix waterfront.

**Dave Golden:** *Wilderness Water Safety*

Since 1972, Dave has been involved with water safety, swimming instruction, lifeguard training and in 1976 started teaching CPR and first aid. In 1976, he encountered a summer camp for the first time and using hindsight became the self-declared world's worst waterfront director. Regularly underestimating the risks of waterfront activities and other water related experiences while supervising other people's children, he has worked hard to advance water safety practices over the years. Time in the wilderness and in canoes became a big part of life in 1980 with frequent trips to the BWCAW followed by a trip down the Mississippi then the discovery of the "little north" in Ontario. Dave continues to train hundreds of trip leaders every year through Wilderness Water Safety courses in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Ontario. He also works full time as the Director of Public Health at the University of Minnesota

**Kris Henker:** *Freelance Facilitator & Master's Degree in The Neuroscience of Leadership*

Kris has worked in the outdoor education industry for 30 years during which she has lead wilderness trips, taught outdoor education at resident camps and served as Director for the Environmental Education program at Frost Valley YMCA and as the Director of The Jungai Centre, a center focused on outdoor education and aboriginal culture, in Australia. Kris currently works as the Assistant Director for the MSc in Applied Neuroscience Program offered through the Profession Development Foundation in Collaboration with Middlesex University. She also develops and presents staff training workshops for both seasonal and year round staff at youth develop agencies, summer camps and outdoor education centers, incorporating Applied Neuroscience, Positive Psychology and Management Theory into staff development topics. Kris has her MSc in the Neuroscience of Leadership through Middlesex University in the UK.

**Amy Hadow:** *YMCA Camp Widjiwagan, Summer Program Director*

Amy is the Summer Program Director at YMCA Camp Widjiwagan. She grew up spending her summers in the North Woods with her family where she developed a love for canoeing and the smell of pine trees that led her to Widji and a career in Outdoor Education. Amy spent five summers as a trail guide at Widji. She also has worked in environmental education, conservation and land management and she has a Masters of Arts in Higher Education and Student Affairs from the University of Iowa. Amy loves to laugh, paddle and spend time with friends.

**Claire Dzierzak:** *YMCA Camp Menogyn, Program Director*

Claire has worked for YMCA Camp Menogyn for 6 years and currently serves as their Program Director. Her current role at Menogyn includes overseeing the development and implementation of a varied wilderness-tripping program serving youth age 12-18. Prior to this role, Claire led canoeing, backpacking and rock-climbing trips through Menogyn all across North America. Growing up in Minneapolis, she was introduced to the wonders of exploration early on and had the opportunity to traverse wild spaces through a leadership development program at Wilderness Inquiry. Graduating from the University of Minnesota with an Anthropology degree inspired her to pursue her passion for connecting people to the land and the stories it holds. Risk management plays a vital role in the creating that sustainable and lasting relationship between both the youth and staff at Menogyn and the places in which they travel. Claire also serves on the MRMS steering committee.

**Andy Leider:** *Senior Consultant, Outdoor Safety Institute*

Andy Leider is a Senior Consultant with Outdoor Safety Institute focusing on organizational development, culture, and project management. His work bridges the space between field operations and organization management. Andy is also Managing Consultant with Potrero Group, a strategy and business planning firm for environmental, public lands, and social sector clients. He has founded two nonprofit educational organizations and a national program to promote innovative science and climate education through public lands. He is a past Director with the Orfaea Foundation, Voyageur Outward Bound School, Montana Yellowstone Expeditions, and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. Andy has created and led experiential education programs since 1990, but got his start as a Widji camper at age 12. He holds a Somatic Coach certification from Strozzi Institute and a degree in History from Gustavus. Andy lives in the San Francisco Bay Area and spends his summers in Bozeman, MT.

**Niki Geisler:** *Executive Director, YMCA Camp DuNord*

Niki is a District Executive with YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities Camps and serves as the Executive Director of Camp du Nord, the Twin Cities YMCA's Family Camp in Ely, MN. Niki has been with the YMCA since 1998, and has served as Program Director with the YMCA of Santa Clara Valley, Camp Director at Camp Loma Mar, and Senior Program Director at Camp St. Croix in Hudson, WI. Her YMCA camping roots began, however, as a Camp Counselor at Camp Campbell in the Santa Cruz Mountains of California, where she found her love for connecting kids and families to the meaningful outdoor experiences that YMCA camps provide. Niki, her husband Brian, and their three boys, Reed, Brooks and Eddy enjoy spending their summers in the north woods of Minnesota on the edge of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. When not being a camp family, they enjoy playing hockey and soccer, reading great kid's books, dancing to silly music, and getting into all sorts of messy adventures!

**Danny Frank:** *Northland College*

Danny Frank is an Assistant Professor of Outdoor Education at Northland College. He holds an Ed.D in Global Indigenous Teaching & Learning from the University of Minnesota Duluth, and an MA and BA from Prescott College. Throughout the past two decades, he has worked in a variety of direct service and administrative capacities in expeditionary learning, wilderness therapy, therapeutic recreation, youth development, and residential treatment, as well as higher education student affairs and academic instruction. Danny lives in Duluth, MN with his partner Angie and his sons Max (9) and Lev (7), and spends family time biking, skiing, fishing, and attending music festivals.

**Alex Black:** *Program Director, Camp Manito-wish YMCA*

Alex Black directs Camp Manito-wish's Leadership Program, which uses wilderness tripping, team-building facilitation and a challenge course to help thousands of youth each year build communities and develop social-emotional skills. He has been at Manito-wish since 2012, and has also taught and facilitated in Chicago, Italy, Russia and Uganda.