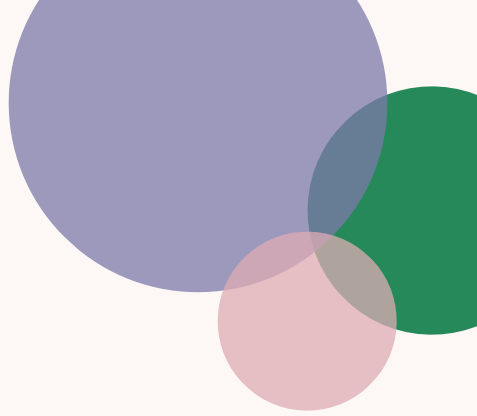




2024 TRO Conference Program: In-Person

All times shown in EST

*Please note that W3 is not eligible for CEUs



Tuesday, June 4	
Optional Pre-Conference Events	
7:00 - 8:00 PM	Registration table opens: come grab your name tag & delegate bag
9:00 - 11:00 PM	Bonfire Night - s'mores and casual meet & greet

Wednesday June 5	
Conference Day 1	
7:00 AM	Registration table opens
7:30 - 8:30 AM	Breakfast: Continental buffet
8:15 - 8:30 AM	Welcome & Announcements
8:30 - 9:30 AM	Keynote: Positive Psychology at Work
9:45 - 10:45 AM	W1: Using Cue Cards as a Tool For Overcoming Communication Barriers
	W2: Volt Hockey - Powering Forward
	W3: Applying for your Registration Designation (<i>*not eligible for CEUs*</i>)
	W4: What is Your Role in Person-Centred Language?
	W5: Delivering Dynamic Senior Fitness Sessions
10:45 - 11:00 AM	Break & Light snack
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	W6: Virtual Reality as a non-pharmacological leisure intervention to reduce responsive behaviors in a Transitional Behavioral Support Unit
	W7: Incorporating Quality Improvement into Recreation Therapy Practice
	W8: KATCH (Kids & the Changing Home)
	W9: Recreation Revolution: Using Life Redesign and RTSS to Illustrate our True Value
	W10: Wind in Your Hair: A Trishaw Experience

*please note this program is subject to change

- **YELLOW:** Children & youth
- **BLUE:** Persons with disabilities & day programs
- **GREEN:** Long-term care & seniors
- **ORANGE:** Mental health
- **GREY:** Palliative care
- **PINK:** Facilitation techniques for all populations
- **PURPLE:** Professional & private practice
- **RED:** Research

12:00 - 1:30 PM	Plated Lunch: Annual General Meeting & Awards
1:30 - 3:00 PM	W11: Living in My Today: An Abilities Focused Approach to Understanding Dementia - Engagement is Food for the Body, Mind, and Spirit
	W12: Cocooning Time Capsule Project – Reflection, Creation, Transformation
	W13: Harmony in Collaboration: Bridging Therapeutic Recreation and Music Therapy for Holistic Client-Centered Care
	W14: St. George Community Outreach Program (Each One Reach One)
	W15: Try it Before You Buy it! TR Resources Exploration and Evaluation
3:00 - 3:15 PM	Break & Light Snack
3:15 - 4:45 PM	W16: From Vision to Reality: Building a Thriving Community-Driven Therapeutic Recreation Practice
	W17: Let Your Rhythm Shine Drumming and Rhythm for Health and Wellbeing
	W18: Paws for Wellness: The Dog-tor Will See You Now
	W19: Lights, Camera, Action: Sienna's Quest to Celebrate National Canadian Film Day
	W20: Death Café
4:45 - 8:00 PM	Dinner on your own & free-time
8:00 PM - late	80s / 90s Party <i>Dress in your 80s/90s attire! Enjoy a DJ, cash bar, games, photo booth & light hors d'ouvres</i>

**please note this program is subject to change*

- *YELLOW: Children & youth*
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- *PINK: Facilitation techniques for all populations*
- *PURPLE: Professional & private practice*
- *RED: Research*



Thursday June 6

Conference Day 2

7:00 - 8:30 AM	Breakfast: Full breakfast buffet
8:00 - 8:30 AM	Welcome back, announcements & energizer activity
8:30 - 10:00 AM	T1: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB): Resource Club
	T2: Advancing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Long Term Care
	T3: Recreation Therapy in Hospice Palliative Care
	T4: Facilitating Bell Choir and Boomwhackers in Care
	T5: Social Club: A Framework for Empowering Youth Through Social Opportunity
10:00 - 10:15 AM	Break
10:15 - 11:15 AM	T6: Where Have All the Behaviours Gone? Unlocking the Secrets to TR Programming for Both “Late-Stage Dementia” and Challenging Responsive Behaviours
	T7: An Exploration into the Role Recreation Therapists have in Supporting Health and Wellness within Forensic Psychiatry Settings
	T8: Empowering Independence – A Look Inside Residential Immersive Life Skills Programs
	T9: Benefits of High-Quality Concerts for Long-Term Care Residents and Staff
	T10: Recreating Resilience: Self-Compassion in the Helping Profession, a Heuristic Inquiry
11:15 AM - 1:00 PM	Buffet Lunch & Tradeshow
1:00 - 2:30 PM	T11: Legacy Programming: Grand Pals & Personal Life Stories
	T12: Towards a Critical Therapeutic Recreation Practice: Creating Care-full Futures for TR through an Ethic of Care
	T13: “Crashing into Snoezelen-MSE”
	T14: Forest Bathing: More than a Walk in the Woods
	T15: Leisure Needs: How to Assess and Program Plan for Individuals Living with Mental Illness
2:30 - 2:45 PM	Break, Light Snack & energizer activity
2:45 - 3:45 PM	Panel: Creating a Toolkit for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in Therapeutic Recreation Practice
3:45 - 4:00 PM	Closing Remarks
	Dinner on your own & Farewell gathering on the patio

**please note this program is subject to change*



Friday June 7

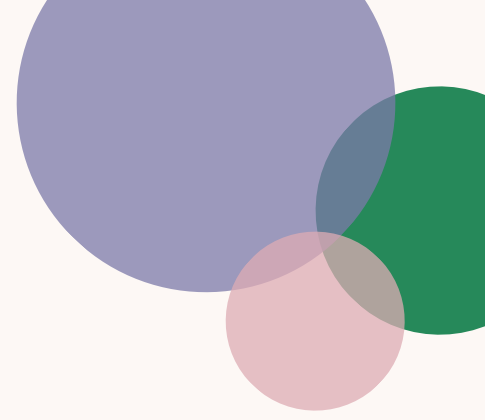
Optional Post-Conference Add-Ons

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	<p>DROM Certification</p> <p>Become a Certified Practitioner of DRÖM - Post-Conference at the Nottawasaga Inn!</p> <p>The DROM Practitioner Certification is designed to inspire Therapeutic Recreation professionals to deliver a dynamic and powerful practice to your participants. DROM is a unique combination of drumming (the DRUM) and meditation (the OM) to energize, relieve stress, bring clarity and calm – all while having FUN drumming on an exercise ball or tables and chairs.</p> <p>This hybrid training will include a mixture of synchronous and asynchronous learning. Training content is CE Pre-Approved by NCTRC and has become a TRO Sponsored event for those collecting PCCs for their R/TRO Designation.</p>
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	<p>Informed Art Facilitation Training</p> <p>Are you wondering how to successfully facilitate art making groups, foster creative self-expression, and encourage moments of insightful sharing? Whether you're a therapist, PSW, nurse, educator, parent, or art student, you've come to the right place!</p> <p>Join Natalie V. Bochenska, artist, Art Therapist, and Registered Psychotherapist, in a day full of creativity and fun.</p> <p>In this experiential certification program, you will gain the basic skills of art facilitation inspired by core art therapy principles and mindfulness practices. You can expect to engage through hands-on art-making demos, meditative practices, and refreshing discussions in a small group setting.</p> <p>We will address the meaning of therapeutic boundaries, confidence and imposter syndrome, the ingredients necessary for safe spaces, and how to tap into non-judgmental curiosity.</p> <p>Whether you devote your work to children, youth, adults, or older adults, the same principles still apply. Get your crayons ready! You will leave the training with an updated approach towards art making, easy to apply techniques and creative projects, and a calm, inspired mind.</p>





2024 TRO Conference In-Person Session Descriptions



Keynote: Positive Psychology at Work

~ Pauline Daugherty, BScN, RN, Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Ontario, Your Health Space

This session will begin with a reflection on flourishing and languishing and how they may present themselves in the workplace. This will be followed by an introduction to the PERMA Model of Well-Being. This model was developed by Martin Seligman as five components that contribute to the concept of wellbeing. Research has shown positive associations between each of the PERMA components and individual wellbeing including job satisfaction and life satisfaction. Relationships encompass all the various interactions an individual may have in their personal and professional life. The ability to understand and enhance these interactions will be discussed during this presentation. Participants will be encouraged to recognize how PERMA will support their wellbeing and ability to flourish.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 key indicators that you are flourishing in the workplace.
2. Describe 1 benefit of developing high quality relationships on individual wellbeing.
3. Identify 3 strategies to develop and foster relationships with colleagues.

W1: Using Cue Cards As A Tool for Overcoming Communication Barriers

~ Fatoumate Djigumde, Seneca College Student

~ Lisa Gordon, Program Manager, Gibson Long Term Care Residence

This presentation will discuss the practical use of cue cards to overcome communication barriers in long-term care facilities. It emphasizes the importance of effective communication in long-term care and how cue cards can bridge the gap, enhance understanding, and improve client-centered care. This session addresses the need for effective communication strategies in therapeutic recreation practice to provide quality care. It highlights the role of cue cards in promoting inclusivity, autonomy, and emotional well-being for residents. Participants will learn how to incorporate cue cards into therapeutic recreation programs, facilitating better communication and engagement with residents facing language barriers or cognitive impairments.

Learning Objectives:

1. List 3 ways communication barriers impact client care.
2. Explain 1 way cue cards can eliminate barriers.
3. Identify 3 ways you can personalize cue cards for your clients.

W2: Volt Hockey - Powering Forward

- ~ Archie Allison, Director, Access and Awareness,
- ~ Karen Stintz, President/CEO - Variety the Children's Charity (Ontario)

VOLT Hockey is a newly adapted sport designed to promote participation for children, youth, and adults of all abilities. This recreational or competitive experience uses a power vehicle with a hockey stick leading the cart for players to use the joystick to play. "I never thought my child would play hockey and now they can!" As we create and reimagine who can play, we are excited to offer more activities to engage persons with disabilities and their peers to ignite interest for persons who use power chairs, and mobility devices and may want to get active and involved but lacked resources. Variety Village VOLT Hockey was one of the first programs in North America. VOLT Hockey is now available in Brampton, Barrie, London, Niagara, and an additional 5 locations in Ontario soon, as well as Alberta and Boston to join the international leagues offered in Denmark. Join us to learn more about sports/ recreation opportunities for everyBODY!

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand 2 benefits to Volt Hockey adaptations to promote physical participation in clients.
2. Understand 3 client and personal benefits to Volt hockey through observation and practical exposure.
3. Identify 1-2 ways to recruit participants through awareness presentations and needs analysis.

W3: Applying for Your Registration Designation

- ~ Vicki Di Giovanni, Chair of TRO's Practice Review Committee
- ~ Victoria Depass, Co-Chair of TRO's Practice Review Committee

Do you have questions about the designation? Would you like to review your application form with members and volunteers of the Practice Review Committee? Then this is the session for you! Applying for your designation is geared to students, new graduates and professionals that are preparing to apply for the designation or would like more information to assist them in getting ready to apply. The designation process, application forms, supportive documents required and ways to obtain PCC's will be reviewed. This is both an information session and a working session, please bring your portfolio, computer/tablet and application form with you.

Learning Objectives:

1. Be able to identify 3 ways to obtain PCC's.
2. Have completed a minimum of 50% of the application form.
3. Be able to verbally inform the volunteer assisting participant on how to apply for designation.

W4: What is Your Role in Person-Centred Language?

- ~ Courtney Stasiuk-Mohr, Project Specialist/Behavioural Supports Ontario Provincial Coordinating Office - North Bay Regional Health Centre
- ~ Esther Russell, Project Manager, The Ontario Centres for Learning Research and Innovation in LTC (Ontario CLRI) at the Schlegel - UW Research Institute for Aging (RIA)

The Person-Centred Language (PCL) initiative emphasizes fostering respectful, life-affirming, and inclusive environments for residents, families, and team members. This Ontario Centres for Learning, Research and Innovation in LTC and Behavioural Supports Ontario workshop offers a comprehensive overview of PCL and existing resources for its effective implementation. Participants will be empowered to develop practical action plans to facilitate person-centered culture change through the use of PCL. PCL plays a crucial role in the professional accountability of therapeutic recreation professionals. For example, through the incorporation of PCL in all documentation requirements; recognizing the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication forms in therapeutic practice; and in the building of trusting relationships through the demonstration of compassion and honouring individual experiences. The connection between PCL and a therapeutic recreation professional's commitment to continuous professional growth is undeniable.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 effects that PCL has on documentation and implementation.
2. Identify 3-5 PCL champions within their organization to support PCL implementation.
3. Develop an action plan for their organization to further implement PCL initiatives.

W5: Delivering Dynamic Senior Fitness Sessions

- ~ Emily Johnson, Founder at StrongerU Senior Fitness Inc.

As a Recreation Therapist, you help people to be their best selves and engage across multiple domains of wellness. In this session, you'll learn how to design and implement quality and dynamic senior fitness sessions that also engage your group intellectually, socially, emotionally, vocationally, and spiritually. You'll leave this session with a dynamic program design system, new Cardio, Strength, and Flexibility routines that you can use Monday morning, and gain access to a full 30-minute class to learn and teach following the session.

Learning Objectives:

1. Have a deeper understanding of how to create fitness experiences that enhance physical, intellectual, social, emotional, vocational, and spiritual wellness.
2. Be able to use a multi-step system to create countless dynamic senior fitness routines on their own.
3. Be able to implement new cardio, strength, and flexibility routines (3 total) into their teaching repertoire.

W6: Virtual Reality as a non-pharmacological leisure intervention to reduce responsive behaviors in a Transitional Behavioral Support Unit

~ Mara Swartz, Recreation Therapist; Baycrest Health Sciences

Baycrest's TBSU (Transitional Behavioral Support Unit) has had the opportunity to formally evaluate the impact of using virtual reality (VR) as a leisure-based non-pharmacological intervention for clients with responsive behaviors. The presentation will provide insight into the research study and findings (including case studies), the equipment that was used, how the sessions were implemented, the outcomes and measures used, the potential for further research in the area as a leisure intervention, as well as hands-on experience, finally viewing participants engaged in the sessions. There will be a variation of charts, graphs, and open discussion on what worked and did not work during the research.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 benefits of the using VR as a non-pharmacological leisure intervention with clients who have responsive behaviours.
2. Identify 3 ways to safely introduce VR to persons with responsive behaviours
3. Identify 2 ways they can use VR in their organization to reduce behaviours.

W7: Incorporating Quality Improvement into Recreation Therapy Practice

~ Cindy Marshall, Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care - Recreation Therapist

~ Kat Powers, Quality Risk, Data Analytics, Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care

This session will look at how Recreation Therapy at Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care utilizes the Quality Improvement (QI) framework to improve processes and the patient care experience. We will explore why QI matters and learn the 6 stages and tools of the QI process. Using a realistic case study we will explore a patient care scenario that requires attention and opportunity for improvement. We will determine the root cause and develop solutions that can be tested with measurable outcomes for success over time. Everyone will leave the session with practical "next steps" for using QI strategies in the workplace.

Learning Objectives:

1. Explain 100% of the Quality Improvement Framework that systematically improves processes and systems with TR practice.
2. Identify 6 stages of Foundations to Quality Improvements.
3. Identify 2 online education and/or resources to assist participants in implementing Quality Improvement strategies at their organizations.

W8: KATCH (Kids & The Changing Home)

~ Valya Roberts, Executive Director Dalhousie Place (Brantford & District Supervised Access)

This program came about from a need that was identified in the community for more supports for children impacted by their parents' separation/divorce. Divorce is a highly stressful time for families. Children are impacted by the divorce process as deeply and traumatically as their parents. As children are still developing cognitively and often unable to express their feelings, they may demonstrate their emotions in a more internalized way, such as depression, or externalize feeling through acting out behaviours (Spigelman & Spigelman, 1991). The short-term impact for both children and parents are associated with the similar feeling of losing a loved one to death, as "divorce can create lingering feelings of sadness, longing, worry, and regret that coexist with competent psychological and social functioning" (Kelly & Emery, 2003, p. 359). Since 1991, Dalhousie Place (Brantford & District Supervised Access) has been providing services for families experiencing divorce and separation. The mission of Dalhousie Place (2018) is to provide a safe, neutral, child-focused service including supervised visits, exchanges, and support for families.

This session is about the creation and implementation of the KATCH program – Kids and the Changing home, a six-week program for children dealing with the impact of separation and divorce. The program utilizes a psycho educational and recreational therapy approach. Utilizing physically active games and engagement strategies, alongside traditional psycho educational approaches to children's group activities. The purpose of the recreational therapy process for children is to improve their social and emotional response to the grief from their family's separation/divorce and help them build coping skills using recreational activities.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 2 key research articles that influenced the creation of the KATCH program.
2. Be able to identify 3 coping strategies that was introduced to the children.
3. Identify 2 long term consequences of divorce for children who do not adjust positively to divorce and separation.

W9: Recreation Revolution: Using Life Redesign and RTSS to Illustrate our True Value

- ~ Adam Van Sickle, Service Access and Transitions Leader
- ~ Ryan Wheeler, Play Coach (Recreation Therapist)
- ~ Deirdre Sperry, Communication Coach

CONNECT Communities employs an innovative Life Redesign model for individuals recovering from brain injuries and stroke, emphasizing meaningful recreation experiences. There is a focus on supporting individuals to practice new skills and to develop leisure-related attitudes and knowledge of community resources. CONNECT Communities, notably referring to Recreation Therapists as "Play Coaches," underscores the importance of play, recreation, and joy in the rehabilitation process. This approach integrates real-life activities with rehab elements, promoting personal accountability, supported risk-taking, and community participation. Challenges include clarifying the depth of these activities, often perceived as mere events. To address this, the Rehabilitation Treatment Specification System (RTSS) serves as a conceptual framework, aiding in the articulation of the nuanced elements involved in developing individuals' leisure lifestyles. This presentation will discuss CONNECT's Life Redesign Model and how the RTSS can support Recreation professionals to illustrate their true value.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 benefits of using the Rehabilitation Treatment Specification System (RTSS).
2. Identify 3 strategies to explain the importance of recreation therapy in rehabilitation.
3. Identify 2 ways to increase awareness and understanding of the RTSS within the broader recreation therapy community.

W10: Wind in Your Hair: A Trishaw Experience

- ~ Kellie Halligan, Recreation Therapist at Royal Ottawa Place
- ~ Erin Langiano, Recreation Therapist at Royal Ottawa Place

Royal Ottawa Place is a long-term care home geared toward assisting individuals living with chronic, persistent mental illness. Individuals living with responsive behaviours, (ie. wandering, pacing, verbal/physical aggression) can have a negative impact on co-residents' living environment in long-term care homes. Often times when individuals transition into long-term care they may feel isolated, disconnected from their community, experience a decrease in socialization, and a decline in independence. The recreation therapy team embraced "The Cycling Without Age" movement to enhance opportunities for connection and community integration. Through the use of a trishaw, this program was used as a complementary intervention strategy. Working collaboratively with the research team, a pilot study was implemented to examine the outcomes of participation in this particular intervention. It was hypothesized that participation would decrease behaviours and improve overall mood. There is currently no known work that has examined these effects with this specific population (mental health and LTC).

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 2 research questions from the pilot study.
2. Identify 3 main benefits of using the trishaw as an intervention for residents in MH and LTC.
3. Identify 3 initial steps you can take to initiate a "Cycling Without Age" program in your facility.

W11: Living in My Today: An abilities focused approach to understanding dementia - Engagement is Food for the Body, Mind, and Spirit

~ Heather Luth, Director of Dementia Services & Knowledge Integration

Living in My Today recognizes that while dementia changes abilities, people can and should continue to have opportunities to express themselves, make choices, try new things, make new friends, and live their truth. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to supporting dementia, each person's experience is unique to them. Understanding how abilities change as a result of dementia is the first step to adapting expectations and engagement approaches. It's always easier to "program for the higher cognitively functioning" residents (how about we change that language!) while engaging those living with more advanced changes is challenging to many recreation therapists. Learn how to take an abilities-focused approach to facilitate programs and adapt some new and exciting resources to match residents' changing needs.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 2 methods of delivery in the program model.
2. Identify 2 benefits of using the abilities inventory to engage residents living with dementias.

W12: Cocooning Time Capsule Project – Reflection, Creation, Transformation

~ Beth Astles, Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, - Head Injury Rehabilitation Ontario

Language can be a powerful tool during times of crisis and uncertainty. During the last three years, the field of recreation therapy, our clients, and ourselves have gone through a time of change. This has opened the door to opportunities for new ways of practicing and serving our populations. Rather than being "socially distant", or "physically distant" at HIRO, for this project, we used the term "cocooning". By transforming our language this project allowed for clients and staff to connect on experiences which led to a powerful discussion of transformation. Like the transformation from caterpillar to butterfly which occurs in the safety of their cocoon, we offered our clients and staff a space to reflect in the same way to share their experience. Although this project was used and created for the COVID-19 Pandemic, this presentation will showcase how this can be applied to a variety of transformative experiences for all populations.

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand and articulate 3-5 benefits of a transformative program for their individual populations.
2. Create a Cocoon Example based on their own personal transformation journey working during COVID-19.
3. Be able to identify 2-3 techniques or processes that could be applied to their own service using the reflect – create and transform approach.

W13: Harmony in Collaboration: Bridging Therapeutic Recreation and Music Therapy for Holistic Client-Centered Care

- ~ Mary Anne Afable, Recreation Therapist, Grand River Hospital
- ~ Melissa Tennant, Recreation Therapist, Grand River Hospital
- ~ Sophia Christopher, Music Therapist, Grand River Hospital

In over 10 years at Grand River Hospital (GRH), a growth in the utilization of music therapy interventions took place, highlighting practice within several areas within the organization. Throughout its recent history, the most evident of its interdisciplinary partnerships have been with recreation therapy. This presentation will describe the collaborative approaches between both music therapy and recreation therapy disciplines. It will identify key benefits and practical applications of this collaborative approach, as it emphasizes holistic client/patient-centered care within mental health and rehabilitation spaces. We will explore evidence-based practices and strategies for fostering effective communication and collaboration to promote opportunities for emotional expression, cognitive stimulation, physical activity, spiritual exploration, and social interactions. Finally, our presentation plans to engage session participants in an experience to apply the ways in which this collaboration connects theory into both music therapy and recreation therapy practices.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 ways in which a collaborative program was developed between Recreation Therapy and Music Therapy within Complex Continuing Care (CCC) and/or Transitional Care Unit (TCU) and Rehabilitation.
2. Participants will be able to explain 100% of the steps in developing collaborative programs between recreation and music therapy departments at GRH-Freeport campus
3. Identify 3 techniques and/or adaptations to apply to clients when facilitating a collaborative recreation and music therapy program within CCC and/or TCU and Rehab.

W14: St. George Community Outreach Program (Each One Reach One)

- ~ Catherine Medeiros, Director of Residents Program
- ~ Sophia Duah, Recreation Assistant

Each One Reach One is a resident program that focuses on helping the most vulnerable in downtown Toronto. At St. George Community, the residents wanted to give back to their local community and collaboratively determined this program would do just that. Each One, Reach One is a program that continually fosters resident, team members, and community engagement and collaboration as they plan each event. This presentation will provide participants insight into the importance of resident-directed programming and ongoing collaboration, community engagement, and the need for continual evaluation. The presenters will share with you the outreach opportunities that have been implemented, strategies to maintain the community connections as well as the experiences the residents have had while giving back to their greater community.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 2 ways a collaborative resident, team, and community program builds trust and can meet the needs of the residents.
2. Identify 3 key components to community collaboration.
3. Learn 3 implementation strategies to plan and facilitate at your organization

W15: Try It Before You Buy It! TR Resource Exploration and Evaluation

- ~ Christine Wilkinson, Part-time Professor, Niagara College
- ~ Debbie-ann Fender, Professor, Niagara College

Have you ever seen commercially available resources advertised that you thought would enhance your TR practice, but been hesitant to commit your budget dollars without being able to tangibly examine and evaluate them? This interactive session will introduce you to a number of exciting and innovative TR resources that the Niagara College Recreation Therapy Program has invested in. These range from unique robotic animals to mindfulness products, to tech-based intervention tools, to dementia-friendly activity kits, and many more. You will learn about our experiences in utilizing these tools both in and outside of the classroom, have the opportunity to closely examine and engage with the resources (taking photos and/or videos will be encouraged to share with decision makers!), assess their potential value for your TR practice, and learn about how and where to purchase these items.

Learning Objectives:

1. Provide a minimum of 3 examples of how the shared resources have been used effectively in TR practice.
2. Identify the pros and cons of a minimum of 5 TR resources for their workplace / TR practice, using the evaluation tool provided.
3. Rank a minimum of 5 shared resources according to purchasing priority.

W16: From Vision to Reality: Building a Thriving Community-Driven Therapeutic Recreation Practice

~ Jessie Jones, Founder, CEO & Recreation Therapist

Discover the journey from inception to success in the field of Therapeutic Recreation as we delve into the presentation "From Vision to Reality: Building a Thriving Community-Driven Therapeutic Recreation Practice." This inspiring session showcases real-world, innovative approaches that have propelled a private practice to prominence. We'll explore the importance of community engagement, innovative strategies, and building a strong foundation in therapeutic recreation. By sharing our success story, practical advice, and insights, we aim to empower TR professionals to embrace innovation and community-driven practices, enabling them to make a tangible impact in their communities. Join us to gain practical, actionable knowledge that connects with the evolving landscape of TR practice, fostering a brighter future for the profession.

Learning Objectives:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of at least 3 key concepts related to innovative approaches and community engagement in therapeutic recreation, as measured by pre and post-presentation assessments.
2. Express an increase of at least 5 points on a motivation and intent scale, indicating a higher willingness to implement innovative approaches in their therapeutic recreation practices, as measured by post-presentation surveys.
3. Actively participate in discussions and generate at least three actionable ideas for innovative approaches and community-driven practices in therapeutic recreation.

W17: LET YOUR RHYTHM SHINE: Drumming and Rhythm for health and wellbeing

~ Ora Goldin

Drumming and rhythm-making are powerful tools for promoting health & wellness for both patients and health-care providers. Empirical research has demonstrated drumming as a group can increase immune functioning, decrease stress & burn-out, enhance well-being, balance mood states, increase focus & concentration, support brain health, and expand communication skills. Intentional drumming can be helpful for people living with a range of issues including Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, chronic pain, depression, anxiety, and more. This activity transcends cultural, language, or age barriers and really allows participants to feel connected, empowered, expressive, and playful. Therapists are essential partners in a patient's health care. Drumming & rhythm-making are important tools for a therapist's own support as well. This innovative and experiential workshop will explore current research on the benefits for multiple populations and varying abilities while offering some concrete takeaways for implementation with your own patients. No musical background is necessary to participate and be inspired!

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 benefits of rhythmic drumming to increase health and wellbeing for clients
2. Identify 3 potential outcomes from participating in rhythmic drumming.
3. identify 3 concrete tolls that can be implemented with clients.

W18: Paws for Wellness: The Dog-tor will see you now

~ Ashley Palmer, R/TRO, St. Josephs Healthcare Hamilton / Senior Recreation Therapist

~ Kelly Bulley, CTRS, R/TRO, St. Josephs Healthcare Hamilton / Senior Recreation Therapist

This session will focus on how to integrate animal-assisted interventions (AAI) into a forensic psychiatry/hospital setting. Throughout the session, we will be sharing information on the development and implementation of the Paws for Wellness program. Paws for Wellness is a program designed to provide opportunities to boost wellness and morale for staff and for patients to develop new leisure skills and improve their social, cognitive, physical, and emotional well-being. There will also be an opportunity for discussion on strategies how to support AAI for safe touch and connection while mitigating risk and current research opportunities.

Learning Objectives:

1. List 2 innovative methods of providing AAI to support patients and staff within a mental health setting (Eg. Resident Dog, Petting Zoo).
2. Identify 3 safety considerations needed when implementing AAI with individuals who are considered higher risk.
3. Identify 3 benefits of engaging in AAI within hospital or mental health setting.

W19: Lights, Camera, Action: Sienna's Quest to Celebrate National Canadian Film Day

~ Erin Matresky, Resident Experience Partner at Sienna Senior Living

~ Second Presenter, REEL Canada

Sienna and REEL CANADA partnered in 2023 and 2024 to implement National Canadian Film Day in all long-term care communities in Ontario and British Columbia. This event promotes community involvement for residents and their families and fosters a sense of community development and national pride. Participation in National Canadian Film Day promotes resident choice and autonomy, as residents have significant involvement in decision-making through the selection of films they want to view to décor and food choices for the day of the event. This event provides residents with intellectual stimulation by allowing them the opportunity to learn more about Canadian Film and Canadian Film Makers. This panel presentation will provide participants with information on National Canadian Film Day, implementation strategies for long-term care settings, and insights into how to create and maintain sustainable community partnerships.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify and describe 3 key metrics of the National and International impact of National Canadian Film Day.
2. Identify 3 key components to a successful community partnership.
3. Identify 3 resources to support with the implementation of National Canadian Film Day in your workplace.

W20: Death Cafe

- ~ Lyndsey Charles, Therapeutic Recreationist, Hamilton Health Sciences - St. Peter's Hospital
- ~ Olivia Rizzi, Recreation Therapist, St. Peter's Residence at Chedoke long term care
- ~ Janet Newbigging, Recreation Programmer, St. Peter's Residence at Chedoke & Recreation Technologist, Mohawk College

This session will introduce you to a unique discussion group where we will explore the profound topics of death and dying, free from any specific agenda, objectives, or predefined themes. Unlike grief support or counseling sessions, a death café aims to enhance awareness of the inevitable, encouraging individuals to embrace the richness of their finite lives. In this space, we will foster open conversations that transcend societal taboos surrounding death. Surprisingly, laughter often finds its place at a death café, creating an unexpectedly uplifting atmosphere. Join us for an engaging and thought-provoking journey into the essence of life and mortality.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 benefits of hosting a death café.
2. Provide 1 example of best practice interventions for advanced care planning.
3. Explain 2 trends within end of life conversations.

T1: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Resource Club

- ~ Rhiannon Buffett, Professor, Canadore College
- ~ Mary Anne Afable, Recreation Therapist, Grand River Hospital
- ~ Hashan Fontaine, Recreation Therapy Student, Canadore College

Within the field of Therapeutic Recreation, we cannot allow our skills and our voices to remain stagnant. We need to learn, unlearn, and re-learn various topics, issues, and trends. Within this workshop-style session, we will explore how to practice digital critical thinking related to DEIB. We will review the consumption of various forms of literature including but not limited to fiction and non-fiction novels, essay collections, podcasts, and documentaries. By co-creating a safe(r) space to discuss topics related to DEIB issues and initiatives, practitioners will be provided the opportunity to reflect upon lived experiences of themselves and others, as well as taken-for-granted notions that influence our work as practitioners supporting a wide array of identities, including equity deserving groups. Participants will work together to develop a variety of resources they can utilize as they continue in their DEIB journey in the field of Therapeutic Recreation.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe 3 important aspects of digital critical thinking.
2. Upon completion of the session, participants will create a list of at least 3 resources related to concepts in DEIB.
3. Upon completion of the session, participants will identify 2-3 implications of the resources on Therapeutic Recreation Practice.

T2: Advancing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Long-Term Care

~ Michelle Fleming, Senior Knowledge Broker, Ontario CLRI at Bruyere

Supporting culture and identity is a critical aspect of people-centered care. As the resident population and workforce continue to become increasingly diverse, the need for thoughtful, intentional efforts to support inclusion and belonging will only continue to increase. Join the Ontario Centres for Learning, Research, and Innovation in Long-Term Care (CLRI) for this session, featuring an in-depth exploration of how to move from awareness raising to action. Learn practical steps to create inclusive and affirming environments in LTC homes. Explore the concept of cultural humility as a foundational framework for fostering genuine understanding and respect. Discuss how to shift from bystander to ally through scenario discussions. Learn about products that have been developed by the Ontario CLRI that can support your equity, diversity, and inclusion journey. This workshop will empower recreation therapists and leaders with the tools and knowledge to create more inclusive environments for residents, care partners and colleagues.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe 2 current strategies that LTC homes are implementing to promote and advance equity, diversity and inclusion in their homes.
2. Provide 1 example of how to shift from bystander to ally.
3. Describe 3 resources available to LTC homes to support inclusive and affirming environments.

T3: Recreation Therapy in Hospice Palliative Care

~ Brianna Brown, C.T.R.S., Hospice Vaughan, Recreation Therapist, Trading Reins, Recreation Therapist & EAL Facilitator

~ Casey Pfenning, Recreation Therapist, Margaret Bahen Hospice

This session is about exploring the close relationship of therapeutic recreation practice and the philosophy of palliative care. We will be exploring how practitioners can improve palliative care supports in long-term care and other populations. Palliative and bereavement care is one population that fits into every organization where TR practices as death and grief are universal experiences for all humans. The largest facet of palliative care is quality of life, which is a priority in all that TR aims to do with clients. This session came about as the presenters were discussing how TR fits at both of their different hospices and how it is not talked about enough in TR despite all of the intersections between palliative care and TR in all populations. Participants in this session will be able to learn about the intersection of TR and palliative care, as well as ways of implementing palliative-based supports in programming with their specific population. We will be especially touching base on long-term care and how palliative care can be better supported by TRs.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 unique ways that recreation contributes to the values of hospice palliative care.
2. Identify 1 application of hospice palliative care philosophy in their population of service.
3. Verbally explain and identify 2 benefits of a legacy project.

T4: Facilitating Bell Choir and Boomwhackers in Care

~ Dawn Ellis-Mobbs, Director of Programs and Community Partnerships - Music Care by Room 217

This session is a practical, hands-on approach to using bell choirs and boomwhackers in care contexts regardless of your own personal music experience! Learn facilitation tips and tricks designed to create meaningful experiences through music, deepening relationships, and providing opportunities for individual and community collaboration. A bell choir is a budget-friendly collaborative, social program that can be used to improve health and wellness outcomes and improve quality of life. This session will include strategies on how to accommodate the needs of individual participants.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe 3 ways the intentional use of music creates more meaningful and inclusive programs for all.
2. Describe 3 proven strategies, tips and tricks that can be used in the facilitation of a group music program.
3. Describe 2 adaptations that can be made to meet the individual needs of participants.

T5: Social Club: A framework for empowering youth through social opportunity

~ Tiffany Morgan, Recreation Therapy Supervisor, Lansdowne Children's Centre

~ Elizabeth Burke, Recreation Therapy Assistant, Lansdowne Children's Centre

The Therapeutic Recreation team at Lansdowne Children's Centre will share their Social Club program implemented for youth with communication, developmental, and/or physical needs. This program is designed to build off individual client goals and results of the Measurement of Social Empowerment and Trust (SET). Upon evaluation of SET results and client strengths/needs, activities are inserted into the program framework. Selected activities provide hands-on opportunities for growth in each SET category and allow for therapist-guided and peer-to-peer learning. As RTs, we have the privilege of making meaningful connections with individuals we serve, and the unique ability to then build programs that provide quality opportunities honoring individuality. Join us as we facilitate a mini version of Social Club, to experience the flow of the framework and discover how quickly social gains can be achieved! Concluding with a presentation of the full program, showcasing activities and methods for successful delivery. Participants can bring a USB to access an electronic resource "binder". With adaptations and the innate creativity of TR providers, we are confident these resources could be utilized with a variety of populations.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify at least 3 different methods of delivering social programming for youth.
2. Identify at least 3 connections between increasing opportunity for meaningful social relationships and quality of life for youth with communication, developmental and/or physical needs.
3. Demonstrate the ability to apply client assessment results to program development and implementation, by selecting 3 purposeful activities for a variety of populations/need.

T6: Where have all the behaviours gone? Unlocking the secrets to TR programming for both “late-stage dementia” and challenging responsive behaviours

~ Laura Elliot, Managing Director, DementiAbility Enterprises Inc.

Dementia is a complex neurodegenerative disorder characterized by cognitive decline and, at times, diverse behavioural changes and challenges. One common challenge faced by TR professionals is that of addressing the needs of those with “late-stage” dementia and those who present with “difficult to resolve” responsive behaviours. This presentation aims to highlight how the DementiAbility Methods, a creative, evidence-based, person-centered approach to care, can help TR staff effectively address even the most challenging responsive behaviours (including “no behaviour” behaviours). This session will discuss how the DementiAbility Methods can be used to problem-solve each situation, through an understanding of the relationship between the brain, life story, environment, and behaviour. The focus of this session will be on exploring how to create program plans for: a) those in the latest stages of dementia and b) for cases that are extremely difficult to resolve using traditional approaches to recreation programming. Case examples along with practical tools and techniques will be provided and discussed.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe 3 ways that individual needs, interests, skills and abilities relate to responsive behaviours of people living with dementia.
2. Describe 3 practical skills that can be used to engage people with late-stage dementia and/or responsive behaviours.
3. Describe 3 behaviour changes that may be observed in people who have dementia and/or responsive behaviours by using DementiAbility Methods.

T7: An exploration into the role recreation therapists have in supporting health and wellness within Forensic psychiatry settings

~ Alicia Kuhr, Recreation Therapist, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton

~ Jon Huys, Recreation Therapist, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton

Forensic psychiatry programs provide care and services to individuals who not only have a mental illness, but have come into contact with the law, and were found not criminally responsible or unfit to stand trial. Previous research has suggested that the side effects of certain medications, the symptoms of a diagnosis, an individual's diet, engagement in smoking, and a lack of physical activity, all play a role in determining the health of forensic psychiatry patients. As such, it is important to have practitioners working within forensic psychiatry programs design and implement interventions that will support in developing, promoting, and maintaining positive health. This session will explore how recreation therapists can implement leisure-based interventions to support positive health and wellness, using a holistic and strengths-based approach.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 2 considerations for developing therapeutic recreation programs for supporting health behaviors within forensic psychiatry programs.
2. List 2 therapeutic recreation interventions that can be implemented to support health behaviors within the forensic psychiatry population.
3. Describe 2 ways that the Good Lives Model of Offender Rehabilitation can be applied to the field of therapeutic recreation with forensic psychiatry settings.

T8: Empowering Independence ~ a look inside Residential Immersive Life Skills Programs

~ Michelle Halliday, Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and Life Skills Coach - Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

~ Stephanie Di Martino, Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and Life Skills Coach - Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital

This session will focus on transitional life skills programs offered through Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital and the impact they have on youth with disabilities between the ages of 17-21 who are transitioning into independent living, adult care, and post-secondary settings. RILS (Residential Immersive Life Skills Programs) is founded on decades of research. This session will provide an overview of the current programs offered and an inside look into what it is like to participate in these programs.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 benefits for youth with disabilities participating in residential immersive life skills programs.
2. Provide 1 example of a Therapeutic Recreation goal area that clients can work on and achieve while participating in residential immersive life skills programs.
3. Identify at least 1 best practice when facilitating a residential immersive life skills program.

T9: Benefits of high-quality concerts for long-term care residents and staff

- ~ Kate Dupuis, Schlegel Innovation Leader in Arts and Aging, Sheridan College
- ~ Debra Chandler, Executive Director, Concerts in Care Ontario
- ~ Julie Music, General Manager, Schlegel Villages

Music can bridge mental, physical, and emotional barriers, stimulate memories, and provide a way to communicate when language is more challenging. Staff can connect with residents and even enhance their own well-being through music. Recreation staff in long-term care (LTC) often hire musicians to provide concerts for residents. In this project, we explored the potential benefits of weekly concerts for both residents and staff of 3 Ontario LTC homes. Residents were observed to react in positive ways to the performances, including singing, clapping, and moving to the music, and demonstrated appreciation and curiosity for the performers and their instruments. Staff indicated that the performances benefited their own social well-being and mood, provided additional ways of connecting with residents and colleagues, and helped them look forward to coming to work. Our results underline the importance and benefits of providing access to high-quality music in LTC for both residents and recreation staff.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe 3 steps to implementing a series of concerts in the long-term care context.
2. Describe 3 ways to evaluate outcomes of these concerts for both staff and residents.
3. Describe 3 potential benefits of live, in-person concerts for staff and residents of long-term care homes, and for the professional musicians who provided the concert opportunities.

T10: Recreating Resilience: Self-Compassion in the Helping Profession, a Heuristic Inquiry

~ Chelsea Lazar, Recreation Therapist, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, Mental Health and Addiction Program

~ Sarah Cake, Recreation Therapist, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, Mental Health and Addiction Program

Managing the risk of stress injury and emotional burden for recreation therapists supporting individuals in healthcare settings is garnering more attention and developing importance in the field. Post-pandemic, recreation therapists continue to tirelessly advocate for their voice in the healthcare system, proving their vital role as a helping profession. The need to prioritize self-compassion is paramount to continue providing effective care and relentless advocacy. This session discusses the concepts of self-compassion, building resiliency, and addressing vicarious trauma as vital components for recreation therapists to maintain their own mental health and provide effective care. The role of self-reflective practice as an essential component of self-compassion is examined. Presenters provide insight through discussion of their own heuristic inquiry of self-reflective practice and engagement with employee wellness opportunities facilitated in their workplace, a Mental Health and Addictions Hospital site. Evidenced-based tools and strategies to build resiliency, manage stress, and self-compassion are offered.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 signs, symptoms, and consequences of compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma, common for professionals in a helping profession.
2. Identify 3 examples of workplace wellness strategies aimed at building resiliency, stress management and self-care.
3. Demonstrate self-compassion by completing 1 evidenced-based, reflective practice tool upon completion of the session.

T11: Legacy Programming: Grand Pals & Personal Life Stories

~ Carolyn Taylor, Recreation Therapist and Spiritual Care Provider - Edgewater Gardens Long Term Care

~ Judy O'Neill, Director of Recreation Therapy at Edgewater Gardens Long Term Care

Participants will learn the importance of supporting the personal identity of residents in care environments through 2 innovative approaches: Community Partners and Family Participation. Grand Pals is a longstanding, highly interactive INTERGENERATIONAL program. Residents are paired with Grade 7 students to share their life stories resulting in a biographical book which is gifted back to the resident at the end of this multi-week program. This addresses self-esteem, personal expression, and relationship building for the resident; Interview/communication skills, story writing and experiential learning for the students. In the interactive portion, participants will apply interview skills and work through the "My Personal Life Story" guidebook. This guidebook may utilize a variety of approaches to glean the social history of residents which informs staff in person-centered care practices and is especially effective when working with individuals living with dementia. Participants will also learn about alternative technology to obtain information for personal life stories.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 opportunities to develop intergenerational connections utilizing community partners.
2. Describe 2 guided interview techniques that can improve information sharing between residents and the care team.
3. Describe 3 benefits of legacy programming.

T12: Towards a Critical Therapeutic Recreation Practice: Creating Care-full Futures for TR through an Ethic of Care

~ Crystal-Jade Cargill, MA Student, Recreation and Leisure Studies, University of Waterloo

The purpose of this presentation is to engage Therapeutic Recreation Practitioners (TRPs) in a critical reflection on the current state of Therapeutic Recreation while holding space for the possibilities of its future. Through a foundational understanding of an Ethic of Care (EOC), TRPs will understand that at its core, EOC involves one's awareness of their interconnectedness and relation to clients and the working environment, the importance of self-care as an extension of care for others. Through a mixture of case studies, practice-based scenarios, and open dialogue with others, can understand how engaging with an EOC supports the cultivation of more caring and care-full futures for our field; not only for clients but practitioners themselves. Underpinning theories and topics will be addressed and defined to provide each practitioner with a dynamic view of the EOC and its position within Therapeutic Recreation.

Learning Objectives:

1. Define ethic of care, interdependence, and the 4 key tenets of Care Ethic.
2. Provide 3 examples of how to engage with an Ethic of Care in Therapeutic Practice.
3. Identify 3 social-justice oriented benefits of engaging with an Ethic of Care in Therapeutic Practice.

T13: "Crashing into Snoezelen-MSE"

~ Kaela Millar, MSE Lab Technologist, Mohawk College

In this presentation, the learner will be introduced to the concept of Snoezelen®- MSE and will explore the evolution of multi-sensory environments in the Netherlands, dating back to the 1970s. In order to deepen one's understanding of this unique practice, the history of disability, and more specifically the history of institutional living, will be analyzed. This presentation will invite one to explore the "8 Favourable Factors" of Snoezelen-MSE as they relate to facilitation and will delve into basic MSE design and equipment, highlighting practical ways that practitioners can utilize these spaces with diverse populations. The presentation will close with a Q&A.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 2 reasons snoezelen was established, the population that it was established for.
2. Identify 3 key steps in facilitating the MSE in meaningful and person-centered ways.
3. Identify 3 standardized equipment and their practical application.

T14: Forest Bathing: More Than A Walk In the Woods

~ Laurie Lamont, Wandering Nature Therapy Walks - Owner

Forest Bathing, Nature Therapy, or "Shinrin-Yoku," refers to the practice of sensory immersions in forests or other natural settings for the purpose of enhancing health and well-being. The practice follows the general principle that it is beneficial to spend time bathing in the atmosphere of the forest in a way that invites healing interactions. The destination in forest bathing is "here," not "there." The pace is slow, not fast. The focus is on connection and relationship. In this interactive presentation, participants will be introduced to the practice and history of Forest Bathing. The presenter will provide evidence-based research and benefits, supporting its use as a therapeutic modality. Participants will learn how it can be used with many different client groups, including seniors in long-term care and survivors of trauma, for example as well as the adaptability of the practice. Delegates will also have the opportunity to experience a forest bathing session on-site.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify 3 examples of Adaptability of Forest Bathing Practice.
2. Identify 2 physiological effects that the practice can evoke.
3. Locate 2 nature therapy guides for future partnerships.

T15: Leisure Needs: How to Assess and Program Plan for Individuals Living with Mental Illness

~ Amanda Wall, Recreation Therapist | Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care

~ Brianne Allan, Recreation Therapist | Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care

This session will explore the process of assessing the leisure needs of individuals living with a Mental Illness. Presenters will discuss potential barriers facing this population and how to adapt to increase leisure participation. Participants will have the opportunity to explore and share practical strategies to assist others in developing programs that will meet the leisure needs of individuals living with a Mental Illness. Working with varying illnesses can make it challenging to create a program that will meet the leisure needs of a group however, this session will aim to spark innovation in program development and enhance confidence in facilitation techniques involving this complex population.

Learning Objectives:

1. Identify a minimum of 3 assessment strategies to determine leisure needs.
2. Identify a minimum of 2 problem solving techniques to assist with overcoming barriers.
3. Identify 2 program planning options for people living with mental illness.

Panel: Creating a Toolkit for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging in Therapeutic Recreation Practice

~ Representatives from TRO's DEIB Committee

The purpose of this session is to provide TRO members with a basic understanding of the terminology and its value and to provide an educational 'toolkit' for members to carry forward in their own personal and/or professional spaces. In 2021, TRO responded to membership needs by creating a diversity and inclusion working group. Since then, the group has grown to become TRO's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Committee. This is in line with TRO's values and the growing diversity in its membership. This session will highlight the importance of DEIB and how we can expand our knowledge and actions to advance the profession. By deepening our understanding of these topics, we can strengthen our client approaches, community advocacy, and organizational management services.

Learning Objectives:

1. Define the terms diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
2. Describe or identify 3 benefits of in DEIB in TR practice.
3. Identify 3 resources to include in a DEIB toolkit.