To Joe Bannon, Sr.,
for his lifetime of dedication
to improving the education
of recreation and park professionals
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Acknowledgments

This complete revision of Kraus’s *Career Perspectives* text would not have been possible without the collaborative efforts of many individuals. We started the project determined to produce a book that would introduce students to careers in recreation, parks, sports management, hospitality, and tourism by helping them link their passions to career possibilities. Like most major projects, this one required more time, creativity, and collaborative effort than initially anticipated.

Thanks go first to the editorial team: Emilyn Sheffield, who ignited my passion for the project by sharing her creative vision; Larry Allen, who proved adept at recruiting qualified authors and getting chapters completed; Jim Murphy, who provided necessary, ongoing mentoring, editorial, and visionary guidance.

Second, this book would not be what it is without retired park ranger and contributing author Tony Sisto’s vision for the passions, pay and perks, preparation, and possibilities model, which he created in his first draft of the Outdoor Recreation chapter. It took a practitioner to show us (the academics) how to communicate clearly and concisely with our future recreation professionals.

We were committed to providing an edited book that was current, consistent in format, and aligned with our audience’s needs. Toward this end, a meeting was held at NRPA in 2008, during which Larry Allen, Bob Barcelona, and Doug Kennedy provided valuable input that shaped the final format. Jim Murphy collaborated with me to produce the “Leisure Service Delivery System: Evolving Structure” model. This model is important because it allows us to place recreation-related careers on a continuum, which honors an emerging future where organizations have flexible boundaries. In chapter 15, Jim graciously shares his vision for forces shaping the future of recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism.

Special thanks go to Dan Dustin, who came up with the “Career with Meaning” title concept; Craig Ross, who shared his expertise on career preparation; and Richard Williams, who allowed me to practice my editing skills with him. All of the contributors deserve special recognition for their time and patience with multiple revisions. Last, but not least, *A Career with Meaning* would not be what it is without all of the recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism professionals who took the time to provide informational interviews, break-out box material, and quotes to make the book useful, informative, and interesting to read. I am grateful to my family and friends, especially Douglas Lamont, who supported me throughout this four-year project.
Our hope is that this text will help move the recreation-related professions toward a new status among undergraduate students: that of intended major rather than discovery major. Too many of our best alumni did not discover this major until they had been in college a while, changing from major to major, searching for the right fit. Eventually, someone pointed them in the right direction, and they “discovered” recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, or tourism. Every day we hear, “Why didn’t someone tell me sooner that I could have a career where I get paid to do this?”

Many thanks to all who contributed to *A Career with Meaning*, which we believe will help resolve this problem by helping students match their passions to the right possibilities earlier in their educational and career planning processes.

—Cheryl Stevens

*Lead editor and contributing author*
Preface

You are probably interested in this book because you enjoy things like sports, the outdoors, or travel, and you like the idea that you could have a career doing something you love. Who wouldn’t want a job where they get up every day wanting to go to work? Plus, you probably have questions like: What kind of a job could I get? How much would it pay? What kind of education and experience will I need to meet my career goals? Perhaps the most important question you have is, “Would I really love it as much as I think?”

The purpose of this book is to connect you with top professionals in all aspects of recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism careers so they can help you find the answers you need. Professionals in recreation-related careers tend to have passion for one or more of the following:

- Being outdoors and caring for the environment
- Helping people have a higher quality of life
- Playing games and sports
- Creating exciting events
- Entrepreneurism and being your own boss

There are few things we can say that apply to all careers in recreation, parks, tourism, and leisure because there are so many different kinds of opportunities. Since these careers cover many settings, skill sets, and populations, answers will vary from person to person. However, if you find you some (or all) of these qualities apply to you, keep reading:

- You think recreation is fun and exciting
- You want to make a difference
- You enjoy working with people
- You enjoy a challenge
- You’re a problem solver and enjoy finding creative solutions
- You like being hands-on and involved in the action
- Sitting at a desk all day doesn’t suit you
- You like doing many different things and being different places
- Being passionate about your career is important to you
- You are open-minded when it comes to people—their varied backgrounds, likes and dislikes, and needs and wants
- You can think on your feet without going off the deep end
- You can be both a leader and a team player, depending on what the situation calls for
- You don’t mind flexible work hours and you’re willing work when other people want to recreate, such as holidays and vacations
- You believe everyone in a community has the right to play and recreate
- You like the idea of helping to create and implement sustainable, eco-sensitive solutions for communities and our environment

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• You would be thrilled to enter a career in which your knowledge and skills are transferable across many fields in recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism, providing continual prospects for personal and professional growth.

We, the editors and contributing authors, would like to promise you that a wide variety of good career opportunities exists—careers with pay and perks such as having a job you love, challenge and personal growth, high job satisfaction and benefits. What it takes is investing time and effort to do some investigation.

Prepare to actively engage in self-reflection and detective work so you can figure out which aspects of recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism could be for right you. Once you figure out your specific interests, you’ll be able to use the chapter on career preparation to make a plan to get the education and work experiences you need to build your ideal career.

As you read this book, you will discover possibilities you’ve never dreamed of, or perhaps, if you’ve thought of them you were unsure how someone could get a job doing “that.” Each of these authors is passionate about what they do, and if one of their career areas is right for you, they would love to have you join their team!
Cheryl A. Stevens, Ph.D.
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Dr. Stevens is a committed recreation educator who has been facilitating hands-on learning in recreation and outdoor leadership for over 25 years. She teaches undergraduate and graduate classes in leisure philosophy and recreation programming. As the recipient of five teaching awards, she continuously looks for ways to improve teaching materials and techniques. In addition to serving as lead editor for *A Career with Meaning* she has written a book titled *Service Learning for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation: A Step-by-Step Guide* and a number of other articles related to teaching and learning.

In addition to her teaching and research, Dr. Stevens has served as a member of the Council on Accreditation for Recreation, Park Resources and Leisure Services (COA), co-chair of the Symposium of Experiential Education Research (SEER), board member of the Society of Park and Recreation Education (SPRE), and editor of the Research Update column in Parks and Recreation Magazine.

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Jim Murphy is Interim Associate Dean, College of Health and Human Services, San Francisco State University. Dr. Murphy received his B.A. in Recreation from San Francisco State University (1966), M.S. with Honors in Recreation and Park Administration from Indiana University (1967), and Ph.D. from Oregon State University (1972).

Jim has authored, co-authored, edited and co-edited seven textbooks including *Concepts of Leisure, Leisure Service Delivery System, Recreation and Leisure Service for the Disadvantaged*, and *Leisure Systems*. He has written many professional and juried articles and conducted numerous workshops and made many presentations at state, regional, national and international conferences. He served a total of six years on the SPRE Board of Directors, including one term as President. He was President of the Academy of Leisure Sciences (2008-09) as well as a Charter Fellow of the Academy of Leisure Sciences (1980). In 2008 Dr. Murphy received the Distinguished Colleague Award of the Society of Park and Recreation Educators, NRPA.
Lawrence R. Allen, Ph.D.
Dean
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In May, 2003, Dr. Lawrence R. Allen became Dean of the College of Health, Education, and Human Development at Clemson University. From August, 2001 to May, 2003 he served as Interim Dean. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Maryland in recreation with a specialty area in counseling and his undergraduate degree in education from West Chester University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Allen has been very active professionally for the past 34 years with memberships in several professional organizations. In 1987, he was elected to the Academy of Leisure Sciences, and in 1995, he served as the President of the Academy. In 1996, he was elected to the American Academy of Park and Recreation Administration. He has a very strong commitment to professional practice in leisure and tourism services and has served on various boards of directors, and state and national committees.

Dr. Allen has written extensively with his primary interest focusing on the impact of recreation and other out of school experiences on individual and community well-being. Along with colleagues at Clemson University, he has authored several articles and manuals revolving around the development and implementation of an outcome based model (Benefits Based Programming) of youth program delivery that enhances the youth’s ability to overcome and cope with the stress and pressures they face in today’s social environment. He has been instrumental in the development of a Master’s degree in Youth Development Leadership at Clemson University and he is very interested in the integration of free-choice learning experiences with the more traditional educational systems employed within the United States and throughout the world.

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Emelyn Sheffield loves every aspect of parks and recreation! She has worked in and taught about tourism, community recreation, fitness, special events, and conference planning in California, Texas, and Missouri. Working with industry sponsors, she develops service learning field schools around themes of national parks, community based stewardship, hospitality, and conference management.

Dr. Sheffield’s interdisciplinary team of faculty, students, and field-based professionals complete destination projects for trails, heritage tourism, and scenic byways. The National Park Service, the USDA Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are recent project sponsors and partners. She serves on the executive boards of the Association of Partners for Public Lands and the California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks, and Tourism.
**Contributors**

**Dr. Robert Barcelona** is an assistant professor in the Youth Development Leadership Program and the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management at Clemson University. Dr. Barcelona received his doctorate from Indiana University after working professionally in the field of athletics and campus recreation. He has worked with numerous recreation and sport organizations in both programming and research efforts and is a member of the Society of Park and Recreation Educators’ board of directors. Dr. Barcelona has won teaching excellence awards at both Indiana University and the University of New Hampshire, and he received a special citation award from the New Hampshire Recreation and Parks Association for his work with youth sports and coaching education. His research on sport and recreation management has been published in refereed journals, trade magazines, and textbooks. Dr. Barcelona is also the co-author of the textbook, *Leisure Services Management*.

**Polly Crabtree** has directed, or provided assistance with, hundreds of events for California State University, Chico in her role as associate director for the Office of Alumni and Parent Relations. These events have run the gamut from small, intimate affairs, to events for more than 1,000 attendees. Crabtree started her post-college career with 17 years of retail management, which provided a good training ground for the fast-paced and chaotic lifestyle of an event planner. Her current position provides her the capability and unique resources to train university students who are interested in becoming event planning professionals.

**Dr. Yao-Yi Fu** is an associate professor of the Department of Tourism, Conventions, and Event Management at Indiana University-Purdue University-Indianapolis. She received her Ph.D. from the Pennsylvania State University in Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Management. Prior to her current appointment with IUPUI, she taught courses in resort and lodging management and hospitality management at all levels at the Pennsylvania State University and at California State University, Chico. She has work experience in hotel and restaurant businesses, special events planning, and theme park planning. Her teaching and research interests include service failure and service recovery in the tourism and hospitality industry, measurement of customer satisfaction and service quality, tourists’ travel decision-making, tourist behavior, and tourism destination development and marketing.

**Dr. Morgan Geddie** is a professor of Resort and Lodging Management in the Department of Parks and Recreation Management at California State University, Chico. Professor Geddie received his doctorate from Oklahoma State University in occupational and adult education with an emphasis in Human Resources Development. He also has an MBA with an emphasis in marketing from the University of Central Oklahoma and a B.S. in Hotel and Restaurant Management from Oklahoma State University. Before joining the faculty at Chico State, he taught at the University of Houston, Oklahoma State University, Eastern Illinois University, and Arkansas Tech University. He also has several years of hotel experience in the New York City, New York and Charlotte, North Carolina markets.
Professor Geddie specializes in the areas of lodging and cruise line management. He has published in many journals and trade magazines as well as being a featured speaker at several conferences.

**Jim Greiner**, founder and president of Wildwater Ltd. Rafting and Starfish Exuma Adventure in the Bahamas, is passionate and committed to outdoor adventures. In addition to his entrepreneurial ventures, Greiner has over 30 years of experience in three cities as a parks and recreation director, and he has been honored with numerous awards in the fields of municipal parks and recreation, tourism, and ecotourism. His wrote *The Middle Atlantic Region Campers Guidebook* and has been involved in leadership roles with a variety of outdoor recreation and adventure organizations such as the Virginia Recreation & Parks Association, Eastern Professional River Outfitters Association, America Outdoors Association (25 years), and Commercial Recreation and Leisure Businesses. Receiving his bachelor’s degree in parks and recreation management from North Carolina State University, and a master’s in leisure services management from Florida State University, Greiner’s real-world experience and academic background provide a unique perspective.

**Doug Kennedy** is a professor and coordinator of the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at Virginia Wesleyan College. He also serves as the associate dean for Campus Recreation and oversees aquatics, fitness, recreational sports, and outdoor activities. Prior to his arrival at Virginia Wesleyan College, he gained experience in environmental resources, employee and campus recreation, fitness, and military recreation while employed in the public and private sectors. He has earned degrees from the University of Delaware, Southern Illinois University, and Temple University. He has also served as the president of the Virginia Recreation and Park Society and chair of the Council on Accreditation. As a three-time recipient of the Samuel Nelson Gray Distinguished Teaching Award, Virginia Recreation and Park Society’s Fellows Award, and YMCA’s Service to Youth Award, Dr. Kennedy has made over 100 presentations at professional events and led delegations to Uzbekistan to assist with recreation planning and democracy education.

**Dr. Craig M. Ross** is professor in the Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies at Indiana University and specializes in sport management. He has written 74 professional articles, five books, three book chapters, 28 technical reports and has delivered 44 teaching presentations, 47 guest lectures, and over 64 state, national, and international presentations. Dr. Ross has received the prestigious Indiana University FACET Award for exemplary teaching, the President’s Award for Excellence in Teaching at the Indiana University, the Excellence in Teaching Award from the National Recreation and Park Association-Society of Park and Recreation Educators, the IU HPER Outstanding Teacher Award, the IU School of Continuing Studies Outstanding Teacher Award, the IU Board of Trustees Teaching Award in 2004 and 2005, and the Teaching Excellence Recognition Award from the IU Board of Trustees Award in 1997, 1998, and 2000.

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**Tony Sisto** is a retired park ranger with over 32 years of experience in the National Park Service. He stays involved with park issues in his volunteer work with the U.S. Association of National Park Rangers (www.anpr.org) and with the International Ranger Federation (www.int-ranger.net). When not traveling to world-protected areas, he lives in California.

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in higher education, Asuncion is considered a multifaceted professional with 15 years of recreation and consulting experience combined. She has facilitated numerous community service needs in the areas of assessment planning, program development, and evaluation. She attributes gaining these transferable skills while working in Armed Forces Recreation. Asuncion has served as a director and program director for community recreation centers both stateside and abroad. She directed the Youth Services Center for Edwards Air Force Base in the Mojave Desert and the 2-2-0 Recreation Center in Korea.

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Recreation improves awareness, deepens understanding, stimulates appreciation, develops one’s powers, and enlarges the sources of enjoyment. It promotes individual fulfillment. It encourages self-discovery. It helps give meaning to life.

—David E. Gray, 1972
Recreation and Leisure in North American Life

CHERYL A. STEVENS
East Carolina University

FOCUS QUESTIONS

Q: I understand why this book covers careers in recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism, but why is leisure important?

A: If you think of leisure as being lazy or idle time, it won’t seem important, but when you consider that leisure experiences are where people can feel free, present, and integrated, you start to understand how it is integral to quality of life.

Q: I heard someone say that recreation is associated with humanism. What does that mean?

A: Humanism, as a school of thought, attaches great importance to human dignity, concerns, and abilities. Social and environmental justice issues and services for important, and sometimes underserved, populations such as youth, elderly, and people who are economically disadvantaged continue to be of the utmost importance. Also, since many North Americans are stressed because they feel rushed and harried, recreation and leisure have the potential to greatly enhance quality of life for all.

Q: What motivates a person to enter a recreation-related profession?

A: Recreation-related professions provide a great opportunity to align your life’s work with something you truly enjoy. Individuals who are attracted to careers in recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism all love some aspect of recreation activities themselves, and they also have a strong commitment to helping others, the outdoors, play, and/or entrepreneurism.
Q: Why do people invest significant amounts of time and money in recreation and leisure experiences?

A: Scientific studies have documented numerous tangible, important benefits to leisure experiences, including things like: stress management, improved physical and mental health, personal growth, spirituality, reduced crime and social alienation, economic growth, and environmental stewardship. Perhaps even more importantly, recreation and leisure experiences add to quality of life and life satisfaction.

**KEY TERMS**

Leisure
Time free from work
Freedom from
Freedom to
State of mind
Recreational activity
Public recreation
Recreation
Public park
Hospitality

Tourism
Play
Humanism
Recreation-Related Profession
Direct service
Inclusive service
So-importants
Benefits
Purple Recreation

**INSPIRATIONAL EXPERIENCES**

Stories are a great way to begin to connect with reasons why people are so passionate about recreation, parks, sports management, hospitality, and tourism experiences:

*A Senior Leisure Experience:* I currently live in a nursing home because I had a severe stroke about a year ago. I can honestly say the only reason I have not gone into a severe depression is our leisure encounter group. The recreational therapists are great and they keep me busy. It’s helped me make new friends, tested my endurance, and it’s something I can look forward to every day.

—Female, African American, Age 72

*What’s Great About Being a Camp Counselor:* Camp was a lot more than I expected because I learned so much about myself. I learned to take leadership for a group of teens and not be afraid of them and what they think of me. I got the chance to make connections with people from different countries and from all walks of life. I got to see the campers overcome their greatest fears and that put a smile on my face. Some were afraid of horses, others didn’t know how to swim, and some didn’t want to try a new activity. I learned to gently push them to their limits without making them push back in the wrong way. Some mornings I didn’t want to get up, but I did. That says a lot about camp life and the positive state of mind you develop while in the company of your camp family.

—Female, Caucasian, 4-H Camp Counselor, Age 22

*Enjoy Work and It Becomes Leisure:* I love computers. I have a degree in computer engineering, and I really love spending hours in front of the computer screen. I asked my sister if I could put a computer inside her computer. She had no clue what I was talking about, but she let me do it. It took me hours—uploading, downloading
different files and applications—but I had a blast. When I finished, I presented it to her with a smile on my face, and then I showed her how to work her two computers in one.

—Male, African American, Age 27

**Competitive Sports:** I played women’s competitive softball for four years. I have so many great memories from the games. Nothing compares to sharing time with friends and others with a common interest; we laughed all the time. I’m very competitive, so that aspect of the game gave me both a release and a chance to show my skills. The tougher the game, the better I liked it. It was such an adrenaline rush. One thing I really miss now is the fitness—I could run, hit, throw, and exercise in a way that felt more like fun than work.

—Female, Caucasian, Age 50

**FRAMING THE DISCUSSION**

These personal stories illustrate benefits that recreation and leisure experiences have for individuals and the professionals that provide them. An important first step in understanding the career options covered in this book is carefully considering the meaning behind some of the terms used in the profession, including leisure, play, and humanism. It’s also important to understand what we mean by each of the words in the book’s subtitle, “Recreation, Parks, Sport Management, Hospitality, and Tourism.” Leisure is the broadest term, so we’ll start there.

*What Do You Mean by Leisure?*

Don’t be too hasty in dismissing leisure as unimportant. The word leisure can get a bad rap when it is equated with being lazy or idle time that is left over when everything important gets finished. However, the meaning of the word leisure is rich and complex, and you should become familiar with these deeper meanings in order to understand what’s meant by “leisure services.”

Alison Link, Leisure Education Consultant tells us that: “**Leisure** has many different definitions—some involving time, some relating to an activity being done, some relating to state of mind. Personally, I am most at leisure when I feel free, present, and integrated. I like this definition for myself, because it allows me to experience leisure at any moment, even in just a few minutes” (cited in Alboher, 2008).

**Leisure and Freedom**

Leisure has been associated with **time free from work** since Ancient Greece, when the best life was seen as one where male citizens who didn’t have to labor had time to pursue truth and self-understanding (Dare, Welton, & Coe, 1998). The Greeks called this time **schol**—note its close association with “school”—because learning for the Greeks was considered to be a part of the best life and a privilege. Since Greeks that had schol did not have to work (in the sense of physical labor), they were able to enjoy learning and thinking freely about interesting questions such as “How should we best live?”

Today, however, we tend to associate school with work, or at least earning our way to a better paying job. In part, this shift in viewpoints happened when the meaning of leisure shifted during Roman times to one that viewed work and leisure as opposites. While Ancient Rome did spread many of the classical ideals in knowledge, arts, music and literature across the European continent, the majority of Roman authors viewed leisure as
Why Do We Stay So Busy?

Americans’ training for a perpetual sense of obligation and productivity starts early, and it doesn’t just affect older adults with mortgages. Consider this narrative written by a soon-to-be college graduate who reflected on leisure, productivity and guilt:

“Work and school consumed so much of my life for many years, so even walking my dog has been done more for exercise than as a leisure activity. When I moved to Florida recently, I bought an annual pass to Disney World, and I have been three times. One Saturday, my boyfriend and I spent the day at Blizzard Beach studying, and then we walked around Magic Kingdom afterwards. I have to admit that I get a sense of guilt when I engage in an activity merely for pleasure, so being productive on my trip to Disney World by doing some homework seemed like the perfect way to spend my time.”

—(H. Chapman, personal communication, June 8, 2009)

otium, which translates as rest and recreation (Neulinger, 1974). This implied that leisure was a time of non-activity that was useful for recovering/restoring for work. Leisure was also viewed as a well-earned rest and reward for a lifetime of hard work (negotium).

This work-leisure dichotomy is how modern leisure is viewed today; that is, that work and leisure are opposite concepts. The Romans believed a person needed to earn his right to rest and relaxation by first working hard. Today, people think about leisure only casually, and continue to view leisure and work as opposites, because the most commonly understood definition of leisure is time free from work. However, it’s important to consider more complex understandings of leisure in order to understand the value of leisure services.

Bregha (1982) expands our understanding of the connection between leisure and freedom when he urges us to consider that leisure can be both “freedom from” and “freedom to.” “Freedom from” is associated with time seen as free from constraint, oppression, or manipulation. For example, if a person views his or her job as controlling of time and choice, he or she will not have a leisure experience while working. However, if a person has a high-autonomy job and feels he or she is in control of, and enjoying, work (which can be creative and meaningful), then he or she may experience leisure and meaning during at least some of the work.

Joe Pavelka (2000), author of It’s Not About Time: Rediscovering Leisure in a Changing World, notes that some people get more meaning and satisfaction from their work than from their non-work time. Ann Hochschild, author of The Time Bind, explains: “today’s managers have successfully engineered the workplace to serve as surrogate family, and while workers will state they value family more than work, they often find work more personally gratifying than home” (cited in Billiteri, 2005). Bear in mind that many people face constraints imposed by many outer and inner forces other than work. For example, a person may make choices that result in a prison term; a child is required to be in school; a person may feel guilty if he is not doing something society thinks of as productive; a person who is unemployed may feel he or she has no right to enjoy time not working because he or she has not earned that right. In sum, a person’s perception of “freedom from” constraints, which is necessary for leisure, is much more complicated than just being off of work.
From a different perspective, thinking about leisure as “freedom to” brings us closer to the deeper meaning of leisure that was implied in Ancient Greece; that is, freedom to engage in something meaningful, significant and authentic to self. Dare et al. (1998) state that,

To live life to its fullest is to live creatively and to understand the freedom which underlies human existence. To understand and accept this freedom is to be authentic. To live meaningful lives we must understand who we are—that is, we must have reflected on our lives and our projects (p. 243).

Finding meaning in one’s life is central to satisfaction. Victor Frankl (2006), concentration camp survivor and author of the book _Man’s Search for Meaning_, concluded that “Life is not primarily a quest for pleasure … but a quest for meaning. The greatest task for any person is to find meaning is his or her life” (p. x). And leisure can be the context in which people connect with whatever is meaningful to them. As Pavelka (2000) notes, “leisure is not so much about time as it is the personal meaning of time” (p. 30).

Bregha cautions us to realize that embracing leisure as “freedom to” can be our greatest opportunity as well as our greatest challenge, because it requires the self-knowledge and wisdom to know what we truly want. In order to embrace freedom, we must be willing to consciously choose goals that will bring long-term happiness and affirm our unique character. This is not always easy in a world where most of us feel our discretionary time is scarce and subject to restrictions. Most people feel they are under a lot of time stress.

In sum, you might be tempted to think that leisure isn’t really very important in our society, but this is only true if you continue to equate leisure with laziness or idle time. As you continue to learn more about leisure, I urge you remember how leisure as “freedom to” is associated with quality of life. Meaningful leisure has the potential to improve anyone’s quality of life because we are human beings, not human doings. Alison Link hints at the importance of leisure in one’s quality of life when she tells her clients, “Leisure can be experienced every day, even if we only have five minutes. Even small amounts can turn ‘surviving’ into ‘living.’” John de Graaf (n.d.) drives this point home when he states that the well-being of people in North America is linked to far more than Gross Domestic Product, and we would do well to ask, “What’s the economy for, anyway?” This line of questioning can urge policymakers to consider the importance and value of health, equality, savings, and sustainability. Thus, one’s attitude toward leisure can make a tremendous difference in quality of life, and this is good news, because personal attitude is something each person can control.

_Leisure as a State of Mind_

The leisure as a _state of mind_ perspective provides a useful way to move past our tendency to view leisure and work as opposites, for if a person is enjoying meaningful work, it is leisure for them. Alison Link describes how leisure can be viewed subjectively as a state of mind, when she says, “Leisure can happen when we are in various [mental] states: artistic or creative, physical, intellectual, social, spiritual, learning new things, volunteering, active, passive, or as a spectator or participant. One can be emotionally connected and engaged or not. And we can even have leisure at work and be more productive, healthy, and creative” (cited by Alboher, 2008). The essence of the “leisure as a state of mind” view is that leisure is a special attitude; in fact, time and activity are irrelevant, because it is personal feelings that matter (Russell, 2009). Therefore, if a person perceives her experience as leisure, then it is leisure for her. Viewing leisure as a state of mind is appealing because it gives value to the individual’s subjective feelings about an experience. If your state of mind tells you that “This experience is meaningful and I choose to do it because it has value to me,” no one can disagree, because leisure depends on your perspective.
Leisure as Recreational Activity

A third view is that leisure is a **recreational activity** that people choose because they expect to enjoy it. Leisure activities may provide personal benefit, reduce stress, and restore peace of mind. Recreational leisure activities can be virtually anything—going for a drive, playing cards or computer games, cooking, or bird watching. People choose different activities for various reasons, and “expecting to have fun” is just one. Other reasons may involve socializing or obligation. For example, we may go to a movie because our friends or family ask us to (i.e., social reasons), or sometimes we go to a “fun” event because it’s expected of us, such as your boss inviting you to a Christmas party (i.e., role obligations). In reality, many people have multiple reasons for choosing a particular activity. For example, a trip to the gym may be motivated by many reasons, such as the desire to lose weight and reduce stress, meeting up with a friend, and the intrinsic joy of moving and feeling powerful.

The main advantage to viewing leisure as activity is that researchers can count it by asking people to record activities time diaries. This way, they can find out how much leisure time people have and what activities they prefer. Time diaries are useful, but they are less than perfect. The primary downside to viewing leisure as recreational activity is that people have different perspectives on the same activity. For example, some people find running enjoyable and meaningful, and for others, it’s work. The leisure as recreational activity view also excludes non-active leisure experiences we may choose for relaxation such as taking nap or daydreaming.

**LEISURE’S MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS**

- **Time free from work**
- **Freedom from (any sense of obligation)**
- **Freedom to (engage in personally meaningful experience)**
- **State of mind (values the individual’s perspective)**
- **Leisure as recreational activity**

Recreation

The National Recreation and Park Association defines **public recreation** as activities that take place at a public park or facility, such as sports, physical activities, experiences in nature or exposure to arts and culture, among other things. Recreational activities can be passive or active and can be engaged by visitors on their own time or they may be organized/conducted by employees of a recreation agency or business. DeGraff, Jordan, and DeGraff (1999) inform us that **recreation** can be viewed as any activity a person freely chooses that has the potential for achieving some desirable outcome. DeGraff et al. define recreation as “an activity that takes place during one’s free time, is enjoyable, freely chosen,
“Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed; if we permit the last virgin forests to be turned into comic books and plastic cigarette cases; if we drive the few remaining members of the wild species into zoos or to extinction; if we pollute the last clean air and dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence, so that never again will Americans be free from noise, the exhausts, the stinks of human and automotive waste. And so that never again can we have the chance to see ourselves single, separate, vertical and individual in the world, part of the environment of trees and rocks and soil, brother to the other animals, part of the natural world and competent to belong in it.

We simply need that wild country available to us, even if we never do more than drive to its edge and look in. For it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures, a part of the geography of hope.

—Wallace Stegner

and benefits the individual emotionally, socially, physically, cognitively, and spiritually” (p. 3). Thus, while recreation and leisure are often used interchangeably, recreation is more easily linked to measurable benefits because it involves people engaging in activities with specific goals, or outcomes, in mind. We will discuss the benefits of recreational activities later on in this chapter.

Parks

The National Recreation and Park Association tells us that a public park is any area, or portions of areas, that are dedicated by any federal, state, or local agency primarily for public recreational use. Therefore, parks include: boardwalks, green spaces, and playgrounds close to people’s homes where they visit on a daily basis; metropolitan and state parks near to urban areas where people can go for weekend visits; and they include large tracts of land such as the National Parks that have been reserved for all. Parks are very important to quality of life even when we are not visiting them on a daily basis because we like knowing the park is there for our enjoyment, as well as the potential enjoyment of future generations. There is something about being outdoors that brings peace of mind and connects us with our sense of place in the universe. As author Rachel Carson noted, “Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.”

Sport Management

According to Dr. Robert Barcelona, Clemson University, sport management is a term that is incredibly wide in scope, and it refers to any one of a number of professional
careers that involve planning, organizing, leading, and controlling sport events, programs, personnel, and facilities (see chapter 9, “Sport Management and Sports Teams”). McLean, Hurd and Rogers (2008) tell us that sport management is not restricted to any one sector, so it’s important for any individual interested in a sport management-related career to think outside the box. There are some career possibilities that may come to mind immediately such as collegiate, semi-professional, professional, and amateur sports, but be aware that jobs in these settings often require specialized skill sets and are highly competitive. If you love sports, you should also think broadly about career possibilities to include areas of sport management such as: sport marketing, guest services and sports clubs (see chapter 9, “Sport Management”); sports arenas, coliseums and stadiums (see also chapter 10, “Events”); intramural sports (see chapter 8, “Campus Recreation”); community recreation youth athletics programs (see also chapter 3, “Community Recreation”); youth sports programs in non-profit agencies and religious organizations (see also chapter 4, “Non-Profit Recreation”); sports programs in military morale, recreation and welfare (see chapter 5, “MWR”), and commercial businesses involving sports facilities and sporting goods (see chapter 13, “Commercial Recreation”).

**Hospitality**

Simply put, the term **hospitality** is providing food, beverage, lodging accommodations, and entertainment (including recreational activities) to guests. The hospitality industry is comprised of many businesses including hotels, resorts, cruise ships, theme parks, clubs, and restaurants. Typically, hospitality is considered to be a component of the tourism industry since all travelers will need hospitality upon their arrival. Hospitality, however, has its own niche, since dealing with guests face to face where they sleep and eat comes with its own special set of opportunities and challenges. Consider that lodging must be available to meet the demands of all types of travelers, whether its families, people with pets, people with special needs and interests, people who want luxury, or those traveling on a budget. In addition to the food, beverage, lodging, and entertainment, recreation specialists also provide activities programs for children and families at destination resorts, timeshares, and campgrounds. If you are interested in providing quality customer service and working in a fast-paced industry that advances people more quickly than many, consider hospitality (see chapter 11, “The Hospitality Industry” as well as chapter 10 “Events,” chapter 11 “Commercial Recreation Businesses,” and chapter 12, “Tourism”).

**Tourism**

**Tourism** can be defined as travel that takes place for recreational, leisure, or business purposes. The World Tourism Organization (1995) defines tourists as people who “travel to and stay in places outside their usual environment for more than twenty-four (24) hours and not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes not related to the exercise of any activity remunerated from within the place visited” (p. 14).

Today, tourism is big business and is recognized as an expanding field within recreation and leisure services, and many argue that it should be seen as a profession in its own right. However, most agree that it is a growth industry, and it is motivationally tied to our recreation behaviors and leisure interests (Sessoms & Henderson, 1994). The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (n.d.) informs us that in 2008, international tourism grew by 2% to reach 922 million. This is up 18 million over 2007, and international tourism generated 944 billion U.S. dollars and accounted for 30% of the world’s service exports. Further, UNWTO forecasts that there will be 1.6 billion tourist arrivals worldwide by the
year 2020. Because tourism is a very significant business today, and due to its obvious tie to recreation activities and leisure experiences, tourism is addressed along with more traditional recreation and leisure services in this book on careers (see chapter 12, “Travel and Tourism” as well as chapter 10, “Events,” and chapter 11, “Hospitality.”

Play

Play is so integrally connected with having fun that our discussion about the meaning of recreation and leisure would be incomplete without it. All people know what play is from personal experience, and play occurs wherever people find it—play can happened anytime, anywhere. As the Non-Sequitur cartoon by Wiley Miller illustrates, children’s play today involves both virtual and in-nature experiences, but both types of activity are play.

Johan Huizinga, author of one of the original studies of play and culture tells us that play has seven defining elements:

1. All play is voluntary activity, and hence, play is linked to freedom,
2. Play is not ordinary, or real life—it is only pretending for fun,
3. Play is limited within time and space in that it has a beginning and an ending,
4. Play creates order by bringing a temporary and limited perfection,
5. There is an element of tension and uncertainty in play,
6. All play has rules that determine what “goes” in the temporary world of play, and
7. Play surrounds itself with an air of secrecy; that is, “we are different and do things differently when we play (p. 12).”

Play can involve participating in a game of pretend, playing soccer, or playing World of Warcraft, and it can occur anywhere—at home, at work, on vacation, and even in a prison, because it occurs in a temporary world constructed by the players.

Questions about play have fascinated people for centuries. Why do people play? What benefit is there in play? Ellis (1977), a recognized play expert, explains that people play for two reasons: (1) to have optimal experiences, and (2) to gain a sense of competence and control. Consider, for example, a girl “playing” teacher with her dolls—she creates the rules of the pretend classroom and has fun handing out rewards and punishments to her “students” She has placed herself in control (a role she cannot take in real life), and her play world affords her the opportunity feel competent and effective, just as she perceives her teacher to be.

As to how people benefit from play, many people think of play as the activity of childhood. Bregha (1982) confirms that’s how it starts: “It is a generally accepted belief
that, as children, we first discover freedom, its delights and dangers, in playing” (p. 1). However, researchers and managers are increasingly discovering that play is very important to adults too. Adult partners who seek novelty and play together, stay together. Play also fosters creativity during work by facilitating the cognitive and affective dimensions, as well as the motivational and skill conditions, of the creative process (Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006). For example, Google erases some of the artificial dichotomizations between work, leisure, and play by expecting employees to spend 20% of their time on non-core projects, which they are expected to explore without allowing considerations of profitability or marketability to hinder their efforts. Why sanction play at work? Because companies are finding that building play into work culture adds to the bottom line by creating more innovative products and employee satisfaction.

Clearly, play adds to one’s life at any age. As playwright George Bernard Shaw once stated, “We don’t stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing.” So, play is important to quality of life at any age, because all humans gain joy from having peak (optimal) experiences and feeling competent and effective, even if only in the moment.

Leisure, recreation and play are clearly linked to optimal human experience. The next section will explain, from a philosophical perspective, what humanism means to recreation.

**Leisure, Recreation, and Humanism**

**Humanism** can be described as a philosophical perspective that attaches great importance to human dignity, concerns, and abilities. Humanists believe that, on a deep level, every person has good inside of them in the form of human spirit, or conscience. Whether or not a person is in touch with, or uses, his or her conscience is another matter (which we will not debate here), but suffice it to say that recreation and leisure service providers have a long history of striving to help people develop their most human qualities.

A humanistic approach to recreation and leisure services is of paramount importance in today’s increasingly stressful and troubled world. As de Graff (n.d.) points out, economic success can no longer be measured in just economic terms like Gross Domestic Product. We must start taking into account other values that constitute the greatest good—health, happiness, knowledge, kindness—for the greatest number—equality, access to opportunity—over the long run—in a healthy democracy and sustainable environment (p. 1). Parks and recreation visionary David Gray noted back in 1972 that “America is turning inward. We are reexamining our thoughts, our ideas, our motives. Our method is introspection and our goal is self-discovery ... the motive is a deeper participation in life” (p. 18). Before you dismiss Dr. Gray’s commentary as potentially outdated, consider its keen relevance to today’s issues:

- Most North Americans believe they face too many demands on their time on any given day and they feel rushed and overwhelmed (Pavelka, 2000)
- For most of the final quarter of the 20th century, Europeans gained relative to Americans in almost every quality of life measure (de Graaf, n.d., p. 2)
- Many people face days filled with tension, boredom, feelings of powerlessness, monotony, and frustration and have increasing problems related to physical health (i.e., heart disease, obesity, diabetes) and emotional health (i.e., anxiety, depression, addiction, and alienation).
- While technology and connectivity have increased work efficiencies, they are merely tools and they will not solve problems with the human condition.
A humanistic ethic is of central importance to the delivery of recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism in today’s world. What this means, in a practical sense, is re-conceptualizing recreation from a humanistic perspective. This means making it our business to promote health and well-being. It means keeping people well versus curing them after they are sick. It means helping people who get sick back to a path where quality of life is of the highest priority. It means viewing recreation as a psycho-emotional-physical response that is independent of the activity. The activity becomes the medium, but from a humanistic perspective recreation is the individual’s internal, pleasurable response to the activity. As Dr. Gray aptly put it:

Recreation is an emotional condition within an individual human being that flows from a feeling of well-being and self-satisfaction. It is characterized by feelings of mastery, achievement, exhilaration, acceptance, success, personal worth, and pleasure. It reinforces a positive self-image. Recreation is a response to esthetic experience, achievement of personal goals, or positive feedback from others. It is independent of activity, leisure, or social acceptance (p. 19).

A growing number of people in North America are seeking new ways to experience the fullest of what life has to offer. Grass-roots movements and the self-help industries are burgeoning with advice to help people improve the quality of their lives by slowing down, focusing on health and well-being, establishing greater intimacy with others, and creating sustainable lifestyles. These approaches to the good life embrace the fulfillment of individuals’ inner experiences rather than the acquisition of things. This is ultimately the work of recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism professionals. Humanistic values are not new to recreation; in fact, they have been with the profession since the beginning.

Next, we are going to take a brief historical tour so you can understand, in a general way, where the profession came from and where it's going. This overview illustrates how recreation and leisure services in America had its beginnings in social services and how the profession has expanded, over time, to meet the needs of many, varied client groups. The good news is this expansion has opened the door for many diverse career options within the recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism professions and meeting humanistic needs is more important now than ever! Note that we will explore the detailed history of each career area in chapters 3 through 13, because we believe history is more interesting and relevant when studied in context.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RECREATION, PARKS, SPORT MANAGEMENT, HOSPITALITY, AND TOURISM

The notion of providing recreational activities and parks in America has its roots in social services and human needs. The profession was established around the late 1800s as the urban population doubled and the Industrial Revolution and immigration resulted growing social welfare concerns. Early social reformers, who were mainly private philanthropists, saw play and recreation as anecdotes to all nature of ills—physical health could be improved by fresh air and physical activity, and moral character and social skills could be learned through organized recreation and play. As you can see from the break-out box, “Our Radical Roots,” the need was great. Consider that in 1890, there were 350,000 children living in New York City, and there were no organized places for them to play (McLean, et al., 2008).
Jane Addams and Joseph Lee are two examples of the profession’s prominent founders. Jane Addams, the daughter of a wealthy man, helped organize support for immigrant settlers and poor laborers. A settlement house, called the Hull House, opened in 1889 in Chicago slums as a neighborhood center to provide multiple social, educational, and recreational services. According to Duncan (1991), Ms. Addams channeled her life’s energies into programs like the Hull House in order to create a more humanistic society. She touched the lives of many, including Joseph Lee, the father of the American playground movement. Like Addams, Lee came from a wealthy family. He was “appalled by the jailing of children for playing in the streets, [and] he established, at his own expense, an experimental playground in Boston” (Duncan, 1991, p. 335). Philosophically, Lee believed recreation should be an integral part of everyone’s life (both adults and children). He wrote an influential book called *Play and Education*, which described the relationships between play, recreation, and the social problems facing our cities (Duncan). Lee and Addams both served as officers in the Playground Association of America, founded in 1906, which is the forerunner to today’s National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

Other events that dramatically shaped the nature of the emerging recreation and parks movement happened concurrently. Central Park was established in 1857 as the first major city park, Yellowstone was set aside as the first national park in 1872, and more than 80 cities initiated their own parks and playgrounds between 1880 and 1900. Thus, the stage
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As the recreation and parks professions matured and diversified, it became accepted that leisure was an end in itself to be enjoyed by all. Public recreation drifted away from a social welfare model (with specific goals to help those in need) toward a model where services were provided for everyone who wanted them (DeGraaf, Jordan, & DeGraaf, 1999). Hence, new kinds of recreation and leisure service providers, which targeted the health and wellness benefits, emerged. These more specialized areas included: armed forces recreation, therapeutic recreation, campus recreation, and employee recreation. In addition, commercial recreation and leisure businesses such as retail sales of recreational vehicles, boats, and equipment and destinations like Disneyland became increasingly popular in post-WWII prosperity and beyond. Of course, non-profit agencies and public recreation and parks continued to operate as well.

As America and other developed countries moved from manufacturing toward a service economy in the latter half of the 20th century, a more specialized class of recreation, parks, and leisure services began to emerge in response to continuing social service needs and people’s growing ability and desire to pay for recreation and leisure. The hospitality industry added value with organized recreation and leisure programs to attract and hold repeat visitor interest. Sports management evolved out of a growing interest in recreation and management opportunities in youth and professional sports. Meeting planning, conference services, and the entertainment industry provided a convergence for business and pleasure. Travel and tourism continued to grow on a national and international scale. Many of these specialized areas are considered professions in their own right, but they are also considered part of the recreation-related professions.

In the 21st century, our recreation and leisure-related professions face tremendous challenges and opportunities. The need for social services and programs that support social justice and the demand for leisure experiences at all points in the cost spectrum has never been greater. People from all walks of life are beginning to reexamine their priorities and consciously seek higher quality leisure experiences. All recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism organizations are being challenged to operate ethically, sustainably, and to respond to the needs of diverse populations.

Individuals who are attracted to careers in recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism all love some aspect of recreation activities themselves, and they also have a strong commitment and attraction to one or more of the following: helping others, love of the outdoors, play, and entrepreneurship and excitement. Let’s take a closer look at these four motivations so we can better understand what drives recreation, parks, tourism, and leisure services professionals.

What Motivates Recreation, Parks, Sport Management, Hospitality, and Tourism Professionals?

Those who work in recreation-related professions are especially passionate about one or more things that give them great satisfaction in their chosen career. Many students searching for a major discover the recreation field and feel like they’ve landed in a gold mine because it’s obvious to them that “This degree will prepare me for a job where I can
look forward to going to work every day!” Recreation-related professions provide a great opportunity to align one’s life’s work with something that corresponds with one’s authentic self. Thus, the recreation professionals whose profiles you’ll be reading throughout this book didn’t arrive there because they were trying to get rich—that might be a secondary outcome—but their first love was something else.

First and foremost, recreation professionals have an intrinsic attraction to some activity or leisure experience that “turned them on” in their youth. What do you love? Maybe it’s soccer, baseball, backpacking, scouts, sailing, summer camp, travel, or kayaking. Mike Gamache, the Director of the Oyster River Youth Association (ORYA), tells us how his passion connects him with his profession: “I played sports and was involved with sports all my life. I’ve always been interested in sports and fitness. I majored in recreation management with a focus in sport studies. I had a chance to interview with the former Executive Director following my internship, and he hired me. I wanted to be at ORYA because I believed that I would be able to make a difference in people’s lives, and learn a lot in the process.” Maybe you love many kinds of recreation and leisure, and the possibilities are truly unlimited.

We’re going to lead you through some exercises in chapter 2 to assess your passions, but we’d like to get you started thinking about what drives your recreational career interests right away so you can see how what motivates you can help you choose the recreation-related career options that may be right for you.

**Helping Others**

Recreation professionals are all about making a difference in people’s quality of life. That difference can be helping others by working directly with clients or helping many on a broader scale (inclusive service). Tom Carr, Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and Program Coordinator for the Northeast Passage Athlete Development Center, talks about what it’s like to provide direct service to others: “Helping to make a difference was a big thing for me. I like to be involved with beginners, and seeing the instant gratification when they are introduced to a sport and get a positive experience. But I do a lot of my work with high level, competitive athletes. What is even more rewarding is seeing their long-term growth. Seeing them begin a sport, and then 10 years later, they are competing in the Paralympics on the national and international stage.”

Sandy Dhuyvetter, the founder, executive producer, and host of TravelTalk MEDIA, provides the type of inclusive service that has a broader effect. She states, “The greatest part about my job is to hear from guests about how we have added value to others’ lives. Travel positively affects people personally and socially, and our world benefits economically as well. Meeting people and connecting people from all over the world is pure joy” (www.traveltalkradio.com). As you can see from Sandy’s comment, some recreation professionals help others on a broad scale.

Matt Postein, from the New England Outdoor Center in Maine, serves both directly and inclusively: “First, there is the satisfaction of seeing our guests have a really great time and feeling the enrichment they are receiving from the experience. The second is being a part of helping our community economically, socially, and environmentally by bringing in visitors who are eco-sensitive, and sharing the beauty and wonder of this wilderness area with them. We do all this while creating jobs and revenue that supports the community.”

Many recreation professionals are driven by the desire to make a positive difference. Our society has many “So Importants,” such as programs, services, and organizations that address social and environmental justice issues. For example, youth need healthy developmental opportunities; the aging and elderly populations deserve active, high-quality lives; persons with mental, physical, and emotional disabilities can be reached through recreation and leisure experiences in ways that they cannot be reached by clinical treatment; people and communities that are coping with crime, poverty, and racial tensions can use
recreation and leisure to build common bonds; communities can be strengthened through sustainable tourism; and, the environment can be preserved and enjoyed simultaneously when we follow sustainable practices. There are no limits to the needs and opportunities for those interested in using recreation and leisure experiences as a means to improve quality of life.

Love of the Outdoors

Are you drawn to the great outdoors? When you are in nature, do you feel at peace? Those who love working in the outdoors have a strong bond with nature. Some people would love nothing more than to work outdoors. They may be particularly interested in preservation and protection, providing positive outdoor experiences, or both. Maybe you can relate to this anonymous blogger who wrote, “I love taking long walks, collecting my thoughts as I enjoy the sights and sounds of nature. I like camping, looking up at the stars, breathing in fresh air. The beauty of nature is unmatched, and we should take the time to appreciate it.”

Ginny Alfriend, Park Specialist for the City of Eugene Parks and Open Space in Oregon, states, “We are outside most every day of the year and time all of our activities to the weather and season. It is a real treat to have my ‘office’ share space with a Pileated Woodpecker!” So, if you love the outdoors in an extraordinary way, the recreation professions provide a number of ways you can work in and for the out of doors.

Play for Life

Earlier in the chapter we talked about how play is a universal human experience. If you are one of those people who have kept your childlike passion for play as an adult, you may be motivated to share it with others. Jack Wise, the CEO of Wildwater Rafting, talks about the value of having fun: “I would have to say that the most rewarding [thing about my job] is to have new and exciting experiences in a special environment. It’s also a bonus to be able to be involved in all these fun experiences myself.” Given that the desire to play-hard/ work-hard is a wide-spread phenomenon in American culture, it’s not surprising that many would love to have a job where they can do just that!

Entrepreneurism and Excitement

An entrepreneur is a special type of person who is drawn to the excitement of combining innovation and risk taking to create and sustain a business venture. He or she provides the leadership for the venture and assumes a significant amount of accountability for the risks and outcomes inherent in that enterprise (Ó’Sullivan & Sheffrin, 2003). Phrases that describe entrepreneurs include: innovator, creator, risk taker, problem solver, and catalyst for change. Starting and maintaining innovative business ventures is not for everybody, but entrepreneurial skills are increasingly needed in all sectors of the economy. That is, public, non-profit and for-profit enterprises increasingly rely on entrepreneurial skills because financial sustainability is no longer a given for any type of organization. Indeed, as we move to a more social economy (more on this concept in chapters 2 and 15), an increasing number of professionals will be called on to blend their entrepreneurial abilities with their passion for making a difference.

John Hope-Johnstone, the CEO of Corvallis Tourism, is one such entrepreneur in a recreation-related profession. John tells us, “I started my tourism career as a travel agent, then as a tour wholesaler, then as a hotelier, then owned my own bed and breakfast in Hawaii, and now I am finishing my tourism career in destination marketing.” John goes on to explain how innovation permeates what he does: “Travel and tourism always stays on
the cutting edge. When the Internet search engines started to blossom as a marketing tool in the ’90s, many of the first online e-commerce businesses were travel-based.”

If you have entrepreneurial abilities, crave the excitement of solving problems and being on the cutting edge of innovation, you will find a number of recreation-related careers that appeal to you, including: sport management, the hospitality industry, travel and tourism, event management, and commercial recreation businesses. Depending on your unique abilities and interests, you may also find ways to combine your entrepreneurial aptitudes with other passions, such as becoming the head of a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and protecting open space.

Now that you’ve become familiar with motives for working in a recreation-related profession, let’s take a look at what motivates clients to engage in recreation and leisure experiences. Understanding the benefits of recreation and leisure experiences will help you better understand how these experiences help people acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities that help them live more satisfying lives.

**Motivation for Recreation and Leisure Participation**

Generally speaking, people are motivated to engage in recreation and leisure experiences because of a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic motives. For example, I may attend my department’s softball game because it’s expected of me as part of my work-role (extrinsic motive—I feel I have to be there because my boss asked me to come), but I may also think it will be fun (intrinsic motive—I go because I want to enjoy myself). In most cases, people choose recreation experiences because they anticipate receiving one or more benefits.

According to Bev Driver (2008), the recognized expert on outcomes and benefits of recreation and leisure experiences, there are three types of **benefits** we should be aware of. First, there are those benefits that are associated with an improved change or condition (p. 4). This implies that a new state is viewed as more desirable than a previous state. These changes could occur within individuals, groups, or biophysical and cultural resources. Examples include improved health, learning, social bonding, improved economic viability, and improvements in natural or man-made environments. A second type of benefit is the maintenance of a desired condition, prevention of an undesired condition, or reduction of an undesired condition (p. 4). An example is protecting natural resources in order to provide opportunities for visitors to maintain their physical and mental health. A third type of benefit is, quite simply, the realization of a satisfying recreation experience (p. 4). It is very important to place a high value on people having satisfying experiences regardless of whether or not any improved conditions can be easily discerned or measured. As pointed out by Estes and Henderson (2002), “Professionals shouldn’t forget … that the outcomes related to enjoyment are still at the core of what makes our profession unique and valuable among other human service areas—we facilitate fun and intrinsically motivating experiences. Although the values of our profession go beyond ‘fun and games,’ enjoyment is, at all times, central to our work” (p. 22). Driver classifies benefits into four types: Personal, Social/Cultural, Economic, and Environmental. See Table 1 to better understand these potential positive benefits.

Documentation of benefits has only come about fairly recently since recreation and leisure experiences tend to be very personal, and often subjective, in nature. However, as you gain more education and experience in recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism, you will gain a better understanding of benefits and how they can be used to manage the best possible recreation and leisure experiences for your clients. While most people are motivated to engage in recreation and leisure experiences for positive benefits
like those shown in Table 1.1 (e.g., fun, relief from stress, physical health, being with friends and so on), it is also important to be aware of the darker side of recreation motivation.

### Table 1.1

**Selected Benefits that Have Been Attributed to Leisure by One or More Scientific Studies**  
(adapted from Driver, 2008, p. 10-11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Personal Benefits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mental Health and Maintenance of such:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Holistic sense of wellness</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Stress management</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Prevention of and reduced depression, anxiety, and/or anger</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Positive changes in mood and emotion</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Personal Growth and Development</td>
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<td>• Self-esteem</td>
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<td>• Self-confidence</td>
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<td>• Value clarification</td>
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<td>• Leadership ability</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teamwork/cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Balanced living</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Acceptance of one's responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Academic and other mental performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Personal Appreciation and Satisfaction from:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sense of freedom</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Self-actualization</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sense of adventure</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Perceived quality of life/life satisfaction</td>
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<td>• Nature appreciation</td>
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<td>• Spirituality</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Psychophysiological</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Cardiovascular benefits, including prevention of hypertension and strokes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Better muscle functioning and strength</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Decreased obesity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Increased life expectancy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Improved perceived quality of life</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reduced need for medications</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. Social Cultural Benefits and Improvements</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Community identity, satisfaction, and morale</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reduced social alienation</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reduced crime</td>
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<td>• Ethnic social integration</td>
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<td>• Family bonding/better life</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Conflict resolution/harmony</td>
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<td>• Prevention of social problems by at-risk youth</td>
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<td>• Developmental benefits in children</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Increased independence of older people</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Increased longevity and quality of life</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 1.1 CONT.

III. Economic Benefits
- Reduced health costs
- Increased productivity
- Less absenteeism
- Local and regional economic growth
- Local amenities help attract industry
- Employment opportunities
- Promotion of places to retire and associated economic growth
- Increased property values

IV. Environmental Benefits
- Stewardship and preservation
- Improved air quality through urban forestry
- Understanding human dependency on the natural work
- Public involvement in environmental issues
- Environmental protection
- Ecosystem sustainability
- Preservation of particular natural sites/areas
- Promotion of ecotourism

Living Near Green Spaces Positively Influences Health

There is new evidence that living near a green space has health benefits. New research published in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* indicates that living near green spaces has tangible benefits to human health. The best health benefits come from living less than one kilometer (3/5 of a mile) from a green space. The research shows that the impact is particularly noticeable in reducing rates of depression.

Other health indicators that benefit from proximity to green spaces include: coronary heart disease; neck, shoulder, back, wrist, and hand complaints; depression and anxiety; diabetes; respiratory infections and asthma; migraine and vertigo; and stomach bugs and urinary tract infections.

While people often report that time in nature reduces their stress and helps them feel better both physically and mentally, this is the first study to demonstrate that proximity to nature translates into fewer health problems.

Researchers looked at the health records of 195 family doctors and 350,000 individuals across the Netherlands, and tracked how often patients were diagnosed with 24 different disease types. Researchers mapped the amount of green space near each patient's household by using postal codes and land use data.


Taken from: "Community Health Priorities: Join the Conversation" Retrieved December 13, 2009 from www.communityhealthpriorities.org/conversation/comments/living_near_greenspaces_proven_to_positively_influence_health/
The Darker Side of Motivation

Let’s face it—not everyone engaging in recreation and leisure experiences has moral, health-enhancing benefits in mind. Humans are driven to seek pleasure, and they are often hedonistic—that is, self-indulgent and reckless—in their choice of activities. In fact, our cultural belief system tells us that when we have worked really hard for a long time that we have earned the right to play hard. In other words, we are prone to thinking, “Thank goodness that’s over, now it’s time to go blow off some steam.” Left to one’s own devices (which means the individual is free to do what he or she wants), many will choose experiences that are potentially harmful to self, others, or society.

Curtis (1988) believed that any recreation professional preparation program should include consideration of purple recreation. He coined the term “purple recreation” to refer to “those activities and interests indulged in by youth and adults during non-work, non-study free time that do not fall within the parameters of what society generally views as wholesome or good” (p. 73). Curtis points out that many purple recreation activities are not starkly bad or evil, as they may be victimless crimes, such as a college students drinking too much after final exams (assuming they make it home safely). They’ve harmed no one but themselves, and the harm may be minimal in the form of a hangover. However, some purple recreation can be quite harmful even when the person did not intend harm. Consider drinking and driving, binge drinking, heavy drug use, dog fighting, compulsive gambling, pornography, prostitution, and so on.

Our intention here is not to engage in a lengthy discussion about hedonistic behavior, but rather to acknowledge its existence and explain why this knowledge is important for future recreation professionals. Dustin, McAvoy, and Shultz (1991) point out that the only virtuous act is one that is freely chosen. Therefore, our role (as recreation professionals) is not to go around forcing people to do only moral, beneficial activities. However, it is our job to ensure that recreation and leisure experiences provided by our agencies are as safe and beneficial as possible. In many instances, recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism organizations will be providing healthy activities that promote positive benefits and moral character development. In other cases, agencies may provide mild purple recreation activities—especially when the paying customer desires them. However, in these cases, it’s important that we, as recreation professionals, always remain aware of the potential for harm and practice good judgment about what activities we willingly provide and practice good risk management to minimize harm.

Conclusion

In conclusion, recreation, parks, sport management, hospitality, and tourism professions are rich with meaning, history, and benefits. There are many young professionals who will find a career under this umbrella who will love their jobs and look forward to going to work every day. To a certain extent, all recreation professionals are leisure educators, too. This is a growing and diverse field, rich with challenges and opportunities. The desire to make a positive difference while doing something one loves is indeed a unique opportunity for leaders in this profession to embrace opportunities to improve quality of life for all.
For Further Investigation

For More Research

A growing number of people in North America are seeking new ways to experience the fullest of what life has to offer. Grass-roots movements and the self-help industry are burgeoning with advice to help people improve the quality of their lives by slowing down, focusing on health and well-being, establishing greater intimacy with others, and creating sustainable lifestyles. Do some research via the Internet to locate at least five facts about Americans’ views of time, work, and leisure. Which public policy agenda items are the most intriguing to you? What do you think about these grass-roots movements? Six websites you should explore are listed here:

Take Back Your Time
(http://www.timeday.org/)

Right2Vacation.org
(http://www.timeday.org/right2vacation/default2.asp)

Families and Work Institute
(http://familiesandwork.org/site/about/main.html)

MomsRising.org
(http://www.momsrising.org/)

Common Good: Restoring Common Sense to America
(http://commongood.org/)

The USA Affiliate of the International Play Association: Promoting the Child’s Right to Play (http://www.ipausa.org/index.html)

Active Investigation

1. Collect your own stories about people enjoying recreation and leisure experiences. Ask one or more individuals to tell you about what recreation or leisure they enjoy the most and what they got out of it (benefits). Write a paragraph for each story. Identify the person by sex, age, and ethnicity (e.g. Female, age 25, Caucasian) to share with others in your class. Classify the story into one of the following types of experiences:

   - Someone enjoying an eudaimonic-type leisure experience (i.e., something that involves good action and no goal other than enjoyment; the experience is an end in itself)
   - Someone who is benefiting from a youth recreation program (i.e., after school, summer camp), a person with disabilities, or elderly person
   - Someone benefiting from a recreational experience (i.e., play, sports, etc.)
   - Someone (or the environment) benefiting from outdoor recreation experience, preferably a park
   - Someone enjoying a commercial recreation/leisure experience (i.e., concert at an arena, Disneyland, etc.).
• Someone enjoying a vacation at a resort or adventure travel experience
• Someone enjoying a virtual leisure experience (i.e., electronic game, social networking)
• Someone enjoying a hedonic leisure experience (i.e., drinking alcohol, gambling)

REFERENCES


