The Voice

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New York State Recreation & Park Society

New York State Therapeutic Recreation Association

REC SUMMIT 2019

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2019 REC SUMMIT

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The Inclusive Recreation Resource Center

New York State
Recreation and Park Society

INSIDE: THE 2019 NYSRPS COMMERCIAL BUYER'S GUIDE

The Inclusive Recreation Resource Center:

A Resource for Parks and Recreation Professionals

By Dr. Lynn Anderson, CTRS, CPRP, Center Director

Inclusive Recreation Resource Center

The Inclusive Recreation Resource Center, headquartered at SUNY Cortland, is entering its 12th year of service to the profession and to people with disabilities and their families. Our mission, to help ALL people play wherever they choose, continues to guide our work and help the Center develop services and products that will foster inclusion in recreation.

Over the past year, we have fine-tuned existing training, developed new training, and developed app-based products that help professionals in the field implement inclusive services. This article will highlight these new developments and ways you can use them at your agency.

The Inclusion Ambassador Training Online

The Inclusion Ambassador Training Online is an exciting and fun way for staff and others to earn certificates and badges as they learn how to promote inclusion. At the end of the 3-hour online training, students receive a certificate of completion and become an Inclusion Ambassador. The training is fun, interactive, and educational. A teenager with Down syndrome, Jess, guides students through the six units in the training via animated cartoons. Social media is used to post optional experiential projects and activities. After extensive piloting, the training is now available free of cost to any Certified Inclusivity Assessor (CIA) who has completed Inclusion U Online. A CIA can invite as many people as they would like to complete the training for free.

The ideal way to use this training in parks and recreation agencies would be to have full-time staff, or at minimum, inclusion coordinators, complete Inclusion U Online, then mentor part-time, seasonal, or volunteer staff in completing the Inclusion Ambassador Training. Since the online training can be done anywhere at your own pace, supervisors can just ask staff to provide them with a copy of their Certificate of Completion. Several agencies are now using the training, and the feedback has been highly positive.
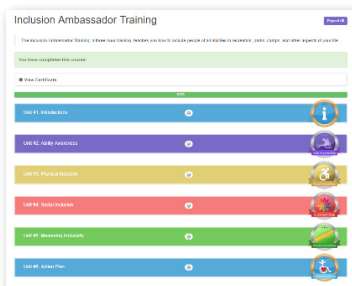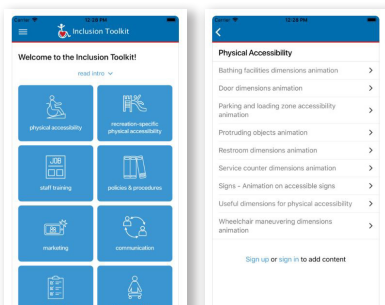
App-Based Inclusion Tools

The Inclusive Recreation Resource Center now has three apps available for free in the App Store and Google Play, for both Apple and Android mobile devices.
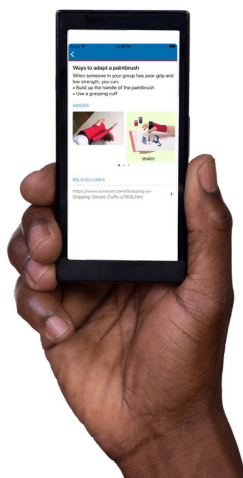
The IRRC Inclusion Toolkit App

The Inclusion Toolkit App is a sort of "recipe box" of inclusion tips, tools, and best practices organized according to categories that reflect Inclusion U and the Inclusion Ambassador Training. The app is pre-loaded with tips and tools to promote inclusive recreation. A key feature of the app is that you can add whatever you find helpful, individualized to your unique agency and program needs - notes, photos, videos, web links, PDFs, documents, and whatever else you want ready access to in the field. You can create your own categories as well. You can use the Inclusion Toolkit in a multitude of ways to help staff implement inclusion at your agency. Training videos, policies, and more could be added to the toolkit and staff could pull them up on their mobile device at any time.

Inclusion Toolkit App icon

Inclusion Toolkit App screen shots

The IRRC CIA App

The CIA App is available for all Certified Inclusivity Assessors. You can download the app for free, then use your CIA login and credentials to use the app. The CIA App allows certified inclusivity assessors to complete the Inclusivity Assessment on their mobile devices, then sync the inclusivity assessment to the online recreation database on the IRRC website. The app makes it easier to complete inclusivity assessments in the field.


CIA App icon

The IRRC Recreation Finder App

The IRRC Recreation Finder App is available to the general public for free. This app provides descriptive information about the inclusivity and accessibility of recreation areas in a searchable database. You can find the recreation nearest you with the activities you want to do. Each entry in the comprehensive recreation database includes descriptive information about inclusivity and accessibility for people with disabilities. The comprehensive database contains hundreds of recreation areas with information collected by trained and certified inclusivity assessors.

Recreation Finder App icon
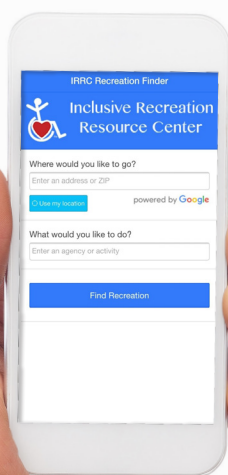
Inclusion U Online

Inclusion U Online is a 10-hour training that teaches you how to be a Certified Inclusivity Assessor. In Inclusion U Online, you will learn the foundations of inclusion and how to use the Inclusivity Assessment Tool. Inclusion U Online has nine modules. For each module, you take a quiz to advance to the next module. At the end of the nine modules, you take the Inclusion U Final Exam to show that you have gained the knowledge and competency to be a Certified Inclusivity Assessor (CIA). You are then able to complete inclusivity assessments, using the Inclusivity Assessment Tool. You will be able to add your inclusivity assessments to the IRRC online recreation database.

Upon successful completion of the Inclusion U Online training, you will be able to print out your CIA Card and a Certificate of Completion. In order to receive 1.0 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for Inclusion U Online, you mail a copy of your Certificate of Completion, along with the CEU fee to NYSRPS. NYSRPS provides CEUs according to the guidelines of the IACET (International Association for Continuing Education). Inclusion U Online is also CE Pre-Approved by NCTRC for CTRS recertification.

Well over a thousand people have completed Inclusion U Online to date, from all over the U.S. and Canada. Though most register as individuals, some took advantage of the group rate package, a cheaper staff training option, described on the website. In addition, many university students participated in Inclusion U

Online, with professors having an enhanced role to track student progress. Universities include SUNY Cortland, Ithaca College, TC3, University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, University of South Alabama, SUNY Upstate Medical, Syracuse University, Clarkson University, Arizona State University, Full Sail University, St. John Fisher College, SUNY Brockport, SUNY Fredonia, Nazareth College, Memorial University of Newfoundland, SUNY Albany, Benedictine College, Dakota College at Bottineau, University of Texas, El Paso, Southern Connecticut State University, University of Rochester Medical Center, and the University of the Sciences, to name a few!

What's Next?

The IRRC is working on a stand-alone trail accessibility tool, used in conjunction with the AllTrails App and expanding on the existing trail accessibility checklist, along with a short free online training on how to use the trail tool. The goal is to have as many trails as possible in the online recreation database, since walking and hiking continue to be the most popular recreation activities, including those with disabilities and information about trails is vital to plan a safe, accessible outing. Currently Syracuse University is using the process to map their "Monday Mile" program.

You can access all the trainings and tools described here on the IRRC website at www.inclusiverec.org. Please feel free to email me as well at lynn.anderson@cortland.edu or inclusiverec@cortland.edu.