KICKOFF KEYNOTE SPEAKER

J. DREW LANHAM, PhD

“PASSION AS PLAYTIME — WHY LOVING WHAT WE DO CAN SAVE US”

Alumni Distinguished Professor of Wildlife Ecology, Master Teacher and Certified Wildlife Biologist – Forestry and Environmental Conservation Department. Clemson University

His published writings — “The Home Place: Memoirs of a Colored Man’s Love Affair with Nature,” “Sparrow Envy: Field Guide to Birds and Lesser Beasts,” and numerous essays and articles — chronicle his experience as a Black man raised in South Carolina with a fascination for wild places and the feathered creatures that inhabit them.

HEALTH AND PLAY INSTITUTE

The 2022 Health & PLAY Institute is a half-day series featuring leading health professionals and researchers from across the country. The institute is part of the 2022 IN PERSON Conference on the Value of Play: THE NATURE OF PLAY.

Building on the inaugural Online Health & PLAY Institute, the second annual Health & PLAY Institute (HAPI22) kicks off with lunch on Monday, April 4.

This year, we will examine the synergies between play and health through the lens of the conference theme, THE NATURE OF PLAY.

The Therapeutic Benefit of Nature PLAY in Acute and Chronic Pain

Michael Suk, MD, JD, MPH, MBA, Chief Physician Officer, Geisinger System Services

Distraction means shifting or moving your attention away. It does not mean that the pain is no longer there. It just means that you use your brain to focus your attention onto something else. You can put your pain in the background and focus instead on playing games, counting, using breathing techniques and many other activities. Learn how we merge technology and techniques in the management of acute and chronic pain in orthopaedic conditions.

The Nature of Play

Stuart Brown, MD, Founder of the National Institute for Play

Looking at life itself through the lens of Nature, even single celled billion year old bacteria have the capacity to... cooperate together and thus better survive. And 500 million year old Octopi just may... play. So as we look at play precursors, and then play itself as it manifests itself most fully in our species. What messages does nature have to provide us as we view this long term vista of play?
Pushing Through a Fixed Notion of Play

Brooke Buckley, MD, FACS, Chief Medical Officer, Henry Ford Wyandotte Hospital

We are good at making quick judgements. Those same judgements cause all-or-none thinking. Commonly adults perceive play as childish, unbecoming, or underserved. We will explore concepts of play and ways that we can evolve those concepts to unlock play’s true potential to bring on successful adulting.

Environmental Determinants of Emotional Intelligence: Role of Nature Play and Greenspace Exposure

Matthew Browning, PhD, Assistant Professor, Parks Recreation and Tourism Management 
& Director of the Virtual Reality & Nature Lab, Clemson University

We found evidence that emotional intelligence in young adults growing up in relatively lower-income areas was positively associated with cumulative neighborhood greenness around childhood homes. If research also finds salutary effects of greenness among general or specific populations – and if a causal link exists between nature exposure and emotional intelligence – then neighborhood greening might help children’s future personal and professional success through enhancing their ability to manage emotions.

National Study of Playgrounds

Deborah A. Cohen, MD, MPH, Research Scientist, Kaiser Permanente
Meghan Talarowski, PLA, ASLA, CPSI, Founder and Executive Director, Studio Ludo

In the summer of 2021, we used direct observation to collect play behavior data on almost 33,000 people in 60 playgrounds in 10 major US cities. The findings are part of the National Study of Playgrounds, a partnership between researchers at Studio Ludo, Kaiser Permanente, and the RAND Corporation.
KEYNOTE PANEL

POWER PLAYER PANEL: THE NATURE OF PLAY
Four incredible thought leaders tackle the 2022 theme.

FRAN MAINELLA - “The Value of Play”
Chair Emeritus, US Play Coalition & Former National Park Service Director
Fran P. Mainella was the first woman Director of the United States National Park Service and served from 2001-2006. She is a Visiting Scholar at Clemson University in the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management and Co-Chair of the US Play Coalition. She also currently serves as Treasurer for the Children and Nature Network Board of Directors. She is also a board member for the National Park Trust and an international speaker on the Value of Play and Reconnecting with the Outdoors.

DEEPTI ADLAKHA, PhD - “A Call to Action – Designing for Outdoor Play and Healthy Childhoods”
Director, Natural Learning Initiative
Deepti Adlakha, PhD, is Director of NLI and Professor in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at NC State University. Dr. Adlakha comes from the School of Natural and Built Environment, Queen’s University Belfast, UK. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Architecture, a master’s in Urban Design, and a Ph.D. in Public Health from the Brown School, Washington University, St. Louis. Her interests lie at the intersection of relationships and disparities between the natural environment and human health.

SARAH MILLIGAN-TOFFLER -“Nature Play Spaces – Transforming Cities into Centers of Well-Being”
President & CEO, Children & Nature Network
Sarah Milligan-Toffler brings her passion for the healing power of nature to the Children & Nature Network. She works with the Board and staff to establish a vision and plan for improving equitable access to the benefits of nature across the U.S. Sarah is the recipient of the 2017 George B. Hartzog, Jr. Environmental Awards Program, Fran P. Mainella Award for sustained and innovative achievement by a woman in the management of North America’s natural, historic and cultural heritage.

DEBORA B. WISNESKI, PhD
“The Nature of Play in Education”
Early Childhood Education, University of Nebraska at Omaha & past president of The Association for the Study of Play
Dr. Wisneski has taught for over 30 years at the preschool, kindergarten, and higher education levels. She is co-author/ co-editor of texts and journals such as the text Reconsidering the role of play in early childhood: Toward social justice and equity (2018) and The Developmental Benefits of Playgrounds (2004). Her research includes how educators can support children’s play in educational settings. Wisneski leads a team of teacher educators and researchers at the University of Nebraska Omaha on play and assisted in the creation of the UNO PLAY Lab.
**FEATURED SESSION RECORDINGS**

**Play is for a Lifetime, What is YOUR play personality?**  
**Stuart Brown, MD & Tom Norquist**  
*Recorded live on Sunday, April 3rd*  
Are you activating your own play personality? This session will provide insights to identify spontaneous joy and deep engagement as your play personality. Learn from the animal worlds and from some 6000 play interviews that play personalities of kids, friends and family demonstrate some of the Nature of Play.

**The Playful Life: The Power of Play in our Every Day**  
**Julie Jones, PhD, and Jed Dearybury**  
*Recorded live on Sunday, April 3rd*  
As play professionals, we create spaces, conduct meetings, teach students, & advocate for the power of play. But how much time do we dedicate for playful living in our own lives? Explore why we all need play and how play can occur anywhere, anytime, and with anything.

**COVID Roadblocks Disrupting Play Opportunities: Fighting Back**  
**Deborah Rhea, PhD**  
*Recorded live on Sunday, April 3rd*  
The LiiNK Project, a 60-minute recess intervention, has been implemented successfully across diverse learning environments to improve whole child development. Unfortunately, state and local school officials are using COVID as a roadblock to nature. This session will focus on how to tackle these continuous roadblocks through health and physical literacy components.

**Playful Pandemic - How Play Clubs, Nature Play, and Extra Recess Are Helping Students Thrive! | Kevin Stinehart**  
*Presented Monday, April 4th*  
Playful Pandemic will explore how one school thrived through the last two years of the pandemic by adding extra recesses, Play Clubs before and after school, and nature play. The results they’ve had are undeniable - decreased office referrals, deceased mental health issues, increased sense of well-being, less social isolation, and increased happiness school-wide!
FEATURED SESSION RECORDINGS CONTINUED

5 Resources to Foster Family Engagement through Nature-Based Play
Daniel Hatcher & Seth Shelby
*Recorded live Tuesday, April 5th*
Join the Alliance for a Healthier Generation for an interactive workshop featuring free resources and strategies to engage the whole family in wellness. Attendees will learn (and practice) nature-based activities to support physical, social, and emotional health.

Active Play: What Role Did it Have in our Evolutionary Past and How Vital is it for our Future? | Darryl Edwards
*Recorded live Tuesday, April 5th*
It will be proposed that although most of us are aware that play is important for children, we are less familiar with the underlying evolutionary mechanisms that make it useful for mind and body in the present.

Playing While Black: The Use of Storytelling For Play Inequity
Courtashia Felton & Corliss Outley, PhD
*Recorded live Tuesday, April 5th*
The workshop will cover foundational concepts central to advancing play equity including an overview of the difference between equity and equality in play setting, the root causes of play inequities (both historical and contemporary), and the impact of implicit bias and racism on current developmental outcomes among Black youth.

LIVE VIRTUAL EVENTS

“The Play Room” Kickoff Event - LIVE ON ZOOM!
*Wednesday, June 29 at 12pm ET/ 9am PT*
Join us in The Play Room! This is an opportunity for conference attendees to interact more directly without a speaker or program. It is a chance to get to know each other professionally and personally and to make connections with play peeps across the globe.

Developing a Love of Learning and Health Through Nature-Based Play Spaces
Tiffany Harris, Daniel Hatcher, Nikki Ferrera-Hasani
*Friday, July 22 at 1pm ET/10am PT - LIVE ON ZOOM!!*
How do playgrounds build a love of learning and healthy habits? Join Too Small to Fail, Alliance for a Healthier Generation, and Inclusion Matters by Shane’s Inspiration to explore the research and practice of creating nature-based play spaces that engage all families and foster holistic learning in early childhood.

More LIVE Virtual Event Details Coming Soon!!
SESSION THEMES

**Accessible & Inclusive Play:** Play should be accessible, available, and open to all. Advance the field for play for all abilities, all shapes, all sizes, all colors.

**Designing for Play:** Landscape architects, architects, designers, city planners, and civic groups are invaluable experts, practitioners and resources for PLAY.

**Education & Play:** Play is a vital part of the learning equation, both in and out of the classroom. Sessions in this theme approach play as a vehicle for learning through both traditional and nontraditional settings, including schools, camps, afterschool programs, museums, zoos, aquariums, parks & rec departments, faith-based spaces & more.

**Emerging Trends in Play:** Play is changing! The Play movement is growing! Explore the latest in play- technology, social media, politics, policies, and more.

**Health, Recreation & Play:** Play is a building block for healthy living. Examine health and physical activity trends related to play, healthy benefits of play, and the intersection of health and recreation to insure a healthy face of play.

**International/Global Play:** Play looks very different around the world. Share play practices, history, and culture from countries across the globe.

**Multi/Intergenerational & Adults at Play:** Promoting play throughout life is our mission. Explore how adults (college-aged to retirees) play and how adults share and benefit from play with children.

**Nature Based & Outdoor Play:** The faces of play are often wet, muddy, and sun-glistened from hours spent outdoors. Focus on play in nearby and far away nature--backyards, parks, creeks, lakes, trails, wetlands, and beyond.

**Nuts & Bolts:** From play basics to play essentials. Share tips, trainings, techniques and tools for PLAY.
EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS BY THEME

All sessions have two themes. The sessions in this list are sorted by their primary theme.

### Accessible & Inclusive Play

**A Tree Grows in Brooklyn: Equity and Play | Angela Novak**

We seek freedom in play, but time, space, and place change how, when, where, what and with whom we play. This session dives into how place influences equity in play. We’ll discuss how the nature of play is place-based and steeped in systemic inequities, concluding with nature-based strategies for play.

**All Ages, All Abilities, All the Time | Jill Moore White**

Parks today face the challenge of providing environments where all visitors can feel safe, secure and fully engaged. Universal design increases usability, safety, health and social participation. In this presentation, participants will discover how applying the principles of universal design ultimately contribute to social equity and social sustainability in parks.

### Designing for Play

**Designing Everyday Spaces for Children | Shweta Nanekar**

“How do we modify current approaches to the design of everyday spaces to make them more child-friendly?” Available literature on child-friendly environments is reviewed to identify empirical research and project examples that can help designers and planners to create spaces that cater to the “Whole Child”.

**Developing a Love of Learning and Health Through Nature-Based Play Spaces | Tiffany Harris, Daniel Hatcher & Nikki Ferrera-Hasani**

How do playgrounds build a love of learning and healthy habits? Join Too Small to Fail, Alliance for a Healthier Generation, and Inclusion Matters by Shane’s Inspiration to explore the research and practice of creating nature-based play spaces that engage all families and foster holistic learning in early childhood.

**Future of Play: Technology Integration | David Flanigan**

We all know that kids are spending countless hours in front of a screen, not only for gaming and social media, but due to COVID, many kids are attending school virtually. What will the future be like for kids if they are addicted to their screens and don’t want to go outside and play?

**Healthy Communities, Parks and Splashpads | Sarah Shepherd**

As demographics, inclusiveness and health concerns evolve, aging facilities need to step up their game to keep communities engaged and active. Explore effective community infrastructure through the lens of aquatic play. Discover how Splashpads increase park usage, promote inclusion and build social capital that help communities grow and flourish.
Emerging Trends in Play

**Bringing Kids’ Imagination to Life In Outdoor Play Through Augmented Reality** | Jyoti Arora Bishnoi & Pooja Rai
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You see a slide, kids see a runway to the moon. You see a rock, they see a sailboat in a storm. The best ride is the kids’ imagination. Outdoor play is losing out to kids hooked onto screens. We present how we use Augmented Reality (AR) to bring kids back to the playground.

**Controversial Play: Weapon, Fantasy and Risky Play-Why They Are Important and How to Support Them** | Samuel Broaden
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In this session, participants will unpack the important aspects of various types of controversial play and learn new strategies to support this type of play in their programs.

International/Global Play

**How global PLAY has influenced PLAY in the Early Years of Australian schools!** | Kim Moroney
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Kim’s research on PLAY has led her to study in Finland and Sweden, visit PEDAL at the University of Cambridge UK, and participate in a study tour of AnjiPlay in China. Kim will share PLAY stories and images of her work in schools in Newcastle, Australia where PLAY is fundamental to pedagogy and practice.
SESSIONS BY THEME CONTINUED

**International/Global Play**

**Contextual Play Hackathon - Creating Meaningful Play Solutions | Pooja Rai & Swetha Manivannan**
Join us as we explore how a country’s culture and practices can find its way into children’s games. Learning about product examples in action, indulge in a play hackathon that will take you through the various stages of designing a game from scratch and create your own paper prototype.

**Entrepreneurship: For Creative Development in The World Of Recreational Motor Activity Outdoors | Manuela Gamba**
Among the eight key competences in Europe, the “sense of initiative and entrepreneurship” is the least aimed at the one young Italians. Through our Italian playful-motor activity (Trekking, canoeing, biking) combined with creative workshops, we develop the transversal concept of entrepreneurship, which is creativity, spirit of initiative and autonomy.

**How global PLAY has influenced PLAY in the Early Years of Australian schools! | Kim Moroney**
Kim’s research on PLAY has led her to study in Finland and Sweden, visit PEDAL at the University of Cambridge UK, and participate in a study tour of AnjiPlay in China. Kim will share PLAY stories and images of her work in schools in Newcastle, Australia where PLAY is fundamental to pedagogy and practice.

**Nature Based & Outdoor Play**

**Finding Ecohappiness: How to Shape Outdoor Play Using Positive Psychology Tools | Sandi Schwartz**
Discover how to guide outdoor play by incorporating key positive psychology tools, such as experiencing awe and wonder, expressing gratitude, engaging in creativity, and being mindful. You will learn the emotional benefits of these tools; why nature is an effective platform to put these tools into practice; and specific activities.

**Outdoor Play in Canada 2021 State of the Sector Report – Developing a common vision in outdoor play | Louise de Lannoy**
The Outdoor Play in Canada: 2021 State of the Sector Report provides a chronology of what has happened within the outdoor play sector since the publication of the Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play, an account of where we are now, and a map of where we need to go.

**Teaching Off Trail | Peter Dargatz**
Now more than ever, play is an essential ingredient in a successful classroom. Teaching Off Trail will discuss a successful public school nature kindergarten that reaches and exceeds curricular standards through the utilization of a 4 P’s philosophy cemented in nature play, citizen science, service learning and community collaborations.
US PLAY COALITION STEERING COMMITTEE

Jodie Adams - Co-founder, Brio 2 Solutions, Parks Director Emeritus, Past President NRPA Board of Directors
Lawrence Allen, PhD - Professor Emeritus, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, Clemson University
Stephanie Garst - Executive Director, US Play Coalition (ex-officio)
Jeff Hallo - Interim Co-Chair of the US Play Coalition, Interim Chair & Professor of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, Clemson University
Stephen Hamelin - President & CEO, Vortex Aquatic Structures
Teri Hendy - President, Site Masters Inc.
Ingrid Kanics - Kanics Inclusive Design Services LLC
Ken Kutska - Executive Director, International Playground Safety Institute, LLC
Martin LeBlanc - Strategic Leadership Advisor, LBC Action and Co-founder and VP emeritus for the board of the Children and Nature Network
Sarah Lisiecki - Marketing Communications Specialist, BCI Burke
Fran Mainella - Chair Emeritus of the US Play Coalition, Former National Park Service Director and Visiting Scholar Clemson University
Tony Malkusak - President and Landscape Architect for Abundant Playscapes, Inc.
Tom Norquist - Senior Vice President Product Development, Sales & Marketing, PlayCore-GameTime
Harrison Pinckey, PhD - Assistant Professor, Parks Recreation and Tourism Management, Clemson University
Lynn Pinoniemi - Director of Marketing, Landscape Structures Inc.
Peggy Riggs - Co-Director of Brio2 Solutions, Retired Deputy Supt of Springfield Public Schools
Dolores Stegelin, PhD - Professor Emeritus, Eugene T. Moore School of Education, Clemson University
Michael Suk, MD - Chairman of Orthopaedic Surgery, Geisinger Health System, Danville, PA
Meghan Talarowski - Founder and Director, Studio Ludo
Heather Von Bank, PhD - Chair and Associate Professor of Family Consumer Science at Minnesota State University-Mankato
Brett Wright, PhD - Co-Chair of the US Play Coalition and Dean Emeritus, College of Behavioral, Social and Health Sciences, Clemson University
Ryan Fahey - Communications Director, US Play Coalition (Ex-Officio)
IN MEMORIAM
JOAN ALMON, JOE L. FROST, ERIC O’BRIEN & DOUG YOUNGBLOOD

Since we were all together at our 2019 conference, the US Play Coalition family has lost FOUR play champions...

Joan Almon (July 14, 2019) co-founded the Alliance for Childhood in 1999 and served as its director until 2012. We were honored to have Joan Almon as one of our founders and champions of the US Play Coalition, collaborating with her Alliance for Childhood on many initiatives in our first decade. She wrote and lectured extensively on child development, early education, and the need to restore play for children and youth. We were blessed that she and her husband Clopper were with us for the 10th Anniversary Conference in April 2019.

Joe L. Frost, EdD (February 17, 2020), was one of America’s leading experts on play and playgrounds with a global reputation as the contemporary father of play advocacy. He was influential in the creation of the US Play Coalition and offered the opening session of the 2009 Summit on the Value of Play (the precursor to this conference). He served as honorary chair of our Play Conference for the first ten years. What a treat to have had Joe and Betty with us in 2017 when we awarded Joe our inaugural research award named in his honor.

Eric O’Brien (January 7, 2021) spent much of his life dedicated to the advancement of public parks. He volunteered countless hours promoting and developing parks and recreation at local, regional and national levels. He engaged with and advised numerous nonprofits and national organizations. We were honored to have Eric as one of our founders and champions – and blessed that he was with us for the 10th Anniversary Conference in April 2019. A mentor to so many and a gentleman to all, we have lost a true giant in our field.

Doug Youngblood (December 22, 2021) was a longtime friend, supporter and play advocate. His passion for parks, kids, community and PLAY will live on through his efforts and contributions. Doug’s most recent gift to the US Play Coalition was his work to develop the new Partners for PLAY initiative, with his beloved hometown of Charlotte, NC as the pilot location. He was with us in 2019 to announce its launch. We are forever grateful to Doug for his vision, kindness and generosity.

In our grief, we find inspiration in the work and the wisdom about play that Joan, Joe, Eric and Doug gave us all.
A very special thank you is in order for so many who helped us plan and implement our 2022 Play Conference and for all those that helped to manage all the other tasks, programs, events, and publications related to the work of the US Play Coalition this year:

Fran Mainella, Ryan Fahey, Michael Suk, Brooke Buckley, Allison Killinger, Leslie Heffington, Gillian Bernabe, Corliss Outley, Jennifer Geddes Hall, Phyllis Post, Victor Mack, Jeff Townsend, Chuck McCuen, Courtasha Felton, Jeff Hallo, Matt Brownlee, Lindsey Watley, Julie Jones, Jed Dearybury, Rachelle Beckner, Carter Roper, Sharon Franks, Sharon Melton, Pam Morgan, Leslie Conrad, Norm McGee, Barry Garst, Kristie Nieves, Annette Parker, Kayla Lee, Angee Pearson, Kirsten Windbiel, CU PRTM & so many more! Much gratitude to all our silent auction donors and patrons too!

Once a month, social media savvy play advocates meet in cyberspace to “chat” about a current issue or trend in play. Launched in January 2016, #WePlayChat is the longest running monthly play-related Twitter chat in the world! Our #WePlayChat has drawn participation from sixteen countries, spanning 6 continents— and no one ever left the comforts of their home or office.

Join in the conversations around the value of play during our #WePlayChat. This FREE professional learning opportunity is a great way to connect with fellow play enthusiasts, teachers and experts from the across the globe! Check out some of our past topics at [http://bit.ly/WePlayChat](http://bit.ly/WePlayChat) and find us on Twitter @USPlayCoalition.

Be sure to visit our website regularly for ongoing updates about the play movement and Coalition activities!

[usplaycoalition.org](http://usplaycoalition.org)

Follow US Play Coalition on social media at @usplaycoalition!
EVERYTHING REVOLVES AROUND PLAY.

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