

Frank Johnson

How did your career in the parks & recreation industry begin?

I began work in parks and recreation as part of a "career change." I previously worked in higher education in roles in admissions and academic affairs with two local colleges. When the opportunity for the Business Development position became available, I applied. Many of my agency and professional contacts translated well from Higher Education to Parks and Recreation. I also had the advantage of being a product of Fox Valley Park District programs and facilities as a youth and a parent residing in Aurora.

Describe the main responsibilities of your role:

I work closely with businesses interested in sponsoring events, businesses who collaborate with the District for ongoing projects, as well as community outreach in being a conduit between the District and its residents. My intention is to generate a collaborative relationship with the community to support the District's efforts to provide services to both residents and area businesses and agencies.

What do you enjoy most about working for the Fox Valley Park District?

I enjoy the diversity of park district staff that I work with on a daily basis to coordinate successful programs for the community. It is fulfilling to see collaboration among departments to provide events and services to our residents in a cost-effective manner. This job often requires flexibility in being available for events during evenings and weekends which with proper planning adds to a positive change in a work week. It is definitely not a Monday through Friday, 9 to 5 job and requires planning for work/life balance which I find rewarding when tasks are successfully completed.

What traits do you feel lend well to a career in parks & recreation?

Parks and Recreation requires a great deal of patience, ability to communicate well both verbally and in writing, and a solid sense of business practices as cost-effective ways to offer programs and operations to residents. . Academically speaking, the parks and rec industry promotes and invites individuals with various skills, including business/accounting, education, physical education, biology, and social sciences and social services, as well as vocational trades.