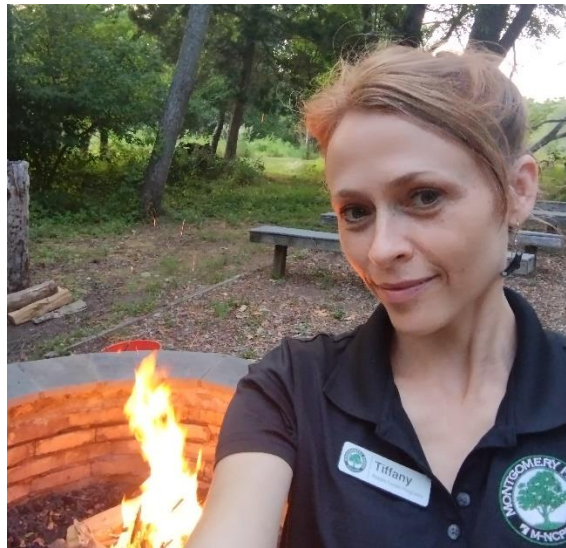




Board Brief



We need community!

By Tiffany Jenkins

To quote one of my favorite co-workers, “In Parks there used to be a safe month”, one where the workload quieted, we could reorganize, regroup, and plan for the future. As this year’s summer camp season came to an end, I looked around the office feeling overwhelmed by the job at hand – the clean-up, the evaluation forms, the emails, the looming fall programming, field trips, right at the door. When would I get a chance to take the breath I needed? And where were the extra set of hands to help me move the mountain I was facing?

I am lucky to work with a great team of interpreters, when faced with something insurmountable we help carry part of the burden and get there together, but not every workplace is so helpful. The NAI community can be that secondary safety

net, providing professional support, guidance, and some much needed joy when the challenges we face are exhausting. The ability to ask questions from others in the field on message boards, receive a mentor, and attend continual professional development opportunities are services NAI knows are essential to keep the love and passion for our profession alive. Speaking from personal experience, the more I take advantage of these opportunities the more confident I feel with each season's new challenges, and the more I know I am not alone in them.

This is one of the many reasons I joined the board of the Chesapeake Region of NAI as the Maryland State Representative and then as Board Director. Like all relationships, growing your professional network takes time. Serving on the board has given me regular interactions with others who are dedicated to their profession. They are all balancing work, family life, a changing world, and they come each month ready to give back to our NAI community in whatever capacity they can. Their dedication inspires me to keep going, keep changing, and keep working to make our field better and more effective.

All of us need community to make it to our goals. I encourage you to look into how you can get further involved in the NAI network! Take time to develop those professional relationships, they will feed you when times get tough. Enjoy this special edition of the Chesapeake Chat, and discover ways you can get involved by reading some of the experiences of our fellow board members. Our region is currently recruiting new members of the board, we'd love to have you contribute to our community!

Happy Fall,

Tiffany Jenkins

Board Director

Chesapeake Region

National Association for Interpretation

Why I Joined the NAI Region 2 Board

NAI Region 2 Board Members *Sammy Zambon, Susan Matthews, Jennifer Simms, Kaden Borseth, and Dodie Lewis* each share why they decided to volunteer on the NAI Region 2 Board and what they have learned from this experience.



Sammy Zambon (he/him)

NAI Region 2 Deputy Director

Visitor Experience Specialist- Chesapeake Community Deputy Director

Virginia State Parks

Richmond, VA

Hi, I'm Sammy Zambon, the Eastern Visitor Experience Specialist for Virginia State Parks. I train state park interpreters, design exhibits and signs, and supervise a mobile outreach program. I'm a CIT and a canoe and kayak instructor. In my free time I like to canoe and travel. I joined the board for the community in March of 2018 as the Interim Deputy Director. I served the rest of that year and now I'm entering my last year of my second full term as Deputy Director. Why did I join the board? Working for Virginia State Parks I am part of one of the largest member groups in the region. By being part of the board I can better communicate what is going on in the region with my coworkers. I am front and center for hearing about and planning training opportunities. I get to see and learn about all the great things interpreters across our region are doing and then I can share them. The deputy director is the lead for planning our regional workshops. This has given me the chance to work with volunteers from across the Chesapeake Community building lasting connections. I have had fewer workshops than other two term deputies, but I have had the unique experience of planning multi-day virtual workshops in response to COVID. I've been honored to serve as deputy director

and I look forward to passing the torch to the next person. If you are interested and have questions shoot me an email.



Susan Matthews (she/her)
NAI Region 2 Secretary/Webmaster
Administrative Specialist
ERT, Inc.
Laurel, MD

In 2020, my husband and I decided to move back home to Maryland after living out of state for several years. As we made the long drive across the country from California I started to think about my career. For over twenty years I worked in the environmental education field. Unfortunately, like many I found myself struggling to find a new job during the pandemic.

I thought back about my time as a naturalist and the great contacts I had made while attending the NAI Region 2 workshop. I registered for a virtual NAI CIG training and our Region 2 workshop. During our Region 2 workshop our president at the time mentioned that our board was looking for a secretary. I thought, “what a great way to stay in touch with what’s going on in our region and to find out about upcoming positions.”

I have had the chance to support our Region 2 board in many ways. I have assisted with reviewing scholarship applications, volunteered as a room mediator for our virtual region workshop, attended regional and national conferences, and I am

now responsible for managing our website. I have really enjoyed my time volunteering with the board. I have met a lot of amazing people and I've gained valuable skills. It's truly been a rewarding and amazing experience.



Jennifer Simms (she/her)
NAI Region 2 Social Media Manager
Park Naturalist II
Montgomery County Parks
Rockville, MD

I've been on the Reg 2 Board for almost a year as our social media lead. A colleague of mine had been in this role on the Board for about 5 years, was ready to step down, and she offered me the opportunity to take over for her on the Board.

Over the year, I've enjoyed the freedom and creativity to represent our region through various posts and learn more about the online interpreting community. But my favorite part of being on the Board is the chance to meet new people. It has opened the door to new connections such as the Beltway Chapter of NAI Reg. 2, and also the opportunity to share program ideas with other educators in my area. Additionally, there are people on the Board who have been in the field for their entire career and are more than happy to be a resource for you. I am honored to receive programming advice or to bounce a new idea for feedback. The Board feels like a "work family" and I'm happy to be the budding new member.



Kaden Borseth (they/them)
NAI Region 2 D.C. Representative
Learning Program Specialist
Smithsonian's National Zoo
Washington D.C.

My name is Kaden Borseth and I joined the NAI Chesapeake board because interpretation is important and I wanted to help spread the word about our great NAI community and give back to all of the hardworking interpreters. I am the DC representative and I work to make sure opportunities are shared with my district and help to create and curate them as well. I have really enjoyed putting together webinars to further learning on important and timely topics, as well as to help members connect with each other and receive continuing education credit. Being on this board has helped me to build a wonderful professional network and connect with colleagues near and far.



Dodie Lewis (she/her)
NAI Region 2 Awards Chair
Manager, retired
Claude Moore Park
Sterling, VA

My name is Dodie Lewis and I've been a member of NAI for 20 plus years. I started out attending the Region 2 workshops and the Beltway Chapter events. After I had attended some of those, the opportunity came up to become the Awards Chair for the region. I felt like I wanted to be more involved with the group and figured this would be a great way to do that. One of the advantages of joining the Region 2 Board was getting to know the other board members at our monthly meetings and being more aware of and helping to plan events for the members of the region. As Awards Chair I have had the chance to get to know both the people who nominated colleagues for Interpretive Awards and those who were nominated for the awards. It's a great position to learn about all the amazing, creative and impressive work being done every day by my fellow interpreters. I love having a way for all of us to recognize those special people. Also, since the awards are presented during the biennial regional workshop, I got to participate in the planning and presentation of each of those.

I think being involved in the workshops over the years has given me a chance to get to know many of the members who attended them. In addition to managing the Awards, I have also volunteered to help choose and to organize the presentations, help choose the scholarship winners and a variety of other organizational tasks. There are many ways to help with the workshops and I recommend this as a great

way for any of the Region 2 members to increase your participation and to get to know your fellow interpreters.

Upcoming Events & Trainings:



Biological Monitoring – Keeping our Streams Healthy

Thursday, Sept. 28, 2023

10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Meadowside Nature Center, ~~Derwood MD.~~

5100 Meadowside Lane Rockville, MD. 20855

To register, contact: Jennifer Simms at Jennifer.Simms@Montgomeryparks.org



Clean streams and healthy watersheds provide valuable ecosystem services that humans and wildlife depend on for survival. For most of Montgomery County, surface waters like the Potomac River are a primary source of drinking water. Thousands of miles of Montgomery County streams drain to the Potomac, Anacostia, and Patuxent Rivers, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. It is therefore vital to not only keep these waters clean but to monitor these important resources

to understand how watersheds may be changing or responding to various pressures, including those of human activities (e.g., development).

Montgomery Park's Natural Resources Specialists Rachel Gauza and Dave Sigrist will lead a workshop and electrofishing demonstration to explore our local water quality and discover common fish identification techniques. The outing will include a presentation about the importance of water quality in our region, job duties and program details, common fish identification and ecology, and a live electrofishing demonstration. Participants should come prepared by wearing closed-toe shoes and proper clothing to stay comfortable during a couple hours of streamside learning.

Rachel Gauza is a Principal Naturalist Resource Specialist and Biological Monitoring Coordinator for Montgomery Parks. She serves as the lead contact for issues related to aquatic resources management and oversees the stream biological monitoring program and interpretation. Ms. Gauza specializes in herpetology and aquatic ecology and has worked as a biologist and environmental educator throughout the DC Metropolitan region for 20 years. A champion for community science, she coordinated the FrogWatch USA monitoring program nationally and locally, served several roles with the Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas, and is a Maryland Master Naturalist Instructor. She has a bachelor's degree in biology from Hood College.

Dave Sigrist is an Aquatic Biologist who began working for Montgomery Parks in 2009. He assists Rachel in administering Montgomery Parks' Biological Monitoring Program, and also serves as the program's in-house taxonomist, certified by the state of Maryland and the Society for Freshwater Science for identification of Maryland freshwater fish and Eastern benthic macroinvertebrates, respectively. Dave has a bachelor's degree in biology from Salisbury University.

We'll meet at Meadowside Nature Center located at 5100 Meadowside Lane Rockville, MD. 20855. Day of Contact: Jennifer Simms Cell: 240.446.0086

Dress for the weather and pack a bag lunch to eat outdoors. The tour, limited to 20 participants, will proceed unless dangerous weather or unsampleable stream conditions. To register, contact Jennifer Simms at

Jennifer.simms@montgomeryparks.org



Certified Interpretive Guide Training Course

CIG Hidden Oaks Nature Center VA

October 24-27, 2023

Hidden Oaks Nature Center

7701 Royce Street Annandale, VA, 22003

Instructors: Tammy Schwab, Julie Gurnee, and Patricia Dietly

Registration Cost: \$230 (The certificate is an additional \$165)

Click Here to

Register: <https://www.interpnet.com/NAI/nai/certification/registration/cigregistration.aspx?EventKey=GI102423>

Fairfax County Park Authority, in partnership with the National Association for Interpretation (NAI), is offering a training course for individuals in the field of Interpretation. It is designed for individuals who deliver interpretive programs or have contact with the public at interpretive sites.

Course Options There are two options for this course.

Option one: take the course without obtaining the CIG certificate.

Option two: take the course and add the certificate as a Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG). You will pay an additional fee for the certificate. The CIG lasts four years and comes with a complimentary one-year membership. If you are already a member of NAI we will extend your membership an additional year.

The CIG Program

The nationally recognized Certified Interpretive Guide (CIG) certificate is designed for anyone in the interpretive field. Whether you're a new hire, a professional looking to refresh your skills, or beginning a second career, this course will aid you in improving your presentation techniques. The course combines the theoretical foundations of the profession with practical strategies in delivering quality

interpretive programming to visitors.

This 32-hour course includes:

- The history, definition, and principles of interpretation.
- Techniques on how to make your programs purposeful, enjoyable, relevant, organized, and thematic.
- How to use tangible objects to connect your audience to intangible ideas and universal concepts.
- The 2 requirements needed to obtain a CIG (program outline, and 10 minute interpretive presentation).

Member Discount: Those choosing to apply for certification will receive a complimentary one year membership to NAI. Memberships will become active within a couple of weeks of registration and will allow you to purchase webinars and other registrations at the discounted member rate. Once memberships become active, you will receive a receipt via email letting you know that you are all set up. Current NAI members will receive a one year extension on their current membership. If you are registering for \$0, your membership will become active when you are certified.

For more information about the course, please contact Tammy Schwab at tammy.schwab@fairfaxcounty.gov or call (703) 324-8750.

Special Terms and Cancellations: Participants are allowed to transfer one time at no charge. Cancellation and transfer requests cannot be made by phone and must be made in writing and emailed, postmarked, or faxed by October 8, 2023.

Cancellations processed before the cancellation deadline will be subject to a \$60 cancellation fee (if fees paid are less than \$60, no refund will be processed).

Cancellations made after this date will not receive a refund. Emailed cancellations and transfers should be sent to certification@interpnet.com.