

**Kara Poole**  
Kara.poole@sulross.edu

**Profile** Experienced and passionate recreation professional with over 15 year’s experience leading programs including outdoor adventure, University programs, fitness and wellness, team building and leadership development, challenge course and group facilitation, aquatics, parks and recreation, sports and leisure, and adventure based therapy. Also, a licensed therapist with expertise in utilizing recreation for wellbeing and improved mental health outcomes.

**Skills** Outgoing, versatile, fast learner, detail oriented, quickly builds rapport, optimistic, people oriented, data driven, engaging teacher, energetic, empathetic, skilled communicator, passionate

**Education** **Master’s degree, Mental Health Counseling**  
Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY  
Graduated: May 2017  
GPA: 3.90

**Bachelor of Arts in Christian Ministries, Minor: Recreation**  
Asbury University, Wilmore, KY  
Graduated: May 2009  
GPA: 3.88

**Work Experience** **Director of Recreational Programs** January 2022-Current  
**Sul Ross State University** Alpine, TX  
-Built a university recreation program from the ground up, including launching an outdoor program and a comprehensive fitness and wellness program designed to increase student engagement and retention  
-Manage, hire, train, and oversee more than 30 student staff members and GA’s for all university recreation programs  
-Provide risk management and budgetary oversight for campus recreation program  
-Create, design, plan, and implement the entirety of recreational programs offered to the university community including fitness and wellness, club sports, intramural sports, the outdoor program, and aquatics

**Adjunct Professor, Kinesiology** August 2022-Current  
**Sul Ross State University** Alpine, TX

- Design course content to meet learners where they are and provide an introduction to the field of Recreation and Kinesiology
- Utilize online learning platforms, specifically Blackboard, to aid in student learning
- Experientially engage students so they connect with course material in a real way that aids in their search for a career path

**Adventure Based Therapist** January 2020- January 2022  
**Moonridge Academy** Cedar City, UT

- Lead experiential therapy groups for adolescent and teenage students and their families including DBT, CBT, adventure, social skills, equine, and play therapy
- Develop client centered treatment plans with specific goals and objectives to meet the needs of individual clients, as well as their families, and continually review and update over the course of treatment
- Maintain good clinical notes, correspond in a timely manner with clients, families, provide transitional services and correspond with educational consultants, and advocate to insurance companies for coverage
- Engage in multicultural counseling with a diverse range of BIPOC clients, and LGBTQIA+ identifying students

**Group Fitness Team Lead, Vasa** July 2020- January 2022  
**Group Fitness Instructor** Cedar City, UT  
**Vasa Fitness, Retro Fitness, & Moonridge Academy**

- Lead diverse groups through fitness routines designed to achieve their fitness goals, while setting the tone and energy for the group
- Manage a staff of over 20 instructors as Group Fitness Team Lead, enforcing company policies and procedures, and leading trainings
- Create the group fitness schedule for each semester, managing schedules, certifications, availability, and needs of 20 instructors

**Challenge Course Manager** January 2012-January 2020  
**Asbury University Center for Adventure Leadership** Wilmore, KY

- Responsible for the training, development, management, and supervision of approximately 50 part-time staff members
- Manage all operational aspects of program including program design to meet client objectives, group need assessments, program scheduling, risk management, overseeing daily operations, and payroll and billing
- Lead groups through hands-on experiential professional development exercises that accomplish the goals and needs of the group including leadership development, communication, problem solving, and others

**Adjunct Professor, Outdoor Education** January 2014-January 2020

**Asbury University**

Wilmore, KY

- Instruct multiple 3 credit hour courses in the Adventure Leadership program, teaching students theories of experiential education including adventure education, place-based education, outdoor education, adventure based counseling, and group leadership
- Utilize my expertise in group dynamics and counseling to create a classroom environment in which students are engaged, learning via multiple delivery methods, and interacting with one another
- Intentionally build relationships with students in my classes in order to advise, support, and invest in them holistically

**Mental Health Counseling Intern**

January 2016-May 2017

**Asbury University Center for Counseling**

Wilmore, KY

- Created curriculum for and led group counseling sessions, including DBT and mindfulness, in order to experientially teach therapeutic skills to clients during sessions, and empower them to implement the skills outside of class in order to meet their goals
- Collaborate on a daily basis with the staff and interns at the Center for Counseling in order to share best practices, improve our collective skills, offer support and feedback, and better serve our clients
- Provide counseling services to college-aged students in individual and group settings, extending empathy and unconditional positive regard, as we partner together to set goals and develop a treatment plan to improve their overall mental and emotional health

**Director of Recreation**

February 2010- September 2011

**Glen Lake Camp & Retreat Center**

Glen Rose, TX

- Responsible for recruiting, training, and supporting up to 60 staff a year working at the challenge course and other recreation facilities I managed
- Perform all daily tasks a director must carry out including routine inspections of equipment, managing a budget and staff, daily equipment checks, and maintaining documentation for all programs
- Responsible for Risk Management policies, including training and certifying all staff in American Red Cross CPR/AED/FA and Lifeguarding

**Challenge Course Facilitator**

August 2006- January 2010

**Asbury University Challenge Course**

Wilmore, KY

- Led groups ranging from youth to corporate adult groups through team building exercises that accomplish the goals of that particular group i.e., leadership development, communication, problem solving, etc.
- Responsible for daily set up and tear down of all gear and equipment used, including both low and high course structures and equipment
- Helped meet the needs of clients by doing a needs assessment with each

group to determine their goals and how we could help meet them

**Camp Counselor, Fitness Leader, Referee** September 2005-May 2009  
**YMCA of Central KY** Nicholasville, KY

-Led group fitness classes for youth, intentionally building confidence and resiliency in the student participants  
-Planned, designed, and led recreational activities for summer camp participants on a daily basis

**Umpire, Lifeguard** June 2004-August 2005  
**City of Berea Park and Recreation** Berea, KY

-Umpire for City Parks and Recreation Softball leagues, enforcing league policies and rules, and managing crowds, teams, and coaches  
-American Red Cross Lifeguard, responding to emergencies and enforcing facility rules and regulations

\*Have also worked as a contract facilitator work Team Building USA and Adventure Associates beginning in 2013 to current.

## Certifications

**American Red Cross CPR/AED/First Aid Instructor** 2010- Present

**American Red Cross Lifeguard Instructor** 2011-Present

**ACCT Level II Challenge Course Practitioner** 2011- 2020

**Wilderness First Responder, WMA** August 2019-2022

**AFAA Group Fitness Instructor** July 2018- Present

**Schwinn Indoor Cycling Classic Certification** July 2021

**Fitness for Two, AFAA** June 2021

**Leave No Trace Certification** January 2023

## Licensure

**CMHC, State of Utah** January 2022- Current  
**ACMHC, State of Utah** November 2019- January 2022

## Training

**Brainspotting, Phase 1** August 2020

## Professional Positions Held

<b>Wellness Committee, SRSU</b>	2022-Current
<b>President, Kentucky Challenge Course Forum</b>	2014- 2020
<b>Planning Committee, KY Challenge Course Forum</b>	2012- 2020
<b>Challenge Course Trainer, KY State 4-H Camps</b>	2012- 2019
<b>Member, ACCT</b>	2010-2020
<b>Member, AEE</b>	2020-Current
<b>Member, NIRSA</b>	2022- Current

## Professional Presentations

### ***Debriefing Techniques***

KY Challenge Course Forum  
Campbellsville, KY February 2013

### ***Challenge Course Marketing***

Christian Camp and Conference Association Super Sectional  
Henderson, NC March 2013

### ***Team Building***

KY High School Athletic Association HYPE Leadership Conference  
Lexington, KY Annually, August 2013- 2019

### ***Adventure Leadership***

Jessamine Co. Chamber of Commerce Luncheon  
Wilmore, KY October 2013

### ***Challenge By Choice: Is it Really a Choice?***

KY Challenge Course Forum  
Union, KY March 2014

### ***Higher Education Challenge Course Programs***

Association of Experiential Education International Conference  
Chattanooga, TN October 2014

### ***Spiritual Formation Through Challenge Course Facilitation***

Association for Challenge Course Technology International Conference  
Austin, TX February 2016

### ***Building Trust Among Teams***

KY Challenge Course Forum

Jabez, KY

February 2016

***Better Debriefing Utilizing Group Counseling Techniques***

Association of Challenge Course Technology International Conference

Savannah, GA

KY Challenge Course Forum

Richmond, KY

February 2017

**Metaphoric Transfer of Learning**

KY Challenge Course Forum

February 2018

**Volunteer Positions**

Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Southland Christian Church, American Red Cross, Volunteer work in various locations (Africa, Myanmar, USA)

**Conferences Attended**

**Association for Challenge Course Technology International Conference**

Minneapolis, MN

2011

Relevant Sessions Attended: Conflict Resolution and Bullying Prevention Activities, Process Communication Model Overview, Spiritual Dimensions of Team, Using a Small Moments Framework to Spark Deeper Reflection and Processing, The Grand Initiative, 7 Best Corporate Portable Initiatives

**KY Challenge Course Forum**

Annually, 2012- 2019

Relevant Sessions Attended: Challenge Course Managers Meeting, Risk Management, Challenge by Choice, Inspections

**Association for Challenge Course Technology International Conference**

Orlando, FL

2014

Relevant Sessions Attended: Higher Education Based Challenge Course Programs, Pedagogy in Challenge Course Training, Paradox of Risk and Element of Choice, ACCT Educational Use Committee

**Association for Experiential Education International Conference**

Chattanooga, TN

2014

Relevant Sessions Attended: Professional Development Intensive- Trauma Informed Adventure Therapy, Becoming a Better Adventure Therapist, Personify Leadership, Challenge Course Meta-Analysis, Emotionally Informed Decision Making

**Association for Challenge Course Technology International Conference**

Austin, TX

2016

Relevant Sessions Attended: Corporate programming, Trainers Toolbox Live, Effective Communication, Using Challenge Course Experiences to Support

Real Time Change in Communication Skills, Trust Post-Conference

**Association for Challenge Course Technology International Conference**

Savannah, GA 2017

Relevant Sessions Attended: Speaking Their Language- Neuroscience and Facilitation, Long-Term Outcomes, Educational Use Affinity Group, Corporate Programming, Engaging Introverts, ACCT Volunteer Groups

**Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare Wilderness Therapy Symposium**

Asheville, NC 2017

Relevant Sessions Attended: Cueing Behavioral Event for Change, Case Studies in Outdoor Behavioral Health Care, New Developments in Insurance Reimbursement, Finding Safety, The Use of Brain-Based Intervention to Increase the Effectiveness of Trauma Work

**Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare Wilderness Therapy Symposium**

Park City, UT 2017

Relevant Sessions Attended: Diversity Education Session: Cultural Competence: Understanding Privilege, Wilderness Therapy and Mindfulness, The Role of Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare in Trauma Recovery, Leading from Within

**Kentucky Counseling Association Conference**

Louisville, KY 2017

Relevant Sessions Attended: Adventure Based Counseling, Meeting with Board, Rapid Eye Movement Desensitization

**Association for Challenge Course Technology International Conference**

Fort Worth, TX 2018

Relevant Sessions Attended: Leading Out of Drama, Educational Use Committee, 3 Words to Never Use, Adventure Based Treatment of Addiction

**NATSAP Southwest Regional Conference**

St. George, UT 2020

Relevant Sessions Attended: Improv and Outcomes

**AEE Regional Conferences**

Virtual 2021

Relevant Sessions Attended: Virtual Family Adventure Therapy, 10 Flexible Pair Activities, Challenge Course Operations

**Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare Wilderness Therapy Symposium**

Park City, UT 2021

Relevant Sessions Attended: The 8 Limbs of Yoga for Treating the Body and the Mind, Nurturing Reciprocal Relationships with Land, Latest Developments in OBH Research, Advocacy, Ethical, Legislature, and Legal Perspectives, Utilizing Mother Nature's Jungle Gym to Enhance Wellness, Supporting Autistic Clients Through Major Life Transitions