

Gareth James Hedges

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Professional Experience

H2O Safety Consulting, LLC

Founder: January 2020 - Present

Founded H2O Safety Consulting to bring a sustainable, collaborative, and data-driven approach to challenging the status quo in aquatic safety. H2O is committed to child safety and drowning prevention worldwide.

The Redwoods Group, Inc.

President: May 2017 – December 2019

Responsible for the operations of Redwoods: approximately \$45M GWP commercial lines B-Corp insurance company. Currently operating in U.S. and Canada with 80 employees. Over the last two years, we have addressed a rapidly changing marketplace by using predictive analytics and an improved data practice to revamp our underwriting pricing and selection models to drive toward sustainable profitability, allowing us to deliver on our mission of using insurance to create safe communities.

VP/Chief Claims Officer: August 2015 – May 2017

Led claims department reorganization and reduction in overall claims pending by 1/3. Managed transition from claims administrator for 2 prior carriers to claims staff integrated into Crum & Forster. Furthered claims staff training and accountability on human-centric claims handling, including empathy and creativity in assisting claimants. Provided specific expertise to aquatic and sexual abuse cases.

General Counsel and Director of Consulting: April 2015 – August 2015

Acted as transition role between consulting directors following the Redwoods' acquisition by Crum & Forster.

General Counsel: August 2014 – April 2015

Responsible for all legal representation of the Redwoods Group and its affiliates, The Redwoods Group Foundation and Redwoods Managers, including contracts, intellectual property review, real estate, etc. Additionally, led Redwoods claims investigations and litigation management. Acted as lead attorney for Redwoods in the merger/acquisition by Crum & Forster.

Associate General Counsel: January 2010 – July 2014

Under supervision of General Counsel, was responsible for contract review, intellectual property review, and aquatic and child sexual abuse claims investigations. Continued to act as aquatic and child safety expert for our risk management and consulting department. Named "Top 25 Aquatic Professional" by Aquatics International Magazine.

Risk Management Specialist: August 2003 – January 2010

Studied aquatic safety across YMCAs and other child serving organizations and developed actionable policy and practice changes to improve safety and reduce drowning deaths and aquatic injuries. Developed trainings and influenced the changing of national lifeguard protocols. Expanded scope beyond aquatics to child sexual abuse prevention, elevation risk, transportation safety, and operational risk management, and assisted Redwoods risk management staff in affecting sustainable change for our customers.

Education

Albany Law School, 2006 – 2009
J.D. Magna cum Laude – May 2009
Georgia Institute of Technology, 1999 – 2003
B.S. Public Policy – May, 2003

Designations/Licenses/Certifications:

Current:

- Admitted Attorney in North Carolina and New York State (Third Judicial Department)
- *Darkness to Light* Stewards of Children (child sexual abuse prevention) facilitator
- National Drowning Prevention Alliance Advisory Counsel Member

Prior:

- Certified Risk Manager, National Alliance for Insurance Education & Research (2006 – 2009)
- Ellis and Associates Lifeguard Instructor (2004 – 2009)
- Starfish Aquatics StarGuard Instructor (2005)
- Ellis and Associates Lifeguard (2001 – 2004)
- American Red Cross Lifeguard (1997 – 2004)
- YMCA of the USA Lifeguard (1995 – 1997, 2009-2010)

Service:

- Darkness to Light: Board Member since 2016. Currently Board Chair
- Habitat for Humanity of Durham. Board Member since 2014. Currently Secretary and Governance Committee Chair
- Habitat for Humanity International Global Village:
 - El Rosario, Honduras: February 2016
 - Madisi, Malawi: June 2018
 - Phnom Penh, Cambodia: January 2019

Publications, Presentations and Training:

2019:

World Conference on Drowning Prevention, Durban, South Africa
Expert Panel on Drowning Behaviour

Various YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, and American Camp Association Conferences:
The Changing Nature of Abuse

2018:

B Corp Retreat Plenary Session:

Creating an Inclusive Economy

Boys and Girls Clubs of America National Conference, Metro Leadership Forum:

Ensuring Youth Safety in Out-of-School Settings: Creating a Culture of Safety

Boys and Girls Clubs Safety Symposium Keynote:

Creating a Culture of Safety for All (with Kevin Trapani)

Association of Aquatics Professionals National Conference:

No Long Breath Holding: It's the Rule, But Do Lifeguards Enforce It? (with Kelly Martinez)

- Expert Panel on Aquatic Safety:* (Moderator. With Jill White, Tom Griffiths, and Shawn DeRosa)
Georgia Institute of Technology: Schiller College of Business: Impact Speaker Series
Purpose, Profit, and the Future of Work
- 2017:
Association of Aquatics Professionals National Conference:
Changing Behavior Through Storytelling (with Stephen Dauchert)
- 2016:
Association of Aquatics Professionals National Conference:
2015 Aquatic Investigation Review
Association of Aquatics Professionals: Aquatic Professional Designation Online Class:
Risk Management for Aquatics Professionals
- 2015:
Jewish Federations of North America Financial and Technology Professionals Institute
Insurance for Cyber Risk
Association of Aquatics Professionals National Conference:
Challenging the Status Quo in Aquatics
- 2014:
American Camp Association National Conference
Your Lifeguards are not Enough: Make them Better and your Water Safer; Crisis Response vs. Crisis Reaction (with Dorcas Tomasek)
Association of Aquatics Professionals Conference
Crisis Management: Healing through Empathy and Honesty
Santa Barbara Swim Community Association
Shallow Water Blackout Prevention
American Swim Coaches Association World Clinic:
Shallow Water Blackout Prevention (with Tom Griffiths and Rhonda Milner)
Jewish Federations of North America Financial and Technology Professionals Institute
Fireman of Lifeguard: Risk Management
Ontario Parks and Recreation Aquatics Conference:
Keynote: *Does My Pool Matter?*
Session: *Insurance Claims: An Indicator of Drowning Trends in Supervised Pools* (with Carolyn Tyner)
- 2013:
The Complete Swimming Pool Reference, 2nd Ed. By Tom Griffiths:
Chapter: Aquatic Risk Management and Insurance
American Camp Association National Conference
Objective-Driven Training: Get the Most Impact Out of In-service
National Drowning Prevention Alliance Symposium
Beyond Lifeguards: Layers of Protection
Association of Aquatics Professionals Conference
How to Stop Child Sexual Abuse
San Diego Department of Environmental Health
Swimming Pool Liability and Risk Management
YMCA Risk Management Conference
Crisis Management
World Conference on Drowning Prevention, Pottsdam, Germany
Drowning Prevention in Public and Semi-public Pools: Learning from over 10 years of insurance claims investigations at YMCA pools to save lives in the water.
YMCA Camp Symposium
Crisis Communication Workshop (with Josh Heimowitz and Dorcas Tomasek)
- 2012:
Association of Aquatics Professionals Conference
Objective-Driven Training: Get the Most Impact Out of In-service

National Drowning Prevention Alliance Symposium
Drowning Risk—Prevention of Incidents and Litigation Perceptions and Reality –
Panelist

American Camp Association Webinars:
Creating Layers of Protection In Aquatics Environments – Author and Panelist
How to Abuse-Proof Your Camp: Procedures for Preventing Child Sexual Abuse
– Author and Panelist

2011:

Center for Disease Control National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
Expert Panel: Moving the Drowning Prevention Field Forward
JCCs of North America Professional Conference
Key Concepts in Risk Management for Aquatic Facilities
Aquatics International University
Risk Management: Insurance Basics (with Kevin Trapani, The Redwoods Group)
YMCA of the USA Risk Advisory Board
Trends in YMCA Aquatic Safety - 2011
World Aquatic Health Conference:
The Lifeguard Assessment Continuum: From Quick Checks to Audits (with Mike
Espino)
YMCA of the USA:
On the Guard: The YMCA Lifeguard Manual – Reviewer and Contributor

2010:

National Drowning Prevention Alliance Symposium:
Making Pools Safer: Social Responsibility on the Pool Deck
World Aquatic Health Conference:
*Mind the Gap: How Linking Risk Management Principles to Effective Field
Practices Saves Lives*
Aquatics International Virtual Conference: The Model Aquatic Health Code
MAHC and Liability