



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

2026 NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND YMCA LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2026	
5:30-7:00 PM	YMCA Headshot Happy Hour, presented by Perry Weather Holiday Inn by the Bay, 88 Spring Street, Portland, ME
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2026	
Holiday Inn by the Bay, 88 Spring Street, Portland, ME	
7:00 AM	Vendor Exhibit Set-up Begins
8:00 AM	Registration Opens
8:00 AM-1:00 PM	Vendor Exhibits
8:00-9:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00-9:30 AM	Opening Session - Alliance CEO Welcome 2026 Awards Presentation
9:30-10:15 AM	Keynote Address Lucia Ortiz, CEO, YMCA Southcoast
10:15-10:30 AM	Break
10:30-11:30AM	Networking Jam 2.0
11:30-12:00 PM	Leadership Academy Graduation
12:00-12:45 PM	Lunch
12:45-1:00 PM	Transition
1:00 PM	Vendor Exhibit Breakdown
1:00-2:15 PM	Workshop Block #1 See Pages 2-3 for offerings
2:15-2:30 PM	Transition
2:30-3:45 PM	Workshop Block #2 See Pages 4-5 for offerings
3:45-4:00 PM	Closing Session Farewell & Giveaways

WORKSHOP BLOCK #1
1:00-2:15 PM

Presenter	Title	Audience	Description
Melissa O'Neill-Walczak	Governance That Drives Mission, Trust, and Impact	• C-Suite (CEO, COO, CFO, etc.) Volunteers (includes board members)	Explore governance practices that strengthen mission delivery, accountability, and organizational excellence. Designed for CEOs, board members, and volunteer leaders, this session fosters shared learning and continuous improvement.
Kim Harty	Beyond Filling the Vacancy: Turning Leadership Transitions into Organizational Opportunities	• C-Suite (CEO, COO, CFO, etc.) • Directors • Volunteers (includes board members)	Discover how leadership transitions can become opportunities to strengthen culture, improve hiring decisions, and position your YMCA for future success. Participants will gain a practical framework and actionable tools to approach leadership searches more strategically.
Alyssa Blask Campbell	The Human Side of Leadership: What the Nervous System Teaches Us About Conflict, Belonging, and Team Performance	All Attendees	Explore the science behind human behavior and learn how nervous system awareness can improve communication, trust, collaboration, and team performance. This session provides practical strategies for navigating conflict and leading with greater confidence, compassion, and resilience.
Emily Golinsky	Managing Decision Fatigue in Mission-Driven Leadership: Protecting Good Judgment in High-Demand YMCA Environments	• C-Suite (CEO, COO, CFO, etc.) • Directors • Mid-Managers	YMCA leaders make countless decisions every day. Learn how decision fatigue impacts judgment, stress, and performance, and leave with practical strategies to reduce cognitive load, prevent burnout, and make better decisions consistently.

WORKSHOP BLOCK #2
2:30-3:45 PM

Presenter	Title	Audience	Description
Meg Helming & Mike LaChance	Advocacy in Action: Strengthening Your Y's Impact	All attendees	Learn practical strategies to build a culture of advocacy within your YMCA by engaging stakeholders, strengthening relationships with decision-makers, and advancing community priorities. Participants will leave with tools and real-world examples that make advocacy achievable across all levels of the organization.
Zachary Boutelle	Every YMCA Staff member Is a Community Builder	- C-Suite (CEO, COO, CFO, etc.) - Directors - Mid-management - Frontline/entry-level	Discover how everyday leadership behaviors shape culture, belonging, and member experience. Participants will learn practical tools to strengthen alignment, engagement, and community-building across their YMCA.
Lisa Drennan	Creating a Culture of Belonging: Practical Strategies for an Inclusive YMCA	- Directors - Mid-management - Frontline/entry-level - Volunteers	Move beyond access and accommodations to create meaningful inclusion and belonging for individuals of all abilities. Participants will explore practical strategies, inclusive language, and actionable tools that can be applied throughout YMCA programs and operations.
Tabitha May-Tolub	Leading the Next 175: Building Resilient Leaders Through Adventure	- C-Suite (CEO, COO, CFO, etc.) - Directors - Mid-management - Frontline/entry-level	Experience how adventure-based learning can strengthen communication, trust, collaboration, and resilience within teams. Participants will gain hands-on facilitation techniques and ready-to-use strategies for building stronger, more adaptable YMCA leaders and teams.