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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DISSERTATION AWARD BESTOWED

The American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration Announces

The American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration (AAPRA), founded in 1980, is an organization of distinguished practitioners and scholars committed to the advancement of the park and recreation field. AAPRA focuses on encouraging scholarly efforts both by practitioners and educators to enhance the practice of public parks and recreation administration.

In light of the Academy's focus, AAPRA hosts an annual competition that alternates annually between best master's thesis (odd years) and best doctoral dissertation (even years). In judging the entries, the Best Paper Committee considers and rates dissertations on the following criteria using a weighted scoring system: relationship to park and recreation administration; quality of the problem development creative approach; and usefulness and applicability and quality of presentation.

The 2020 Best Dissertation Award was to Dr. William Rice (Ph.D.-The Pennsylvania State University) for his study, *Three Measures of Recreational Ecosystem Services in Protected Areas: Studies from U.S. National Parks*. Two Certificate of Merits were also awarded to two runner-up dissertations: *Environmental Justice Implications of Urban Park Discourses, Development, and Use* by Dr. Lauren Mullenbach (Ph.D.-The Pennsylvania State University) and *The Invisible Walls of the 606: An Examination of the Relationship Between an Urban Greenway and Community Change* by Dr. Brandon Harris (Ph.D.- Clemson University).

In announcing the Dissertation Award, Dr. Andrew Mowen, Best Paper Committee Chair, stated "we had a very strong pool of dissertations this year. I'm proud of science being produced by our early-career scholars. In particular, Dr. Rice's winning dissertation utilized innovative tools and modeling to improve managerial decision-making at our National Parks."

Executive summaries of the three dissertation executive summaries are available on the AAPRA website, <http://aapra.org>.

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The American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration is a nonprofit organization founded in 1980 to advance knowledge related to the administration of recreation and parks; to encourage scholarly efforts by practitioners and educators to enhance the practice of park and recreation administration; to promote broader understanding of the importance of parks and recreation to the

public good; and, to conduct research, publish scholarly papers and/or sponsor seminars related to the advancement of park and recreation administration. For more information, visit www.aapra.org.