



NATIONAL RECREATION
AND PARK ASSOCIATION



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Grand Plaque Recipients Announced in the 2023 National Gold Medal Awards in Parks and Recreation *The premiere award in the park and recreation industry*

Lacey, Washington, October 13, 2023 – The [American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration](https://www.aapra.org) (AAPRA), in partnership with the [National Recreation and Park Association](https://www.nrpa.org) (NRPA), is pleased to announce the 2023 Grand Plaque recipients in the National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management. [Musco Lighting, LLC](https://www.musco.com) is proud to continue as the award sponsor for more than 20 years.

Founded in 1965, the Gold Medal Awards program honors communities in the United States that demonstrate excellence in parks and recreation through long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development and agency communications. Nominations are separated into six classes, with five classes based on population and one class for armed forces.

The following agencies received the Grand Plaque award October 11th, in Dallas Texas, at the National Recreation and Park Association Annual Conference:

Class I (population 400,001 & over): Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation, Virginia Beach, Virginia
Class II (population 150,001 – 400,000): City of Plano Parks and Recreation Department, Plano, Texas
Class III (population 75,001 – 150,000): Champaign Park District, Champaign, Illinois
Class IV (population 30,001 – 75,000): Hoffman Estates Park District, Hoffman Estates, Illinois
Class V (population under 30,000): Cullman Parks, Recreation, and Sports Tourism, Cullman, Alabama
Armed Forces Recreation: Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Kanagawa, Japan
State Parks: Texas State Parks, Austin, Texas

Agencies are judged on their ability to address the needs of those they serve through the collective energies of community members, staff members and elected officials. Each of these recipients received the Finalist Plaque in their category on Monday, October 9th. For the Grand Plaque round of judging, each Finalist submitted a five-minute video that supports their application and the judges reviewed progress on the agency's strategic plan.

A panel of five park and recreation professionals judged all application materials. Judges are chosen for their considerable experience and knowledge in parks and recreation on both the local and national levels.

For more information on the National Gold Medal Award Program, visit www.aapra.org.

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The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration is a nonprofit organization founded to advance knowledge related to the administration of recreation and parks; to encourage scholarly efforts by both practitioners and educators that would enhance the practice of park and recreation administration; to promote broader public understanding of the importance of parks and recreation to the public good; and, to conduct research, publish scholarly papers and sponsor seminars related to the advancement of park and recreation administration. For more information, visit www.aapra.org.

The National Recreation and Park Association

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all people have access to parks and recreation for health, conservation, and social equity. Through its network of 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.

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