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American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration

**2023 Finalists Announced for the National Gold Medal Awards
in Parks and Recreation Management**

Lacey, WA. (April 24, 2023) – The [American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration](#) (AAPRA), in partnership with the [National Recreation and Park Association](#) (NRPA), is pleased to announce the finalists for the 2023 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management. [Musco Lighting, LLC](#) continues its 20+ years as the proud sponsor of the National Gold Medal Awards program.

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 recognition. Applications are separated into seven classes, with five classes based on population, one class for armed forces recreation and one class, awarded on odd numbered years, for state park systems.

Agencies are judged on their ability to address the needs of those they serve through the collective energies of community members, staff and elected officials. Four finalists in each class are chosen to compete for grand honors each year.

In announcing the 2023 National Gold Medal Finalists, AAPRA Executive Director Jane H. Adams shared, “Each agency is commended for submitting a 2023 application for the prestigious National Gold Medal Award. The Academy congratulates the 20 local park and recreation agencies, the four armed forces installations, and the four state park systems on receiving the Finalist award. We look forward to presenting these awards at the Gold Medal Gala Reception in Dallas, Texas, as part of the National Recreation and Park Association’s annual conference.”

The 2023 Gold Medal finalists are:

Class I (population 400,001 and over)

- Gwinnett County Parks & Recreation, Lawrenceville, GA
- Hillsborough County Parks and Recreation, Tampa, FL
- The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Greenbelt, MD
- Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation, Virginia Beach, VA

Class II (population 150,001 – 400,000)

- City of Henderson Parks and Recreation, Henderson, NV
- City of Plano Parks & Recreation Department, Plano, TX
- Roseville Parks, Recreation & Libraries Department, Roseville, CA
- South Suburban Park and Recreation District, Littleton, CO

Class III (population 75,001 – 150,000)

- Champaign Park District, Champaign, IL
- City of New Braunfels Parks and Recreation, New Braunfels, TX
- Plainfield Park District, Plainfield, IL
- Waukegan Park District, Waukegan, IL

Class IV (population 30,001 – 75,000)

- Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services, Bristol, CT
- Douglasville Parks and Recreation, Douglasville, GA
- Hoffman Estates Park District, Hoffman Estates, IL
- Park District of Oak Park, Oak Park, IL

Class V (population less than 30,000)

- City of Macedonia Parks & Recreation, Macedonia, OH
- Cullman Parks, Recreation, and Sports Tourism, Cullman, AL
- Oak Brook Park District, Oak Brook, IL
- Sycamore Park District, Sycamore, IL

Armed Forces Recreation (Worldwide)

- Dover Air Force Base, Dover AFB, DE
- Directorate of Family and Morale, Welfare, and Recreation, USAG, Fort Knox, KY
- Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Kanagawa, Japan
- Naval Air Station Whiting Field, Milton, FL

State Parks

- Missouri State Parks, Jefferson City, MO
- Ohio State Parks and Watercraft, Columbus, OH
- Texas State Parks, Austin, TX
- Wyoming State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails, Cheyenne, WY

A panel of five park and recreation professionals reviews and judges all application materials. Judges are chosen for their considerable experience and knowledge in parks and recreation both locally and nationally.

This year's Finalists awardees will compete for Grand Plaque Award honor, and the six Grand Plaque recipients will be announced at the 2023 NRPA Annual Conference in Dallas, TX.

For information on the National Gold Medal Awards, visit [AAPRA](#) or [NRPA](#).

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The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration is a non-profit 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 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 Americans 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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