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Contact:

American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration

Jane H. Adams, Executive Director

info@aapra.org

Add to Your Agency's Assets! Apply for a 2024 National Gold Medal Award

The National Gold Medal Award Program, governed and managed by the American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration (AAPRA), announces applications are now open for the 2024 National Gold Medal Award Program, sponsored by Musco Lighting and offered in partnership with the National Recreation & Park Association. The [online application](#) is now available.

Viewed as the premiere award in parks and recreation, the National Gold Medal Program seeks to identify agencies who display excellence in the management of their parks, open space, facilities, and recreation services. In addition to public agencies, the 2024 National Gold Medal Award is open to armed forces recreation installation programs worldwide.

So...why go for the National Gold Medal Award? One award recipient shared that by applying for a National Gold Medal Award, "our agency received a huge positive and significant public and political recognition from this award. A great boost to staff and recognition of the overall teamwork for the agency." Another recipient stated the benefit as "Credibility, as it helps us improve fundraising and our elected leaders are also more inclined to provide additional budget support. Most importantly, it is a great tool for recruiting new employees."

Public agencies apply based upon their population: Class 1 (population 400,001 and over); Class II (population 150,001 to 400,000); Class III (population 75,001 to 150,000); Class IV (population 30,001 to 75,000) and Class V (population less than 30,000). Armed forces recreation installations programs do not have population categories.

The National Gold Medal Award application asks agencies to identify what they do well in managing their agency and why is that considered the agency's most outstanding effort; the activities undertaken both internally and externally to connect with the community it serves; examples of the results it has achieved; examples of innovation and creativity; and how it addresses the issues of access to all; community health and well-being; and climate-ready parks. Finally, it asks agencies to share challenge(s) it has faced in the last three (3) years; how it has addressed the challenge(s); and the results achieved.

**"The National Gold Medal Award
helped make the agency more
relevant in the city's hierarchy."**

Applicants must complete an online National Gold Medal Award application by March 1, 2024, at which time a panel of five (5) independent Gold Medal Award judges carefully review each application and select four (4) agencies per population category and four (4) armed forces installation programs as National Gold Medal

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Finalists. Finalist applicants then submit a five (5) minute video showcasing the activities and results noted in their application. The Gold Medal Award judges then select one (1) agency per category to receive the Grand Plaque. Finalist and Grand Plaques will be awarded either Atlanta, Georgia, as part of the 2024 National Recreation and Park Association Conference, October 8-11.

In 2023 the following agencies received the coveted Grand Plaque Award: Naval Air Facility Atsugi, Kanagawa, Japan; Texas State Parks, Texas; Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation, Virginia; Plano Parks and Recreation, Texas; Champaign Park District, Illinois; Hoffman Estates Park District, Illinois; and Cullman Parks, Recreation, and Sports Tourism, Alabama.

The National Gold Medal Award Program is administered by the American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration (AAPRA) in partnership with the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) and is sponsored by Musco Lighting, LLC.

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