



## 2023-24 Committee and Task Force Accomplishments

### BEST PAPER COMMITTEE

*Chris Beth, CPRP, Chair*

The 2024 Best Paper Committee focused on selecting the best dissertation, in line with every other, even-year tradition. The committee undertook an extensive announcement campaign, collaborating closely with universities that offer doctorate programs in parks and recreation, natural resources, and related fields. Despite these efforts, only two submissions were received. This outcome, while lower than anticipated, still provided the committee with quality work to consider.

Upon receiving, reviewing, and scoring the two executive summaries, the committee found both submissions to be of high academic merit. Both dissertations were quite interesting and enjoyable to review. After a thorough evaluation, the committee selected Renata "Kika" Bradford from the University of Montana as the 2024 Best Paper Award recipient for her dissertation titled "Shaping Outdoor Recreation in Protected Areas: Insights From Factors Influencing Brazilian Protected Area Professionals." The Certificate of Merit is presented to Leah Coffey, University of Tennessee, for her dissertation titled "Transformative Experiences and Responsible Visitation in Yellowstone National Park: A Study on Canyon Village Concessionaire Seasonal Employees." I extend my heartfelt thanks to the committee members for their assistance, time, and expertise in this process. As we look ahead to next year, it is clear that we will need greater promotions and a Vice-Chair, especially since this role was left vacant during this year's process due to unforeseen circumstances.

### BYLAWS COMMITTEE

*Dina Trunzo, CTRS, Chair and Dr. Terry Robertson, Vice Chair*

The purpose of the Bylaws Committee is to respond to requests from the Board of Directors for proposed additions or amendments to the bylaws. This year the Bylaws Committee was initially asked to review a section about membership. The Committee Chair and Vice Chair met first to familiarize themselves with the current bylaws. They noted a few items that they felt the full committee should review. A committee meeting was held in August to read through the Bylaws and to discuss suggestions and possible edits. The Committee also noted the Academy's mission, vision, and values and utilized those when reviewing the Bylaws, especially the current and proposed purposes. With a quorum present at the meeting, the Committee approved the recommendations and suggested other changes. Suggestions will be sent to the Board for its review and approval, and as per the Bylaws, will then be voted upon by the membership.

### CAREER DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

*Dr. Jean Keller, Chair and Tim Herd, CPRE, Vice Chair*

Based on the 2023 Task Force's recommendations, the 2024 Task Force members discussed career development and recruitment, and chose to develop a national campaign for entry level careers in parks and recreation. The main goal has been creating a 4-minute, emotionally compelling video highlighting the diversity of positions within parks and recreation profession. This began as a collaboration through the generosity of the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS), who is funding the video production. The Task Force has the agreement and support of the AAPRA Board of Directors to develop a national promotional campaign aimed at high school and college students showcasing parks and recreation as viable professional career choices.

PRPS, Blackbird Media Group, and Task Force members are in the process of creating the video with a compelling, emotional appeal that expands viewers' awareness and understanding of the diversity and viability of a life-fulfilling career in the profession. Interviews are being completed and B-roll footage is being obtained. To produce an engaging and effective video, an interview-driven "real people, real stories" approach was selected. Additionally, dynamic offshoot videos of short 10-15-second clips for associated social media promotions will be produced. The video will be accompanied by complementary, downloadable educational tool kit materials to help students, counselors, and parents learn more about park and recreation professional careers and educational paths to secure them. Materials will be secured and developed to support the video by late December 2024.

Task Force members are now developing a survey to better understand how professionals found and entered careers in park and recreation.

AAPRA and PRPS are finalizing an agreement with NRPA to support a dedicated web page using the AAPRA video and educational tool kit to promote careers in the park and recreation profession. The agreement will be finalized in September 2024.

The Task Force will also work with the AAPRA Branding & Social Media Task Force, along with NRPA, the State Association Affiliates, the Academy of Leisure Science, ActivEnviro, and others to disseminate information about the national promotion campaign for careers in the park and recreation profession. Task Force members have met with groups leaders and will speak at these organization’s conferences.

**EXTERN COMMITTEE**

*Bill Foelsch, CPRP, Chair and Bill McAdam, CPRP, Vice Chair*

**Extern Program Sponsor: [Williams Architects](#), Itasca, Illinois**

The Academy Extern Recruitment and Selection Subcommittee’s work, coordinated by Externship Committee Vice Chair Bill McAdam and augmented by the promotion and contacts of our Past Externs, resulted in 15 Externship applications from throughout the country. The subcommittee reviewed, ranked, and made the final selection of the 2024 Class of Externs, two of whom are Ernest T. Atwell Diversity Externs. The 2024 Extern Class will be joined by one of our 2023 Externs who was not able to participate at the Dallas NRPA Annual Conference. We thank the Academy Board for extending this courtesy for the 2023 Extern to attend the Atlanta NRPA Annual Conference. These Externs receive a full package registration to the 2024 NRPA Annual Conference and reimbursement of expenses up to \$1,000 for travel and lodging. They are also invited to participate in all Academy related meetings including the Extern Reception, the Virtual Membership Meeting, and the Annual Awards Dinner.

Simultaneous with the Extern selection process, the Mentors and Buddies Subcommittee, coordinated by Linda Kotowski, began the process of recruiting Extern Buddies from past Academy Externs and Extern Mentors from Academy members. This pairing of Extern, Mentor, and Buddy is designed to enhance the value of the extern’s experience at the conference, and to initiate what will hopefully be a longer-term professional networking opportunity. As soon as the 2024 Externs were announced, the Mentors and Buddies were selected and paired with the Externs from the on-line applicants.

The Externship Committee thanks Red Barn Communications (Brit and Shelley) for their efforts to support the application submission and ranking process for Externs, Mentors and Buddies through the on-line *Submittable* program. The following are our Externs, Mentors and Buddies for the 2024 NRPA Conference:

<b>2024 Extern</b>	<b>Mentor</b>	<b>Buddy (Former Extern)</b>
Gabrielle (Gabby) Vera	Robert Armistead	Kimberly Zygmant
Molly Keays	Stacey Dicke	Sarah Sandquist
Maxime Pierre	Michal Anne Lord	Daniel Bregman
Jeff Achée	Bill Foelsch	Tara Eggleston Stewart
Alison Feliz	Chris Nunes	Katie MacCammon

We thank all the Externship applicants, and our Mentor and Buddy candidates for their interest in this valuable Academy program, fostering professional and career communication and networking between young professionals, mid-career professionals and seasoned pros.

The annual Extern-Mentor-Buddy Virtual meeting was held August 7<sup>th</sup>. This was an opportunity to review the Externship Manual, gain additional insights into how to maximize the Externship experience, ask questions, provide general information about AAPRA programs and processes; and to share insights among the Externs, Mentors, and Buddies. Additionally, our individual Extern-Mentor-Buddy pairings have been holding direct conversations over the summer to help Externs plan their NRPA Conference experience.

We also note that one of our Past Externs, Kathy Capps, is working with Linda Kotowski on consolidating our various Externship Committee documents into one cohesive and informative manual.

The Past Extern VRT Sub-Committee, coordinated by Adriane Clutter, Montgomery County Parks, MD and Kimberly Zygmant, Layton Parks and Recreation, UT, are planning two Past Extern Virtual Roundtables (VRT) meetings for the next six months. The group determined they will plan the first roundtable in cooperation with the NRPA Young Professionals Network to help expand the reach and understanding of the Academy's programs and benefits.

The History and Past Extern Involvement Sub-Committee will update the Past Extern roster of current professional assignments and to discuss additional opportunities for Past Externs to affiliate with the Academy in other projects. The 2024 Externship Committee is grateful for the assistance of the following former externs who served on the committee this year: Kathy Capps, Adriane Clutter, Michael Biedenstein, Anthony Iracki, Tabitha Martinez, AJ McCage, John Stutzman, Jay Tryon, Tom Venniro, and Kimberly Zygmant.

The Committee is currently planning the Annual Extern Reception for the Atlanta NRPA Annual Conference on Monday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 – 7:00pm at Hudson Grill. We sincerely appreciate the sponsorship of Williams Architects, Inc. for their enthusiastic support of the AAPRA Externship Program.

#### [JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION \(JEDI\) COMMITTEE](#)

*Roslyn Johnson, CPRP and Michael McCarty, CPRP, Co-Chairs*

The JEDI Committee continues its work with both internal and external focused goals. Internal goals are focused on the Academy, and this year began with drafting a value statement for the Academy, at the request of the Board of Directors, on "Belonging", which is "We commit to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion by actively seeking to create safe, secure, and supportive environments." A subcommittee also planned and hosted a Conversation That Matters on Implicit Bias, held June 2024 with approximately 50 registrants. The subcommittee included former externs and mentors as well. Work is in progress for a Fall Conversation that Matters, with a topic and date to be determined.

The Committee has been discussing the possibility of a gathering at the NRPA Conference in Atlanta to network in-person and invite others to learn about the efforts that the Academy has taken centered around JEDI. Members are encouraged to attend the Extern Social on Monday, October 7 at 5:30pm.

External goals are focused on the profession. Conversations continued on developing a JEDI Award to recognize park and recreation individuals and agencies for their efforts related to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. NRPA has recently developed a similar new honor called the Innovation in Equity Award, and they want to ensure our proposed award will not conflict or compete with this new initiative. Our goal is to have something in place for 2025, however the sub-committee will continue meeting to determine how to best facilitate this.

One of our Co-chairs has been active with a subcommittee to work on a White House Initiative. She was part of a group that met with federal legislators on Capitol Hill along with the NRPA Board of Directors and the NRPA Legislative Advocacy Group. There is more work to be done next year as this program is part of a longer goal. We remain hopeful to get this done next year.

#### [LEGENDS IN PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE](#)

*Carrie Fullerton, CPRE, Chair and Michael McCarty, CPRP, Vice Chair*

**Legends Program Sponsor: [Landscape Structures](#), Delano, Minnesota**

The Legends Committee identifies distinguished administrators; educators; local, state, or federal elected officials; and/or citizens who have made outstanding contributions to parks, recreation, and conservation. Selected individuals deemed to be Legends are interviewed (typically) by their nominator. Academy membership is not required to nominate or be a Legend nominee. Special thanks to the sponsorship from Landscape Structures that provides the funding of these wonderful interviews.

During 2024, all of the existing videos and biographies have been uploaded to the Academy [website](#), which are now live and available. The Committee encourages all members to check out these amazing Legends videos!

Committee members are working to obtain the biographies of the 110 current Legends. The Committee is working off a Master List created by Linda Kotowski. Jodie Adams has been in contact with NRPA to determine if we can record interviews with some Legends at the 2024 NRPA Conference in Atlanta. Carrie Fullerton is looking to see if we can record a Legend this year virtually

with the Eppley Institute/IU. Troy Houtman is updating the criteria to be selected as a Legend utilizing existing matrix and rubric material.

#### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

*Cindi Wight, CPRE, Chair*

The Membership Committee focused on refining membership criteria, enhancing the nomination process, and recruiting new members. We began with updating criteria to be more inclusive of educators who are not on the tenure track, which was spearheaded by Chris Nunes and Deb Jordan. We also developed a criteria checklist to ensure all candidates meet the minimum qualifications and to facilitate a more transparent scoring process. Discussions regarding including consultants who significantly contribute to the profession continue.

Prior to the membership application period, we conducted a successful webinar entitled "Six Tips for a Successful Nomination," which provided valuable guidance to members on preparing strong nominations. Feedback from attendees indicated improved readiness for the nomination process. The webinar is posted on the Academy's [website](#).

A Membership Committee Procedures Manual draft has been prepared, outlining the committee's operations, timelines, and expectations. This document will be a vital resource for current and future committee members.

The largest accomplishment this year is that we received a record 24 nominations, an increase from all previous years. After a rigorous scoring process, the committee recommended 16 nominees for induction into the Academy.

The end of membership year culminates with a meeting that will focus on reviewing the proposed "Advocates" membership category and discuss its potential impact on the Academy. We will also conduct a Bylaws review to evaluate any necessary changes to align with our evolving membership goals. We will finalize membership application materials, ensuring the application process is clear and accessible for all potential nominees. And lastly, continue recruitment strategies to reach out to underrepresented groups and regions to encourage diverse nominations.

This year, the committee has made significant progress in strengthening the membership process and preparing for future challenges. We look forward to continuing this work, ensuring the Academy remains a leading organization for park and recreation professionals.

#### MENTORSHIP COMMITTEE

*Sheila Canzian, CPRP, Chair and Kimberly Garrett, CPRP, Vice Chair*

The APPRA Mentorship Program was established in 2014 with the goal of partnering less experienced park and recreation professionals with established professionals in leadership positions from throughout the United States. This unique 1:1 Mentor/Mentee relationship provides an opportunity for younger professionals to gain experienced practitioner insight and advice on a number of topics including professional career advancement, day to day working situations and heightened awareness of career opportunities in the parks and recreation field.

The 2024 class of mentors/mentees was the second largest ever, with 104 pairings! Mentee applicants live in 30 different states, with the greatest number of applicants hailing from Texas, North Carolina, California, Ohio, and Illinois. Mentor applicants from 22 different states with Texas, Ohio, California, North Carolina, Kansas, Virginia, and Illinois having the greatest number. For approximately 75% of mentees, this is their first year participating in the program. Conversely, 58% of mentors are previous participants in the program!

This number reflects the true dedication of park and recreation professionals toward ensuring that the next generation of leaders is well prepared.

Monthly meetings between mentors and mentees began in April and will continue through November with the hope that a physical meeting will occur at the NRPA Conference in October for those able to attend the conference. The positive response and appreciation for the Mentorship Program can be summed up in one of the many comments we received after the 2023 program: "I absolutely loved my mentor. Ms. Debbie got me through a very bad experience, she walked me through leaving a job I loved and helped me start at a whole, new different state and a better position! I LOVED this program! Thank you for having these resources for people like me, new in parks and recreation, love for what we do, but unsure on the directions that I could go!"

**NATIONAL GOLD MEDAL AWARDS COMMITTEE**

*Karen Hesser, CPRP, Chair and Stacey Laird Dicke, CPRP, Vice Chair*

**National Gold Medal Award Sponsor: Musco Lighting, Oskaloosa, Iowa**

The National Gold Medal Award honors public park and recreation agencies and state park systems throughout the United States and armed forces recreation programs worldwide that demonstrate excellence in long-range planning, resource management, and innovative approaches to delivering superb park and recreation services with fiscally sound business practices. The Gold Medal Committee’s purpose is to prepare and deliver materials to market the program to encourage agencies to apply. And once the finalists are announced, to assist with the Gold Medal Reception and to champion the finalists within their communities after the NRPA Conference. (The Committee does not judge the Gold Medal applications.)

This year, a webinar was held in December entitled “Going for the Gold -- Medal that Is”, in which Karen and Stacey shared the requirements of the nomination process and led a panel of three professionals from Gold Medal Award agencies, who shared how to prepare a successful application. The webinar is also available on the Academy’s [website](#) as a reference.

Stacey is facilitating the “Going for the Gold Medal” Session at the 2024 NRPA Conference in Atlanta. The session will be held Thursday, October 10 at 9:30am, in Room B316. Panelists include Sarah Sandquist, Champaign Park District, IL; Michael Kirschman, Virginia Beach, VA; and Nathan Anderson, Cullman, AL.

The Committee is currently preparing to assist with the Gold Medal Gala Reception for the 24 agency finalists at the NRPA conference. Karen and Stacey and the Gold Medal Committee will connect with the Finalist agencies to re-present their Gold Medal Plaques locally (either in person or virtually) and to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of the Finalists. Accompanying them will be local representatives from our sponsor Musco Lighting, without whom this program would not be possible.

**NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

*Janet Bartnik, CPRE, Chair*

The Nominating Committee met in June, brainstorming candidate names and then verifying their interest in serving on the Academy Board of Directors. All candidates confirmed that they understand the policy that members of the Academy Board are not allowed to apply for the National Gold Medal Award for their agency until their term has ended, nominate an individual for membership or write a letter of support for a nominee.

The following slate of candidates was submitted for Board approval: (✓ indicates the elected candidate)

**President-Elect**

Michael Kalvort

**Elizabeth Kessler ✓**

**Secretary (2-year term, 2024-26)**

**Stacey Laird Dicke ✓**

Dina Trunzo

**Board of Directors (2 vacancies, 3-year term)**

**Darrell Crittendon ✓**

Kimberly Garrett

Priscilla Geigis

**Bernita Reese ✓**

Following the Board’s approval of the slate, each candidate was notified to submit a brief bio, photo, and statement as to why they want to serve the Academy. Candidate’s photo, bio, and statement were linked on the electronic ballot and posted on the Academy website for reference. Candidates were notified of their status upon ratification of the election results. We thank everyone who agreed to serve the Academy, and we wish the new Board of Directors much success in the coming year.

**PUGSLEY MEDAL COMMITTEE**

*Elizabeth Kessler, CPRE, Chair and Lewis Ledford, Vice Chair*

**Pugsley Medal Sponsors: Davey Tree Expert Company and the National Park Foundation**

We are pleased to present accomplishments of the 2024 Cornelius Amory Pugsley Medal Committee. This year has been marked by significant progress and renewed efforts to elevate the profile of the Pugsley Medal; one of the most prestigious honors in the field of parks and conservation.

The Cornelius Amory Pugsley Medal is awarded to citizens, political leaders, and parks and conservation professionals who have made outstanding contributions to the advancement of parks and conservation at local, regional, state, or national levels. The 2024 Pugsley Medal Committee focused on raising awareness and increasing the reach of the medal, aiming to inspire and recognize more individuals across the country.

The Committee met monthly from January through June 2024. We conducted a thorough review of the nomination criteria and application process to ensure clarity, inclusivity, and alignment with the medal's purpose. Modifications were made to better reflect the evolving landscape of parks and conservation work. A scoring rubric was developed to guide the selection process, promoting transparency and consistency in evaluating nominations. The Committee actively reached out to parks and conservation organizations across the country, encouraging nominations from a diverse array of candidates. The Pugsley Medal was prominently featured in the April 2024 Conservation Issue of the NRPA *Parks and Recreation* magazine, with an article detailing the significance of the medal and encouraging nominations. To further increase visibility, a targeted social media campaign was launched in collaboration with the Branding/Social Media Task Force, successfully reaching professionals and advocates within and beyond the Academy.

We are excited to announce three medals will be presented at the 2024 Annual Awards Dinner, October 9<sup>th</sup>, at the NRPA Conference in Atlanta. Nominations were open from April 7 to June 7, 2024, and we received an impressive array of candidates - the most received in recent history - showcasing the extraordinary work being done across the country.

Heartfelt thanks are extended to the members of the 2024 Pugsley Medal Committee for their outstanding efforts and dedication throughout the year. We would also like to recognize Anita Gorman, Kansas City, Missouri, who ends her term in 2024. Her contributions have been invaluable, and we will be selecting a new member to join us in 2025.

The Cornelius Amory Pugsley Medal is made possible through the generous sponsorship of The Davey Expert Tree Company in association with the National Park Foundation. Their support is instrumental in honoring those who have dedicated their lives to the conservation and advancement of our nation's parks. We acknowledge the regular support and productive meetings with Brian Borkowicz, Manager of National Accounts from the Davey Tree Expert Company, whose collaboration has been crucial to the success of the Pugsley Medal. The commitment to parks and conservation continues to inspire and support our mission.

#### [RESEARCH FOR THE PROFESSION COMMITTEE](#)

*William Nelson, Chair and Dr. Denise Anderson, Vice Chair*

Research for the Profession began the year by reviewing past activities and evaluating the success of those endeavors. Past work identified primary concerns of practitioners which were then presented in the NRPA *Parks and Recreation* magazine. Our discussions then centered on who was doing research, what research was available, and what offerings might be provided to the profession. This led to creating three surveys. The first survey requested universities and colleges to identify the types of research they were providing to Park and Recreation related agencies. The second survey requested agencies to respond if they had staffing assigned to research, or, if they were using consultants and/or universities to do research for them. The third survey will request State Directors to provide information about research requested by their member agencies. The goal is to have a better understanding of what the research needs are, and then provide access, or programing to support those needs.

A second endeavor is the listing of agency and association websites who provide research, and making that information more accessible to the park and recreation administrators. The list has been developed, but there is a need to improve on the dissemination of that information. As a result of the wealth of information that exists within the membership of the Academy, the goal is to update an "Ask the Expert" resource program the Academy offered in the past. This list identifies tasks that Park and Recreation Agencies deal with from time to time, but matched with the names of Academy members who have expertise in that area. Departments who would like some mentoring in a specific area would then contact one of the Academy members who has experience in that issue/topic.

## URBAN DIRECTORS COMMITTEE

*Dr. Edwin Gómez, CPRP, Chair and Darrell Crittendon, CPRP, Vice Chair*

The Urban Directors Committee met throughout the spring and summer 2024 focusing on two major action items: (1) submitting names to the Board for new members and (2) submitting suggestions for revisions to the definition of urban directors as stated in the bylaws. Two reports were submitted to the Board of Directors. The committee met, discussed each application, and completed final seven reviews in June, and voted to recommend Mr. A.P. Diaz (Superintendent, City of Seattle, Washington) and Mr. Corey K. Wilson (Recreation and Parks Commission for the Parish of Baton Rouge, Louisiana [BREC]) as nominees to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors affirmed both nominees.

With respect to the definition of Urban Directors as contained in the bylaws, we discussed defining an urban area, the issue of political vs. non-political appointment, and whether a nominee should or need not have a park/recreation background. Lastly, we looked at rewording the bylaws to match our deliberations. All actions, votes, and motions made by the committee always had a quorum. The final report regarding our findings in both these action items was submitted to the AAPRA Board of Directors on June 25, 2024. Our recommendation is to begin the membership process earlier, to have a deadline for nominators due by mid-April to allow the committee chair to organize and coordinate.

## BRANDING AND SOCIAL MEDIA TASK FORCE

*Elizabeth Kessler, CPRE and Stacie Anaya, CPRP, Co-Chairs*

The Branding/Social Media Task Force made substantial progress over the past year, focusing on enhancing the visibility and engagement of AAPRA across digital platforms as deemed a priority within the 2022-2025 Impact Plan. The Task Force collaborated with staff and Academy members to implement several key initiatives, including social media strategy development, website improvements, and content promotion. Below is a high-level summary of the accomplishments and ongoing efforts.

### **1. Social Media Recommendations**

#### **1A. Hashtag Protocol:**

- **Objective:** Amplify the reach of AAPRA's social media posts.
- **Status:** Completed. A hashtag protocol was developed, included in the toolkit, and shared on Basecamp. Moving forward, the protocol will be monitored for effectiveness, with LinkedIn tagging emphasized.
- **Next Steps:** Continue implementation and monitoring; consider future modifications.

#### **1B. Sponsorship Agreements and Benefits:**

- **Objective:** Standardize sponsorship agreements to ensure alignment with AAPRA's goals.
- **Status:** Limited progress. The Task Force was not involved in reviewing agreements but highlighted the importance of understanding and upholding sponsorship terms.
- **Next Steps:** Suggest reviewing agreements as they come up for renewal, potentially adopting a model similar to the National Gold Medal Award program.

#### **1C. Annual Content Calendar:**

- **Objective:** Maintain a consistent and engaging online presence through a well-structured content calendar.
- **Status:** In progress. The calendar framework was developed and promoted, focusing on Conservation/Parks and JEDI initiatives.
- **Next Steps:** Finalize the calendar and consider assigning committee members to contribute content regularly.

#### **1D. AAPRA Video Promotion:**

- **Objective:** Increase visibility of AAPRA videos through social media.
- **Status:** Ongoing. Video content promotion continues, but additional content is needed.
- **Next Steps:** Continue promoting existing videos and encourage content creation.

#### **1E. Data Analytics and Performance Metrics:**

- **Objective:** Utilize data to optimize social media engagement strategies.
- **Status:** Ongoing. Data analytics have been shared with the Leadership Team, with a focus on monitoring growth.
- **Next Steps:** Consider adding a monthly analytics report to Basecamp for the entire Task Force.

## II. Website Recommendations

### 2A. Update Website Banner:

- **Objective:** Enhance branding by adding "American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration" to the webpage banner.
- **Status:** Completed.
- **Next Steps:** Ongoing monitoring to ensure consistent branding.

### 2B. Consistent Webpage Updates:

- **Objective:** Ensure all webpage content is up-to-date, especially before major communications.
- **Status:** In progress. Key updates identified, including creating a photo gallery and updating nomination information.
- **Next Steps:** Task Force to review all pages by the end of the AAPRA year, with additional recommendations for improvements.

### 2C. Branding and Marketing Toolkit:

- **Objective:** Provide members with resources to effectively promote AAPRA.
- **Status:** Social media toolkit completed and shared. The toolkit is set to be included on the website and in new member materials.
- **Next Steps:** Finalize and distribute the toolkit and continue developing a comprehensive Marketing and Branding Plan.

### 2D. Member Resources on Website:

- **Objective:** Create a dedicated space for AAPRA branding resources on the website.
- **Status:** Ongoing. The social media toolkit is ready, but additional resources are needed.
- **Next Steps:** Identify a location on the website for these resources and upload necessary materials.

### 2E. YouTube Channel Integration:

- **Objective:** Enhance online presence by adding a YouTube channel link to the website.
- **Status:** Completed. The YouTube link, along with LinkedIn, has been added to the website.
- **Next Steps:** Consider adding an Instagram account to expand social media reach.

### Conclusion:

The Branding/Social Media Task Force has made significant strides in strengthening AAPRA's online presence. The integration of past externs has brought fresh perspectives and a deep understanding of current digital trends, which has been instrumental in crafting compelling posts and stories. This engagement is crucial to reach a broader audience and enhance the Academy's visibility.

While some initiatives have been successfully completed, others are ongoing and will continue. The Task Force remains committed to optimizing engagement strategies and ensuring that AAPRA's brand is consistently represented across all digital platforms. Looking ahead, a decision is needed regarding the future of the Task Force:

### Option 1: Engage Committees

**Continuing the Task Force:** If the Task Force is to continue, it is important to identify a representative from each committee. This approach will ensure diverse input and engagement across all areas of AAPRA. Each representative would take on specific responsibilities related to their committee's focus, contributing content, and providing feedback on branding efforts.

### Option 2: Sunset or Transition the Task Force

**Recommended Strategy Sunset the Task Force:** If the Leadership Team and staff can absorb all duties, consider sunsetting the Task Force. A formal transition plan should be developed to ensure smooth handover of responsibilities.

**Transition to a New Model:** If the Task Force continues, consider transitioning to a model where each committee has a representative. This approach ensures that all areas remain engaged and contribute equitably to AAPRA's branding and social media strategies.

An implementation timeline should be developed for whichever option is chosen to ensure a structured and effective transition or continuation.



**AMERICAN PARKS AND RECREATION FOUNDATION**

*William Nelson, President*

The Foundation has been active with several housecleaning chores in addition to our support of professionals who wish to attend some of the NRPA Schools but do not have the financial support to do so. We offered two scholarships for each of the following NRPA schools: Supervisors Management School, Revenue Development Management School, and the Directors School, for a total of six.

This year the Foundation reviewed and updated its bylaws to recognize our business activities taking place in the State of Washington. This also revised language that was confusing, as well as adding responsibilities for the leadership officers. In addition, a workplan for the individual committees and officers has been developed and implemented.

An updated MOU between the Foundation and the Academy for the provision of Administrative Services was developed to take us through the next three years. There is recognition that additional changes may be made in the future, but the goal was to develop a working document that would be in place while the Academy and Foundation updated an overall Strategic Plan.

Finally, we are proud to announce that Chris Dropinski has earned the honor of becoming a Lifetime Foundation Trustee. She joins John Potts as our only other Lifetime Foundation Trustee.

Academy members are encouraged to make an annual donation to the Foundation to continue offering professional development scholarships. Each scholarship ensures we are preparing the next generation of leaders.

Our 2024 goal is to 100% of Academy members make an annual donation.

Whether it's a \$1, \$10, \$100, or \$1000 donation, please make yours TODAY by using this [link](#).

Watch for the 2024 – 2025 Committee/Task Force Participation Survey in November  
This is YOUR opportunity to identify where you want to contribute to the Academy's efforts!