



## BIOS AND STATEMENTS

### 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATES

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The following individuals have been approved as candidates for the 2021 Academy Board of Directors:

**President-elect**

Janet Bartnik, CO  
MaryBeth O'Dell, OH

**Secretary: 1 year-term**

Stacey Laird Dickey, TX  
Cory Styron, FL

**Treasurer: 2 year-term**

Robert Armistead, TX  
Detrick Stanford, GA

**Directors: 3 year-term**

**(4 candidates/2 highest voter receivers are elected)**

Roslyn Johnson, MD  
Michael Klitzing, IN  
Joe Turner, TX  
Larry Zehnder, TN

**Please Note:** We are unable to do electronic voting as the current bylaws stipulate a ballot must be mailed to the last recorded address of each member. [Article VII, Section 2]

Please return your completed ballot in the provided, pre-addressed envelope with a postmark of August 20, 2021 or before. Please exercise your responsibility as a member of the Academy and vote for the candidates of your choice.

PRESIDENT-ELECT CANDIDATES  
(Vote for 1)

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**Janet Bartnik**  
**Mountain Recreation Metropolitan District, Colorado**  
**(Member since 2014)**



New to Eagle County, Colorado, in 2017, Janet Bartnik brought the Mountain Recreation Metro District community together, employed a balance between the business model and social service, and engaged community partners in efforts to improve accessibility and affordability of programs and services, all guided by a freshly distilled mission, vision, strategic plan, and organization name.

Prior, Bartnik was the Director of Parks and Recreation in Liberty, MO, where she was instrumental in engaging four community partners in the creation of a community health coalition (Liberty Community Health Action Team) and worked with the Liberty Park Board to develop a new mission and vision. Bartnik also served as the Director of Parks and Recreation for the City of Raymore, MO, where she was aggressive in seeking alternative strategies for funding, land acquisition, and developed a recreation division for Raymore which had previously only had parks.

Janet's commitment to the field of Parks and Recreation is evident in her involvement with a wide range of professional associations, most recently serving as Academy secretary.

**Candidate Statement:**

*Serving the profession is a privilege, and the Academy offers many incredible leadership opportunities to inspire, influence, and advance the profession through service to the field of parks and recreation. My involvement in Academy committees over the past seven years has not only afforded me an opportunity to work with an amazing number of the brightest and most experienced minds in the field, it has also allowed me to grow my leadership skill and given me insight into the ways in which we can continue to influence positive change in the profession. Serving as Secretary of the Board in 2020 & 2021, I've been proud of the way that each committee and task force managed through the challenging times created by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Academy must be flexible to continue its work in support of professionals as the industry evolves in response to this and future challenges. Thank you for nominating me for this post. If elected, it would be an honor to serve in this capacity.*

PRESIDENT-ELECT CANDIDATES  
(Vote for 1)

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**MaryBeth O'Dell**  
**City of Kettering**  
**Parks Recreation and Cultural Arts Department, Ohio**  
**(Member since 2010)**



MaryBeth has 43 years of progressive professional experience in all areas of parks, recreation, cultural arts and the entertainment industry. She has extensive understanding of complex organizational systems, including diverse workforce structures. Mary Beth has expertise in strategic planning, project management and financial oversight in municipal and park district organizations through her employment with Dallas, Schaumburg and Kettering. In Kettering, she manages a department budget of \$17.4 million. She has participated in various public bond levy projects and successfully orchestrated an \$18.3 million campaign for City of Kettering Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department. She has managed several public private fundraising campaigns through the Kettering Parks Foundation; raising over \$2 million in the last 12 years. In Kettering, Mary Beth has led the department efforts through four CAPRA Accreditations and won the National Recreation and Park Association Gold Medal Award, Class IV in 2014.

**Candidate Statement:**

*I would consider it a privilege to continue working with the Board of Directors, leading the efforts to strengthen and ignite the human capital that exists in the Academy membership and advancing the profession through an outwardly focused agenda. I would be committed to encouraging our members to be engaged with at least one of the Academy's four goals:*

- *Advance knowledge related to the administration of parks, recreation, and conservation*
- *Promote a broader understanding of the importance of Parks, Recreation and Conservation to the public good.*
- *Encourage scholarly efforts by practitioners and educators that enhance the practice of park and recreation administration*
- *Conduct research, publish scholarly papers, and sponsor seminars related to the advancement of parks and recreation.*

*I would continue to work toward:*

1. *Advancing the Gold Medal Award through a deeper focus on agencies' resourcefulness with their assets.*
2. *Extending the new member orientation through a formal onboarding program.*
3. *Assess the recommendations from the JEDI Task Force for future integration into the Academy system.*
4. *Continuing to strengthen the Academy committee structure; however, introduce a less-prescribed opportunity encouraging collaborative and individual ventures within the membership to focus on advancing the profession.*
5. *Increasing ways to recognize and celebrate academy members' successes and improve the exchange of information in real time through the various social platforms that exist and through the Academy website*

*Thank you for your consideration of my candidacy for President Elect of the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration.*

SECRETARY CANDIDATES  
(Vote for 1)

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**Stacey Dickey, CPRP**  
**City of New Braunfels, Texas**  
**(Member since 2017)**

Stacey Dicke has been the Parks and Recreation Director for the City of New Braunfels since 2004, overseeing 700+ acres of parkland and facilities. The Department received the Texas Recreation and Parks Society's Distinguished Gold Medal award in 2010 and 2016 and was a National Gold Medal finalist in 2020 and 2021. The Department was accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies in 2020.



After graduating from Texas A&M University in 1989, Stacey went to work for the City of Waco Parks and Recreation and became involved with several professional organizations including the Texas Recreation and Parks Society, National Recreation and Parks Association and Texas Amateur Athletics Federation. After working in Waco for eight years, Stacey went to work for Texas Parks and Wildlife as a grants administrator. In 1998, Stacey was hired by the City of Arlington and spent the next six years working for the Recreation Division of the Parks and Recreation Department. She served as President of TRAPS from 2001-2001. Stacey was named to the Texas Recreation and Park Society Hall of Honor in 2015 and inducted into the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration in 2017.

Stacey is married to Kyle Dicke and together they have six children. She is involved in a number of organizations in the community including Oakwood Baptist Church, New Braunfels Noon Lions and the Chamber of Commerce.

**Candidate Statement:**

*I am excited about the opportunity to serve on the Academy Board. Since my induction in 2017, I have been impressed and thankful for all of the hard work the Board and members engage in each year. The efforts have been impressive and far reaching. I would be honored to be able to contribute to these efforts. I have been involved with the Extern, Mentoring and Social Media Committees since joining the Academy. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know Academy members through involvement with these Committees. I have also enjoyed my interaction with the young professionals and helping to guide their development and introduction to the work of the Academy. If elected, I will endeavor to give my best to the Academy and support the goals of the membership.*

SECRETARY CANDIDATES  
(Vote for 1)

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**Cory Styron**  
**Los Alamos County, New Mexico**  
**(Member since 2019)**



Cory Styron, Community Services Director of Los Alamos County, NM is nestled in the northern mountains of New Mexico, Los Alamos County is most famous for its role in the Manhattan Project. It's an intelligent community boasting a disproportionate number of scientists and engineers that are warm, welcoming, and often focused on getting away from computer screens to find recreation opportunities outdoors.

As the Community Services Director, Styron leads a diverse team focused on improving the quality of life through a wide range of divisions: Parks, Recreation, Open Space, Aquatics, Golf, Ice, Libraries, Culture and Social Services. With extensive outdoor recreation experience, Styron came to Los Alamos after leading other communities through quality-of-life improvements in northern New Mexico as well as in Texas and Florida.

Over his career, Styron has developed a culture of continuous improvement for each organization and led two agencies through the CAPRA process and spent the last 15 years sharing that knowledge with others and improving the process at the national level.

For Styron, working with communities to discover the best they can be and leading them to incorporate that into their everyday practices is very rewarding. A community's social, mental, physical, and economic health are elements that provide the "quality of life" intangible that sets it apart from other communities. This intangible builds pride and resiliency in cities, counties, and states. Styron is a life-long outdoor enthusiast. Many of his most treasured memories with family and friends occurred outdoors in natural settings. He enjoys camping, hiking, kayaking, fishing, and wildlife viewing. If you are in New Mexico, you might spot him with his wife Madeline and their two furry kids, Radar and Zoey, in their recently purchased 22-foot travel trailer as they take advantage of the outstanding natural areas in the region.

**Candidate Statement:**

*I would like to serve as the Secretary for Academy to further our mission and give back to our profession that has been so supportive of me over the years. I have served as the President of the New Mexico Recreation, Parks Association and Chair for the Commission of Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and been active in a variety of other boards. I believe these leadership roles have prepared me to make a difference in the Academy.*

TREASURER CANDIDATES  
(Vote for 1)

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**Robert Armistead**  
**Travis County Parks, Texas**  
**(Member since 2010)**



Robert Armistead, CPRP, is the Assistant Director for Travis County Parks in Austin, Texas (since 2008). He graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a B.A. in Sociology, and from Southwest Texas State University with a M.Ed. in Sports and Leisure Management. He is a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP) with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

Prior to working with Travis County Parks, Robert was the Assistant Director for the City of Corpus Christi Parks and Recreation Department in 2007-2008. From 1976-2007, he worked for the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department, retiring as Division Manager, Programs.

Robert served as a member of the NRPA Board of Trustees from 2003-2009. He was a member of the NRPA Urban Youth Initiative Advisory Committee (1999-2002) and served on the Council of State Association Presidents (CSAP) Executive Committee (2009-2011). He was a member of the NRPA Southwest Regional Council / Network from 1995-2012 and served as Chair in 1998-99. He received the 2005 NRPA Southwest Region Fellow Award and the 2006 NRPA Ralph C. Wilson Award.

Robert was President of the Texas Recreation and Park Society (TRAPS) in 2009-2010 and served on the TRAPS Board of Directors in 2002-2006 and 2008-2011. He is the recipient of the 2004 TRAPS Dan Whitworth Fellow Award, and the 1991, 2001, and 2015 TRAPS President's Award.

Since 2010, Robert has been a member of the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA), and has served on the Bylaws, Externship and Mentoring committees. He has also served on the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation (TAAF) Executive Board (2002-2007, 2015-2017) and as Finance Committee Chair since 2009. He has been a volunteer with Texas Special Olympics track and field for many years.

**Candidate Statement:**

*I am proud to be a member of the Academy, and appreciative to be nominated to serve as Treasurer on the Board of Directors. Working with Academy members on various committees has been a pleasure and I continue to learn from these professionals. I look forward to serving in a leadership role on the Board and continuing the efforts to advance our profession. If elected, it would be an honor to serve as Treasurer.*

TREASURER CANDIDATES  
(Vote for 1)

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**Detrick Stanford**  
**Clayton County, Georgia**  
**(Member since 2017)**



I am submitting this statement expressing my interest as serving as Treasurer for the American Academy of Park and Recreation Administration. I am grateful that I could be considered and excited about serving in this capacity for such an esteemed body. I believe I would be challenged in the role, but I will also contribute with more than 20 years of experience in government and non-profit sectors.

I am the Chief Operating Officer in Clayton County, Georgia, and I have served with distinction the past five years. I'm responsible for a \$224M operating budget and 2600 employees. Additionally, I served as the Parks and Recreation Director, as well as other leadership positions to include Chair and Board Member of the National Recreation and Park Association and the Georgia Recreation & Parks Association.

I have a unique viewpoint as I understand the service area we support, while also recognizing the fiduciary responsibilities that come with service to a government agency and non-profit entity. Again, I welcome the opportunity to continue to serve and understand the commitment and time requirement that's needed to be successful in this endeavor.

In addition to my experience and personal qualities, I have a solid educational foundation and a passion for people and financial management. I am extremely enthusiastic about the continuous growth of the Academy and our willingness to revolutionize and meet the challenges of a profession we know and love.

**Candidate Statement:**

*If elected, I will uphold and maintain the standards of operation I have been performing in previous positions and look forward to the new responsibilities. With my experience, I can best support the Academy in its future endeavors. Thank you again for your consideration.*

DIRECTOR CANDIDATES  
(4 candidates; vote for 2)

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**Roslyn Johnson**  
**Baltimore County,**  
**MD Department of Recreation and Parks, Maryland**  
**(Member since 2017)**



Roslyn was most recently unanimously confirmed as the first female Director for Baltimore County, MD. She has had an extensive career in the field of Parks and Recreation and previously served as the Deputy Director for Facility Operations at the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation Prince George's County as well as Richmond, VA, Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD. She's a true advocate for and passionate believer in innovation of all forms; especially the ways in which it can shape our communities and the lives of our residents. Roslyn has served on the Board of Directors for the National Parks and Recreation Association for 6 years, she has taught at NRPA's Director's School for 5 years and the inaugural Graduate Institute, is a familiar speaker at the National NRPA Conference, and served as keynote both nationally and internationally. She is a graduate of The University of Maryland, College Park and the Harvard Kennedy School of Executive Education. Ms. Johnson is a member of the prestigious American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, NRPA and MRPA. These days, Roslyn is particularly focused on the intersection of diversity and innovation as we look for ways to adapt to and to continue to enjoy an ever-changing world. In her free time, she enjoys making fused glass jewelry and silversmithing.

**Candidate Statement:**

*The diversity of our profession and ways in which we serve our communities is awe inspiring. Our parks have been over loved and for many, having access and visiting the land all of our residents own was the key to maintaining many their sanity during the pandemic.*

*I am interested in serving on the board because of my desire to continue to move our profession forward. I am now hopeful for the opportunity to serve our members and our profession as an Academy Board member. This past year, COVID-19 has shown us how nimble we are as practitioners and how our profession is rapidly changing. Our profession was turned upside down regarding service delivery and we had to quickly adapt and reaffirm our place in Government and in delivering services to the community. We look very different from what we looked like 6 months ago. We have a new normal. This new normal is permeating throughout all of our communities and professional organizations. As innovation and community service are just two of my passions, I am eager to serve in a new capacity bringing my passion and knowledge of innovation to the Board. As a Board Member I can continue to serve our profession and members and in working with the Directors, help to shape the future of the Academy with your input. I now am asking for the ability to roll up my sleeves and serve our membership and profession as we maneuver into our 'new normal'.*



DIRECTOR CANDIDATES  
(4 candidates; vote for 2)

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**Michael W. Klitzing, CPRE**  
**Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation, Indiana**  
**(Member since 2017)**



Michael Klitzing has been instrumental in expanding and enhancing parks and recreation in each of the communities he has served. A visionary leader, Michael is the Director/CEO of Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation (CCPR), a nationally accredited, two-time winning Gold Medal (2014 & 2020) agency with a \$15 million operating budget over 80% self-funded. Bringing an entrepreneurial approach to managing public services, he has transformed CCPR into a national trailblazer in sustainability and inclusion.

An active member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Michael is a former Vice-Chair of the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies and was the Conference Program Committee Chair and Local Host Committee Co-Chair for the 2018 NRPA Annual Conference in Indianapolis. He is also a frequent speaker at NRPA, international, and state conferences. Michael was recognized as the 2018 National Distinguished Professional by NRPA, inducted into the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration in 2017, and named the 2015 Recreation Alumnus of the Year by Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. Michael also received the New Professional Award in 2008 from NRPA and the American Park and Recreation Society.

Michael's commitment to parks, recreation, and conservation extends beyond his career. He is a current member of the Lake Lemon Conservancy District Board of Directors, first elected in 2017, responsible for managing the 7th largest public reservoir in Indiana. He previously served on the Brownsburg Park Board from 2009 to 2016, including five years as President. During Michael's tenure, Brownsburg Parks was transformed into a more customer-focused and financially sustainable agency.

**Candidate Statement:**

*If selected by my peers to serve as a member of the Board of Directors, I will help ensure the future success of AAPRA through my passion for parks and recreation, quest for continual improvement, and demonstrated leadership skills. My past volunteer efforts have centered firmly around the Academy's mission to promote professional development, advance industry best practices, and mentoring the next generation of leaders in this incredible profession. I am committed to identifying and advocating innovative ideas, as well as bringing my collaborative and inclusive approach to help achieve the Academy's vision and core functions. I would cherish the opportunity to help advance the knowledge and understanding of parks, recreation, and conservation with the distinguished members of the Academy, just as I have successfully done as an administrator and citizen board member at the local level.*

*When I made a commitment to pursue a career in parks and recreation in 1996, I did so to 'make a difference'. As a second-generation parks and recreation profession, I had the opportunity at a young age to witness the transformative impact our field has on the lives of so many people. Parks and recreation administration represented the perfect meshing of my skills and interests. The extent to which this is true has been demonstrated throughout my career. I seek new opportunities to continue 'making a difference' in the profession I love, but on a larger scale. I have the expertise, experience, ability, and desire to positively contribute to the Academy.*

DIRECTOR CANDIDATES  
(4 candidates; vote for 2)

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**Joe Turner**  
**New Braunfels, Texas**  
**(Member since 2014)**



In September 2002 Joe was appointed by Harris County Commissioner Jerry Eversole as the Park Administrator for Precinct 4. He worked with his Team to begin the vision and planning for the Spring Creek Greenway between two Counties. Today the Spring Creek Greenway is 40 miles of green space with hiking and biking trails in addition to canoeing and kayaking. In July 2004 Joe was recruited and appointed by Mayor Bill White to serve as the Director of the Houston Parks and Recreation Department. He continued to serve at the request of Mayor Annise Parker and Mayor Sylvester Turner until he retired in April 2017.

His accomplishments include developing inclusive Playgrounds without Limits and installing them in Parks with public transportation nearby to provide equitable access to these playgrounds. He created successful Public Private Partnerships to expand the Departments Capital Bond Funding. Preservation of Historic Parks and Buildings was a signature element of his time as Director. Those include Bethel Park, Emancipation Park, Sam Houston Park and the Park Department Offices, which were the original Manned Space Headquarters for the first two years NASA was in Houston. In 2008 under his direction HPARD received their CAPRA Accreditation. At the NRPA Conference in Houston in 2013, the Department completed their 5 year reaccreditation. Joe served on the NRPA Board of Directors for 7 years and was Chair of the Public Policy Committee for two years and a member for many years. Joe was elected to The American Academy of Park and Recreation Administration in 2014. He was elected to the Board of Directors in 2018. He currently serves as the Chair of the New Braunfels Park Advisory Board. He is actively engaged with the Brackenridge Park Conservancy in San Antonio and is a member of the Texas Recreation and Park Society.

**Candidate Statement:**

*Thank you for the opportunity to serve these last three years as a Director on the Board of The Academy. I believe the Academy has made significant improvements over the past three years and I would like to continue in that process. I served the last four years on the Membership Committee and have watched our total number of members increase each year through active recruitment and excellent candidates. I was the board liaison to the Urban Directors Committee this year and saw the same great work accomplished there. I served as the board liaison these past two years to the Mentor/Mentee Committee. This is an active Committee working to increase the number of Mentees and Mentors to assist them in their development as a professional. I believe that this is a crucial service opportunity for all of those in The Academy.*

*I was also part of the working committee that reviewed and discussed the contract that was developed with the NRPA on our Gold Medal Award Program. We now have a contract with the NRPA that we manage and control the Awards program.*

*We have seen a pandemic and social injustice over these past years and our organization has made a difference. I am a visionary leader who will be involved to move The Academy forward to meet these needs and to profess the value of our profession. It would be a great honor to be elected to serve this next term. I would appreciate your vote. Thank You.*

DIRECTOR CANDIDATES  
(4 candidates; vote for 2)

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**Larry Zehnder**  
**Barge Waggoner Sumner and Cannon, Tennessee**  
**(Member since 2014)**



Lawrence Zehnder's parks and recreation experience has spanned a period of 42 years holding top administrative positions in Athens Tennessee, Charleston SC, Norfolk Virginia and most recently retiring after 15 years with the City of Chattanooga Tennessee. He has served as NRPA's SE Regional Director and has been state association president in Virginia and Tennessee. He began his long career in parks with the Cleveland (OH) Metro Parks Department in 1969 and went on to receive his formalized training in Recreation and Park Administration from Clemson University. Mr. Zehnder is presently a Senior Parks and Recreation Planner with the engineering and park planning firm of Barge, Waggoner, Sumner and Cannon. He has made several presentations at national and state conferences and was selected to address an international workshop on parks in East Germany in 2003 and a forum of 16 countries in China in 2007.

**Candidate Statement:**

*The roll and function of the American Academy is extremely important in today's society in presenting how important certified Recreation Professionals are to the quality of life components of our communities. Presenting the benefits and value of professional certified leadership and accreditation of agencies and colleges is of utmost importance to advancing its impact and support. I see the American Academy board membership as being my opportunity to continue my lifelong career in parks and recreation and make improvements that may be vitally needed!*