
WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

Waukegan Park District Staff Receive Statewide Recognition

Waukegan, IL (February 11, 2016) Greg Petry, Executive Director of the Waukegan Park District, was recognized with the 2016 Honored Professional Award by the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD). The award was presented at the annual “Soaring to New Heights Conference” in Chicago. Petry has been active in the park and recreation profession for more than 40 years contributing at the local, regional, state and national levels. His roles include being a dedicated member of the IAPD joint legislative Committee, an Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) Board member representing the Chicago Metro region, a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Task Force, a member of the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, Founder, President and Honorary Life Member of the Midwest Institute of Park Executives, and Past President of the Sports Turf Managers Association. He has published numerous articles in the Illinois Parks and Recreation Magazine and spoken at state and national conferences. He is sought out for information and counsel by other industry professionals and has a national reputation of excellence and service.

Jay Lerner, Superintendent of Recreation, was recognized by the Illinois Park and Recreation Association with the 2015 Community Impact Award. Lerner has worked at the Waukegan Park District since 1998 and was promoted to the Superintendent of Recreation in 2013. Among his accomplishments cited were the oversight of indoor and outdoor athletics and

the functional design of two sports venues, the Field House Sports and Fitness Center and the Waukegan SportsPark. Together, these facilities contribute more than \$15M to the economy of the area. Lerner also implemented several new sports programs at the Waukegan Park District including the NFL Punt, Pass and Kick, Turkey Trot and NFL Flag Football. His impact on Waukegan youth, adults and seniors continues to grow, especially with the addition of new programs that combat obesity, increase physical activity and move people outdoors to connect with nature. Lerner's steady and thoughtful approach to guiding recreation, especially sports and fitness, provides community members with a number of high quality options throughout their lifetimes.

The Midwest Institute of Park Executives recognized Rafael Ayala, a maintenance worker III responsible for playground, park improvements and special events, with the 2015 Outstanding Park Employee and the Ralph Voris Community Service Awards. These regional competitive awards recognize parks maintenance employees. Attached to the Community Service Award is a scholarship to attend the National Recreation and Park Association Maintenance Management School.

Finally, the Waukegan Park District was accredited by the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA). The district received an overall score of 99% and accreditation is for four years through 2019. The Loss Control Review and accreditation process examines policies, procedures, safety and loss experience.

Patricia (Pat) Foley, Waukegan Park District Board President stated, "It is very gratifying to have our leaders and staff receive these top awards. While Waukegan is the main beneficiary

of their efforts, it is especially rewarding when they are recognized by their peers for their accomplishments and commitment. To achieve 99% on the rigorous Loss Control Review and receive PDRMA Accreditation is a testament to the District's commitment to keeping patrons and employees safe and recognition of its excellence in managing risk which ultimately delivers value to the taxpayer."

About the Waukegan Park District

Established on December 26, 1916, the district has 48 sites and more than 725 acres of land, including the 18-hole Bonnie Brook and 9-hole Greenshire Golf Courses. Properties are managed to the highest environmental and conservation standards. Facilities operated by the district include the Field House Sports and Fitness Center, the Jack Benny Center for the Arts, the Waukegan SportsPark, the Waukegan Skate Park, the Waukegan BMX Track, recreational centers, an outdoor swimming pool, disc golf course, dog exercise area and agility course, outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, and sports courts including basketball, tennis and pickleball. A full range of programs and services are offered year round for all ages, from infants to seniors as well as special needs populations. Healthy lifestyles, wellness initiatives, and a connection with the outdoors and nature are integrated throughout programs, services, and special events. Cultural events are provided by the Waukegan Symphony Orchestra and Concert Chorus, the Bowen Park Theatre Company, and the Waukegan History Museum. There is something for everyone! The award-winning District employs 59 full-time and over 250 part-time, year round, seasonal, and temporary employees. The District is a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), and Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA). The district maintains national accreditation from the NRPA Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), the Illinois Association of Park District (IAPD) Distinguished Agency accreditation and the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) accreditation and sustains a Level A Loss Control Program. The district was a NRPA Gold Medal Finalist in 2012 and 2013, and awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013.

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