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# WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Waukegan Park District Best in the Nation**

**Waukegan Park District Wins National Recreation and Park Association Gold Medal for Agencies with populations between 50,001 to 100,000**

**Waukegan, IL (October 8, 2013).** The National Recreation and Park Association awarded the Waukegan Park District its highest honor, the 2013 National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management, at its Annual Congress and Exposition in Houston, Texas today. The Board of Commissioners and Senior Staff were on hand to accept the prestigious award.

The award honors the nation's outstanding park and recreation agencies for excellence in the field of park and recreation management. A panel of five parks and recreation professionals review and judge all application materials. Judges are chosen for their considerable experience and knowledge in parks and recreation on both the local and national level.

Earlier this year, the Waukegan Park District received word that it and three other agencies were named finalists in Category III (based on population). Finalists are judged on several criteria including how community needs are identified and met, excellence in financial and operational management, planning, environmental stewardship, health and wellness, communication and collaboration with other organizations in the community. Janet Kilkelly, President of the Waukegan Park District Board stated, “The Waukegan Park District Board of Commissioners couldn’t be more excited! Receiving this honor recognizes and confirms the quality of benefits our residents enjoy daily through the Park District.” She extended her thanks and appreciation on behalf of the Board to Greg Petry, Executive Director, the management team, and District staff whose hard work and commitment to excellence and the community of Waukegan made the achievement of this award possible.



### **About the Waukegan Park District**

Established on December 26, 1916, the district has 47 properties and 720 acres of land, which includes 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, outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, and sports courts including basketball and tennis. A full range of programs and services are offered year round for all ages from infants to seniors and special populations are included. 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 57 full-time staff 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 Districts' (IAPD) Distinguished Agency accreditation and the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) accreditation and sustains a Level A Loss Control Program. The district was named a NRPA Gold Medal Finalist in 2012 and won the NRPA Gold Medal in 2013.