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The Waukegan Park District Has Been Announced as Finalist for the 2019 National Gold Medal Awards in Parks and Recreation

Waukegan Park District to compete for prestigious honor in the park and recreation industry

Waukegan, IL May 15, 2019 – The [American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration](#) (AAPRA), in partnership with the [National Recreation and Park Association](#) (NRPA), is pleased to announce the Waukegan Park District as a finalist for the 2019 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management. Musco Lighting, LLC has been a proud sponsor of the Gold Medal Awards program for over 10 years.

Founded in 1965, the Gold Medal Awards program honors communities in the U.S. that demonstrate excellence in parks and recreation through long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development and agency recognition. Applications are separated into seven classes, with five classes based on population, one class for armed forces recreation and one class for state park systems awarded on odd numbered years.

The Waukegan Park District is a finalist in the Class III category, Class III (population 75,001 – 150,000). This is the third time the District has been named a finalist; the District won the Gold Medal in 2013.

Agencies are judged on their ability to address the needs of those they serve through the collective energies of community members, staff and elected officials. The Waukegan Park District joins three other finalists in their class that will compete for grand honors this year.

Waukegan Park District Board President Marc Jones stated, “This national recognition within the park and recreation profession acknowledges the substantial impact of the District and its staff on the community of Waukegan. I am proud to be part of an organization that consistently delivers on its promise of meeting the needs of Waukegan through excellence, innovation and creativity.”

A panel of five park and recreation professionals reviews and judges all application materials. Judges are chosen for their considerable experience and knowledge in parks and recreation on both the local and national levels.

This year's finalists will compete for Grand Plaque Award honors this summer, and the seven Grand Plaque recipients will be announced live during the NRPA General Session at the 2019 NRPA Annual Conference in Baltimore, Maryland, Sept. 24–26, 2019.

For more information on the Gold Medal Awards, visit www.nrpa.org/goldmedal or www.aapra.org.

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About the Waukegan Park District

Established on December 26, 1916, the district has 50 properties and more than 737 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, Fitness and Aquatics Center, the Jack Benny Center for the Arts, the Waukegan's Greg Petry SportsPark, the Waukegan Skate Park, the Waukegan BMX Track, recreational centers, 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, and the Waukegan History Museum. There is something for everyone! The award-winning District employs 62 full-time and over 230 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), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) Distinguished Agency accreditation and Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) accreditation and maintains a Level A Loss Control Program. The district was awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013 and a NRPA Gold Medal Finalist in 2012, 2013, and 2019.

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The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration is a non-profit organization founded to advance knowledge related to the administration of recreation and parks; to encourage scholarly efforts by both practitioners and educators that would enhance the practice of park and recreation administration; to promote broader public understanding of the importance of parks and recreation to the public good; and, to conduct research, publish scholarly papers and sponsor seminars related to the advancement of park and recreation administration. For more information, visit www.aapra.org.

The National Recreation and Park Association

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated

to ensuring that all Americans have access to parks and recreation for health, conservation and social equity. Through its network of 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.

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