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Finalists Announced for the 2012 National Gold Medal Awards

AAPRA and NRPA select agencies to compete for prestigious honor in the park and recreation industry

ASHBURN, VA., May 7, 2012 – The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA), in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), is pleased to announce the Finalists for the 2012 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management. This year's proud sponsor of the Gold Medal Awards program is Musco Lighting LLC.

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 five classes based on population. This year, the Gold Medal Award is expanding to include a new category for armed forces recreation communities. This category will recognize the contributions of military recreation providers and the work they do among service members, their families, retirees, reservists, civilian employees and local communities.

Agencies are judged on their ability to address the needs of those they serve through the collective energies of citizens, staff and elected officials. Four finalists in each class are chosen to compete for grand honors each year.

The 2012 Gold Medal finalists are:

Class I (population 250,000 and over)

- City of Henderson (NV) Parks and Recreation Department
- Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Riverdale, MD
- Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department, Charlotte, NC
- Plano (TX) Parks and Recreation

Class II (population 100,001 – 250,000)

- City of Round Rock (TX) Parks and Recreation Department
- Conejo Recreation and Park District, Thousand Oaks, CA
- Rockford (IL) Park District
- South Suburban Park and Recreation District, Centennial, CO

Class III (population 50,001 – 100,000)

- City of Kettering (OH) Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts Department
- James City County Parks and Recreation, Williamsburg, VA
- Roswell (GA) Recreation, Parks, Historic and Cultural Affairs
- Waukegan (IL) Park District

Class IV (population 25,001 – 50,000)

- St. Charles (IL) Park District
- Town of Castle Rock (CO) Parks and Recreation Department
- Town of Leesburg (VA) Parks and Recreation Department
- West Bend (WI) Parks, Recreation and Forestry

Class V (population less than 25,000)

- City of Cullman (AL) Parks and Recreation
- City of Lafayette (CO)
- Durango (CO) Parks and Recreation Department
- Town of Erie (CO) Parks and Recreation Department

Armed Forces Recreation

- Fort Knox, KY
- Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, CA
- Naval Base San Diego, CA
- Naval Station Great Lakes, IL

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 six Grand Plaque recipients will be announced live during NRPA's Annual Congress & Exposition in Anaheim, CA., Oct. 16-18, 2012.

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

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 is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of 20,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, recreation initiatives, and conservation of natural and cultural resources. 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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