

Academy ENews
March 2020



President's Message



Preparing for spring and summer activities can be busy enough; adding legitimate concerns about the Coronavirus makes planning even more challenging. You are the ones on the front lines, and your continued service to the community is often unsung. Parks are safe places where people can go to socialize, and we offer the best that we can for the community. Be safe, be

strong and be well.

The Academy deadlines are looming so please nominate, apply and submit for the following:

- a. New Members (Professional, Educator, Urban Directors):** applications will be available on the website by April 6th with a deadline of June 4th. Now is the time to consider fellow professionals and educators who qualify for membership into the Academy and submit their application for consideration.
- b. Legends:** A Legend nominee does not have to be an Academy member; however, they must have made a lasting impression on the profession. Each selected Legend will record an oral history of his/her contributions to parks, recreation and/or education.
- c. Pugsley Award:** Nominees do not need to be an Academy member, but they must have made a significant contribution to the parks and conservation profession in his/her career. [Click here for more information; deadline is June 5th.](#)
- d. Robert W. Crawford Hall of Fame:** The candidate must be deceased for at least five years before one is considered for induction to the Hall of Fame. Academy membership is not required; person would have made a lasting, significant contribution to the field of Parks and Recreation through actions, research, education or conservation. Click [here](#) for more information; deadline is March 27th. Please check the AAPRA website for updates on application deadlines for others such as Externs, Best Paper, and the AIPE/Academy Foundation's Pottsie scholarship to the NRPA Director's School.

All the committees and task forces are currently underway with their respective goals. The work of the Academy is ongoing and quite varied which means it will take each of you to be involved for successful outcomes. The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration depends on your contributions. Thank you for being an active participant.

Dianne Hoover, President

COVID-19: Parks, Trails, and Playgrounds

Excerpted from NRPA's blog:

"Early observations show that there is a surge of public use of trails and open outdoor areas of parks. While many park and recreation agencies have closed facilities and canceled programs, they have not closed parks and trails. However, agencies are reporting on closing playgrounds because there is no present guidance from CDC on how best to manage these spaces, including recommended cleaning and disinfection for outdoor equipment to prevent transmission of the coronavirus, or recommendations for limiting outdoor play with others. When making a decision about closures of playgrounds and outdoor facilities, agencies should coordinate with local public health officials. If agencies do allow public playgrounds to remain open, they should follow the [CDC's guidance on the cleaning of facilities and surfaces](#)."

COVID 19: How is Your Agency Re-acting?

You cannot watch the news or listen to the radio without updates on the Coronavirus. The recent upgrade to a pandemic has certainly awakened many of us to its dangers. Parks, facilities, classes, and special events are potential opportunities for the Coronavirus to spread. NRPA's recent release stated "preparedness is key..." NRPA encourages park and recreation agencies to (1) connect with your city, county, or state health department for updates about your community and to follow their guidelines for disinfectants, hand washing, etc; (2) educate your staff about precautions they should be taking to reduce the risk of transmission while at work; (3) follow the [Center for Disease Control](#) where they have an excellent [update](#) and (4) carefully plan (or postpone) large community gatherings; the CDC has a special section on prevention in [large community gatherings](#).

The National Law Review has released these [guidelines](#) for employers which may be helpful.

COVID-19 Academy Survey

Take this quick survey (it will take 4 minutes of your time!) sharing your agency's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will send out the results via the Listserve. Click [here](#) for the survey.

Some Personal Advice on COVID-19 (as if we need more reminders!)

- Wash your hands OFTEN with soap and water for 20-30 seconds
- Don't touch your face! Especially the T-zone of eyes, nose, and mouth!
- Eat to boost immunity and fight sickness
- Get outside and move -- walk, hike, bike, whatever you love (keeping 6 feet from others)
- Do personal distancing -- 6 feet at least!
- Practice stress management -- yoga, meditation, reading, turning off the TV/radio!
- Surround yourself with support--friends and family who love you

Board of Directors Update

The Board of Directors met February 25, 2020, and took the following actions:

- Approved distribution of an RFP to association management companies located in Sacramento to provide administrative support services to the Academy; deadline for submission is March 20th; a subcommittee of the Board will review the proposals and submit a recommendation to the Board in April
- Approved the 2020 operating budget
- Approved two new Gold Medal judges forms to ensure transparency in judging
- Approved a waiver statement which allows for disqualification of an application or revocation of a Gold Medal in certain circumstances. The Board of Directors will be the governing body regarding any disqualification or revocation of a Gold Medal award.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors is Monday, April 6th.

Extern Committee on the Move!

The Extern Committee has established its work plan for the year. Each member of the committee signed up for one or more sub committees: Robert Armistead will lead the extern recruitment and selection subcommittee; Michael Kalvort and Linda Kotowski both stepped up for the Mentors and Buddies subcommittee with Michael focusing on the Mentors and Linda on the Buddies. Michal Anne Lord will chair (again) the networking reception subcommittee and Linda Kotowski will chair for the History and Past Extern involvement subcommittee.

The goal is to release the externship application by March 6th with a May 1st deadline to apply. Please help spread the word to young professionals in your agency, region, or state association. You will also hear from Michael Kalvort about serving as a mentor. Being a mentor is a wonderful opportunity to meet an outstanding up and coming Parks and Recreation professionals!

Committee members:

Cindi Wight (Chair), Carrie Fullerton (Vice-Chair), Linda Kotowski, Michal Anne Lord, Robert Armistead, Tom Shuster, Detrick Stanford, Bill Zimmerman, Chuck Balling and Jean Keller

A Note from Your AIPE/Academy Foundation

Thank you to all our donors for a successful 2019! The Foundation's Campaign Committee was energized by the amazing campaign last year and with your continued support we hope to continue the momentum into 2020. The Committee continues to have the aspirational goal of 100% contributions from Academy members. Our benchmark goals for 2020 are to raise \$12,000 from 125 donors and to have 100% contributions from our new 2019 members. We continue to send a message that the importance is more about giving than the amount one gives. The average donation in 2019 was \$92 per member and that trend has continued in 2020. Your contributions currently support the continuation of the very successful John C. Potts Leadership Development Scholarships and help this Academy pay it forward.

The committee met in early January to confirm the goals we had set for ourselves in October 2019 and to set its work plan for 2020. This includes a thank you letter from the Foundation President to all donors and an email to all non-donors in March encouraging them to give to the Foundation. As of our late February meeting we are over halfway to our benchmark fundraising goals!

We also discussed additional opportunities if we continue to grow our fundraising dollars. We will discuss these more then roll out the new area(s) to support as part of the 2021 campaign with the additional funds used in 2022.

Please help us reach our goals! Your contribution assists the AIPE/Academy Foundation with initiatives including funding the Pottsie Scholarship! To make YOUR donation, please click [here](#) or mail your check payable to the AIPE/Academy Foundation at 5716 Folsom Blvd., #237, Sacramento, CA 95819.

Campaign Committee: Cindi Wight (chair), Michael Kalvort, Chris Nunes, Tom Shuster and Mark Young. Pottsie Committee: Mark Young (chair), Renee Bahl, Chris Dropinski, John Potts, Cindi Wight and Tara Eggleston Stewart (previous scholarship awardee).

Help an Inspiring Professional: the AIPE/Academy Foundation Pottsie Scholarship Applications Deadline March 25th

The AIPE/American Academy Foundation Board of Directors is again pleased to offer two John C. Potts Leadership Development Scholarships (Pottsie Scholarships) for aspiring parks and recreation agency directors to the 2020 NRPA Directors School in Chicago, August 16-20. Scholarship funds cover full tuition, lodging, and up to \$500 in travel expenses for two (2) first-year students' participation in the Directors School.

The scholarship is intended to support new directors (3 years or less as a director) or superintendents or assistant/deputy directors and mid-level managers who desire to be agency directors. Applicants should have demonstrated leadership and management potential within their organizations toward their goal of being an effective director, but do not have the financial resources to apply to the Directors School.

The Academy Foundation is basing the scholarship on financial need as well as a strong resume and outstanding references. Applications can be found on the website at <http://www.aapra.org/john-c-potts-leadership-development-scholarship>. The application must be emailed to foundation@aapra.org no later than March 25, 2020.

National Gold Medal Award Program Deadline Extended to April 10th

With the demands of dealing with COVID-19, the Academy has extended the application deadline for the National Gold Medal Awards Program until Friday, April 10th. We recognize there are many priorities of your time and attention now but we hope this extension will make it possible for your agency to complete its application. Click [here](#) for more details!

Member News

Mark McHenry Appointed to Missouri Conservation Commission

The Commission is responsible for appointing the MO Department of Conservation's Director, serving as policy makers, approving wildlife code regulations, strategic planning, budget development and major expenditure decisions. Commission members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Legislature. Mark served as the Director

Nature Themed Playground at Dodd Park at Point of Rocks

Submitted by James Worsley, Ph.D., Chesterfield County, Virginia

Using partnerships with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and Niagara Cares, a unique nature-themed playground has become a popular destination. The first of its kind in Chesterfield and the region, the playground features elements that reflect flora and fauna from the natural environment, such as ants, butterflies, frogs, mushrooms and turtles, as well as educational signage. "Our goal is for the playground to entice visitors to explore the trails and natural areas of the park," said Dr. James Worsley, Director of Chesterfield County Parks and Recreation Department (CCPRD). Targeting 2-12-year-olds, the facility introduces creatures of the forest, meadow and marsh ecosystems and invites them and their parents to explore the park's natural areas. Interpretive and educational signage expands the nature experience. A trail connects the top area of the park to the river bottomland. Cues along the trail serve as a catalyst for further nature exploration.

Objectives:

- Provide play experiences for preschoolers – elementary ages
- Use marsh, meadow, and forest-themed play pods to expose visitors to outdoor wonders at the park
- Entice physical play
- Educate visitors on the park's natural environment
- Invite visitors to explore other park areas
- Build community partnership with Niagara Cares, philanthropic arm of Niagara Bottling
- Continue partnership with NRPA
- Allow volunteer involvement
- Provide in-house training of staff in playground construction

The project, conceived CCPRD, received a grant coordinated by NRPA and worked with local sponsor, Niagara Bottling. Parks staff designed the facility, procured equipment and supplies, and coordinated construction activities and volunteer work days. Volunteers from the local Niagara Bottling plant landscaped the area.

Visitation to the lower part of the park has increased significantly. Interviews with users have been very positive. One father said, "the nature themed area was fun and educational for my kids..." The grant was \$88,000.

Up-Coming Events

International Making Cities Livable Conference Set for Indiana – **before planning to attend check the website as the conference may postpone or cancel!**

The 57th International Making Cities Livable conference will be held in Carmel, Indiana, June 2-6, and will focus special attention on effective strategies and visionary design solutions to making cities, and especially their suburban areas, healthy and livable for ALL – young and old, poor and well-to do, and those with health and mobility issues.

Click [here](#) for session themes - many apply to parks and recreation!

Resources You Can Use

Investing in Equitable Urban Park Systems

City Parks Alliance has issued a new report which includes case studies from Los Angeles County and six cities—San Francisco, Detroit, Minneapolis, New York City, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh each detailing how staff used data to direct resources to parks in low-income and blighted areas that had been overlooked for years. The report indicates these strategies can be used in small to middle sized communities as much of the data used is regularly available. Click [here](#) to read the report.

Have You Heard About Playbarries???

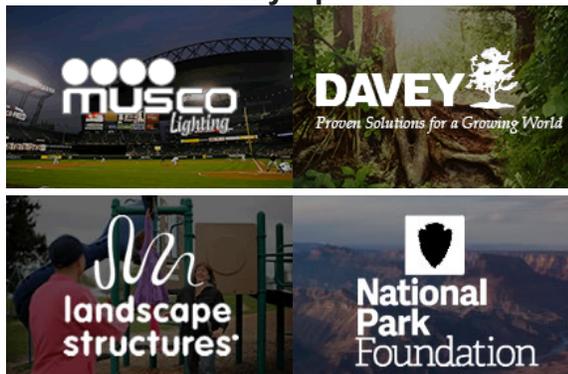
Libraries offer community gathering spaces where neighbors without internet access can complete job applications and families can gather for story time. But as times have changed, so has the vision, function, and form of the library. Libraries are also becoming community spaces that support children's development. The results of this ambitious **Play-and-Learn Spaces** project—just published in the journal [Library & Information Science Research](#)—involved a novel collaboration between designers, community organizations, and researchers who hoped to push the envelope on how the children's area in library spaces might be more responsive to the needs of families. Check out the full Brookings Institute article [here](#).

Why We Need Nature in Cities

Check out this [article](#) from the Natural History Museum in London on why we need nature in cities. Dr. Cecil Konijnendijk is a Professor of Urban Forestry at the University of British Columbia (UBC). He studies the role of nature and green spaces in cities and towns, and how we can use the natural world to make urban environments healthier and more livable. "Research shows really clearly that we need nature in our surroundings. We need trees in

our streets, plants in our gardens and flowers on our balcony. We need nature as our neighbor all the time."

Academy Sponsors



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