



BUFFALO  
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## News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Buffalo Grove Park District Receives Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency Award

(Buffalo Grove Park District, Buffalo Grove, IL) - The Buffalo Grove Park District has been recognized as an Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency by the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA).

The two statewide associations administer the Illinois Distinguished Accreditation program with the goal of improving the delivery of park and recreation services to Illinois residents. "Illinois has a reputation for the best park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies in the nation," said Peter Murphy, IAPD President and CEO. "The Illinois Distinguished Accreditation program provides an opportunity for these agencies to undergo a voluntary, comprehensive evaluation process to demonstrate that they have met state guidelines to provide exceptional park and recreation services to their community. The end result is to improve the quality of life for Illinois residents."

"This program gives recognition to park and recreation agencies that go above and beyond in dedicating themselves to offering quality programs and services designed to fulfill their community's needs," said Debbie Trueblood, IPRA Executive Director.

A park district or recreation agency that applies for Distinguished Accredited Agency recognition undergoes a detailed, lengthy process of application and evaluation. A Joint Distinguished Park and Recreation Accreditation Committee (JDPRAC) comprised of members from IAPD and IPRA coordinates the process. "Agencies submit a self-evaluation and a formal letter requesting admission into the process," said Wally Frasier, IAPD Co-Chair of the JDPRAC. "If the committee determines the agency is eligible to continue the process, we send them an evaluation date."

According to Frasier, on the day of the evaluation, the agency presents documented information and gives a tour of pertinent facilities and parks for the evaluation team's review.

The team reviews general management procedures, finance and business operations, facilities and parks, personnel, recreation services, legal documentation and other materials including mission statements, goals and safety manuals.

Upon completion of the evaluation, the agency is notified in writing of the official results within 10 days. Agencies that have achieved Distinguished Accredited status are recognized with a plaque at the IAPD/IPRA Annual Conference Awards Luncheon in January.

"There are tremendous benefits for an agency that achieves Distinguished Accredited status," said Mike Clark, IPRA Co-Chair of the JDPRAC. "The agency's application and review process is an excellent self-evaluation and agencies that apply realize increased operational efficiency and effectiveness. Communities can rest assured knowing that their park district or recreation agency employs qualified professionals and has met professional standards."

The Buffalo Grove Park District applied for the Illinois Distinguished Accreditation program in the fall of 2012, and the JDPRAC approved the Buffalo Grove Park District for Distinguished Accredited status in November 2013. Areas that the JDPRAC highlighted as outstanding include staff and Board development and delineation of responsibilities, overall condition of parks and facilities, preventative maintenance plan, and that the staff was very informed and friendly.

In compliance with the program, the Buffalo Grove Park District will be reevaluated in six years to verify that they have continued to demonstrate sound management practices in providing quality park and recreation services to the community.

IAPD is a non-profit service, research and education organization that serves park districts, forest preserves, conservation and recreation agencies. The association advances these agencies, their citizen board members and professional staff in their ability to provide outstanding park and recreation opportunities, preserve natural resources and improve the quality of life for all people in Illinois.

IPRA is a not-for-profit organization and public interest group who is an advocate in providing quality park, recreation and conservation education, resources and services to professionals and citizens throughout the state of Illinois.

"We are very pleased to again receive this accreditation. We work very hard to make sure we are using best practices in everything we do to provide our community with the highest quality recreation programs and facilities, and receiving this accreditation tells us that we are doing exactly that," said Buffalo Grove Park District Executive Director, Dan Schimmel.

Buffalo Grove Park District Board President Jack Schmerer said, "This shows how seriously we take our job to provide the best service we can for the community. It's who we are. We always want to be the best!"

The Buffalo Grove Park District first became an Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency in 1995, and also received reaccreditation in 2001 and 2007.

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