



December 15, 2023

Dear NYSRPS Members,

With the end of the year quickly approaching, the time has come once again to set our sights on the annual NYSRPS Awards! Each year we have the opportunity to recognize the best of the best in 19 different categories representing the various aspects of parks, recreation and leisure services along with our Memorial Hall of Fame. It is a great honor to acknowledge the programs, facilities, agencies and individuals that make our profession an integral part of the communities we serve.

The NYSRPS Awards not only allow us to recognize excellence amongst our peers, but they also provide the opportunity to showcase our accomplishments to the boards, commissions and supervisors who may not be aware of the exceptional services we provide every day. By celebrating our individual accomplishments, we are strengthening the parks and recreation community as a whole, and reinforcing the important role we play in our towns, cities, counties and beyond.

We can't do any of this without you! Please consider submitting a nomination for one or more of the 19 available categories listed in this packet. This is the perfect opportunity to showcase your programs, facilities and staff members that deserve additional recognition for a successful year.

Included in this packet you will find the award descriptions, nomination form and a checklist with helpful hints. Sample nomination packets are available for your reference. If you have questions, would like to see a sample packet, or need additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at [meganball@ongov.net](mailto:meganball@ongov.net) or by phone at (315) 453-6712 x6734.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am looking forward to reviewing your nominations!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan M. Ball".

Megan M. Ball  
NYSRPS Awards Committee



## New York State Recreation and Parks Society Award Nomination Checklist

Thank you for taking the time to submit a nomination! The NYSRPS Awards would not be possible without your support, and we want to help make this process as easy as possible. Feel free to use the checklist below to help prepare your nomination packet.

Nominations for all awards are due by Friday, February 23, 2024. Winners will be contacted (via the Nominator) by mid-March. An Awards presentation will be held at the NYSRPS Conference on Monday, April 15, 2024.

If you have any questions regarding your nomination, please do not hesitate to contact us! You can send any questions or concerns to Megan Ball at [meganball@ongov.net](mailto:meganball@ongov.net), or call (315) 453-6712 x6734.

**When preparing your nomination(s) for the NYSRPS awards, please be sure to include all of the following items:**

- **Completed Nomination Form**
  - Please list the “Nominee’s Name” as it will appear on the award if selected.
  - Be specific! Be sure to indicate if you are nominating an entire organization (i.e. Amazon, etc.) or a specific person from the organization.
- **Letter of Support from the Nominator**
  - This should supplement or replace the “Reason for Nominating” section of the Nomination Form. Include how the nominee fits the award criteria and why you feel they should win. The more detailed information the better!
- **Additional Letters of Support**
  - The more the merrier! Provide a variety of letters from writers who know the nominee in different ways to create the most complete packet.
- **Supporting Documents (i.e. news articles, flyers, nominee’s resume, etc.)**
  - Again the more the merrier!
- **Photos**
  - All photos should be submitted in the PDF nomination packet.
  - Choose 3 – 5 of the submitted photos that can be used in the award slide show if selected. Please submit these photos in JPEG or PNG format in addition to the PDF nomination packet.
  - High quality photos are preferred.
  - When nominating an individual, please include photos representing their involvement with parks, recreation and leisure services.
- **Videos (if applicable)**
  - Please submit any videos in a format compatible with Windows Media Player or provide a link to access the video on a video sharing website (i.e. YouTube).
- **Regional Partners/Affiliates**
  - If you are nominating a winner from your organization, simply add a completed NYSRPS Nomination Form to the existing packet before submitting. Please list which award they won from your organization under “Reason for Nominating.”

# AWARDS AND *Recognition* 2024

## Recognizing the Professionals Who Improve Our Quality of Life

### INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

Lifetime Achievement  
Distinguished Service  
Outstanding Service  
Young Professional  
Robert W. Miner "Good Guy"  
Frances Wallach "Good Gal"  
ABCD Award (Above and Beyond the Call of Duty)  
Distinguished Citizen/Organization  
Elected Official of the Year  
Memorial Hall of Fame  
Therapeutic Recreation

### AGENCY AWARDS

Special Event  
Program of Merit  
Multimedia  
Excellence in Landscape Design  
Exceptional Facility Design  
Exceptional Park Design  
Inclusion Program of Excellence

### INDIVIDUAL/AGENCY AWARDS

Environmental Leadership  
Outstanding Corporate Partnership



# *Selection of Winners*

**Each year the New York State Recreation and Park Society presents a series of awards that have become a coveted honor for the people and organizations singled out for their contributions to parks and recreation.**

These awards are an excellent opportunity to recognize the contributions of the variety of people who make New York's parks, recreation and therapeutic recreation facilities work at their best.

The awards are given at the Annual Awards Presentation, held each year during the Annual Conference & Business Expo. Only current members of the New York State Recreation and Park Society are eligible to nominate qualified candidates.

NYSRPS would like to see all of New York State represented in these awards and we rely on our membership to take a look around the office and community to nominate both the hardworking behind-the-scene organizers as well as our creative and inspirational leaders.

## **NOMINATION PROCEDURE**

Nominations for non-members of NYSRPS are accepted, unless otherwise indicated by specific Award criteria. A deserving recipient may receive the same award once every 10 years. Nominations submitted by non-members will be disqualified.

It is required that all nominations include images of the individual, organization, publication, facility or program for presentation purposes at the Awards Reception.

NYSRPS Regional Partner and Affiliate award winner nominations (selected via local award ceremonies) must be submitted by the Regional Partner/Affiliate Chairperson. These nominations must be submitted together, in one package, and each entry must be accompanied by the official nomination form with award category indicated.

The NYSRPS Awards Committee will be solely responsible for the review, evaluation, and selection of award winners. Nominators will be informed in writing of the decision of the Awards Committee prior to the Annual Conference. Decision of the committee will be final. All award entries will remain the property of the NYSRPS.

## **ONLINE NOMINATION PROCEDURE**

Simply complete all fillable form fields and attach this form to an email (to Awards Committee Chair) along with additional supporting documentation. Supporting documentation may include supporting letters, videos, pictures, news releases, flyers, or any other documentation you believe will enhance your nomination application. See the awards check list for additional information.

## **HARD-COPY NOMINATION PROCEDURE**

The nomination form must be clearly and completely filled out and postmarked by the deadline indicated. Supplemental material such as supporting letters, videos, pictures, news releases, flyers, etc. must be packaged together with the completed nomination form.

Please contact the NYSRPS Awards and Recognition Chairperson at the email address or phone number listed on the nomination form for mailing address.

# Past Winners of our Highest Honors

## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

1987	Joseph M. Caverly, Westchester County Parks
1988	Robin Kunstler, Patricia Urquhart & Professor Lestor Rhoads
1989	John P. Silsby, Town of Tonowanda
1990	Joseph P. Davidson, City of New York
1991	Patricia Urquhart, Town of Manlius
1992	Uluss (Gus) Thompson, NYS Parks & Recreation
1993	Jim Donahue, Town of Perinton
1994	Salvatore Cresenzi, Village of Rye Brook
1995	Edward Wankel, New York State Department of Parks & Recreation
1996	Gary Lane, Town of Tonowanda
1997	Bryon Bissonette, City of Plattsburgh
1998	Judith A. Gordon, Suffolk County Department of Parks
1999	Mr. Daniel Drake, Town of Southport
2000	Mr. Tom Kehoskie, Town of Camillus Parks and Recreation
2001	Mr. Michael Cooper, Town of Penfield
2002	Mr. Paul Blake, Sales Representative, Mid-Atlantic Products
2003	Dr. Arthur Mittelstaed, Jr., Recreation Safety Institute
2004	Justin Pokines, Town of Sullivan
2005	Frank Allkofer, Monroe County Parks
2006	William Zimmermann, City of New Rochelle
2007	Richard Rose, Town of Orangetown
2008	Joseph A. Stout, Westchester County PRC
2009	Charles Connington, Clarkstown Parks & Recreation
2010	Sally Rogol, City of Rye
2011	Ann Smiley, Town of Lysander
2012	Jack Voelker, Chautauqua Institution
2013	Jeff Myers, Town of Perinton
2014	N/A
2015	N/A
2016	Linanne Conroy, Town of Penfield
2017	Tom White, City of Syracuse
2018	Edean Casey, Town of Onondaga
2019	N/A
2020	Eric Bacon, Town of Camillus
2021	Charry Lawson, Town of Onondaga
2022	Robert Robare, Town of Plattsburgh
2023	Dave Goldberg, Town of Pound Ridge

## OUTSTANDING SERVICE

1987	Village & Town of Mt. Kisco, NY
1988	Ontario Beach Program Committee Inc. of Rochester, NY
1989	Rosaline Preudhomme
1990	Bill Diamond, Diamond Studios & Associates, Inc.
1991	Daryl Willenbrink
1992	Jeanie T. Piatt, Project Playground Citizens Group, Town of Newburgh
1993	E. William Miller, Town of Tonawanda Parks & Rec Committee
1994	Jean Marshall, Town of Gates
1995	Cheektowaga YES Program
1996	Genesee Region Telephone Pioneers
1997	Onondaga Park Association
1998	Bernadette Castro
1999	Vergie Mingo, Western New York Children's Psychiatric Center
2000	William Murray, NYSOPRHP- Central Region
2001	Jody Rogers, Town of Cicero
2002	James Smiley, Oswego County Catholic Charities
2003	Tom White, City of Syracuse
2004	Bonnie Brown, City of Syracuse Aquatics Director
2005	Peggy Kenyon, Town of Manlius
2006	Jim Raulli, Village of Manlius
2007	Elaine Apfelbaum, Town of Clarkstown
2008	Martin Denecke, Town of Hamburg
2009	Jeff Myers, Town of Perinton
2010	Bob Ellis, Onondaga County Parks
2011	Patrick Driscoll, City of Syracuse
2012	Wayne Morris, Town of Clay
2013	Kristine Zingaro, Town of Manlius
2014	Karen Keast, Town of DeWitt
2015	Julie LaFave, Town of Cicero
2016	Mary Beth Roach, City of Syracuse
2017	Teresa Roth, Village of North Syracuse
2018	Bill Barber, City of Binghamton
2019	Bill Lansley, Onondaga County Parks
2020	Josh Haeick, Village of Hamburg
2021	Paul Palmer, City of Binghamton
2022	Thomas Venniro, Hilton-Parma
2023	Bill Alley, Town of Cicero

## MEMORIAL HALL OF FAME

Joseph Prendergast  
Harlan G. Metcalf  
Matthew Dolan  
Edward Ghiazza  
Franklin J.J. Diemer  
Frederick Law Olmstead

George Hjelte  
Laurance S. Rockefeller  
Dr. Frances Wallach Dr.  
Sal J. Prezioso  
Sidney G. Lutzin  
Luther H. Gulick

Joseph Lee  
Robert Moses  
Dr. M. Alexander Gabrielsen  
Robert C. Crawford  
Dr. Edith Ball  
Doris L. Berryman

Howard Braucher  
Steven R. Fowler  
Kim Ball  
Graham Skea

## INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

### LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This special award is to recognize a person who live(d) or work(ed) in the State of New York and has achieved prominence for his/her excellence in achieving outstanding and lasting contributions to the advancement of recreation and parks on the local and/or state levels. These contributions should be of long term impact upon the recreation and park movement. A minimum of 20 years in the field of Recreation and Parks is required. Nominee is to be a resident of/or work in the State of New York at the time of prominence.

### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

This is the most prestigious award that the NYSRPS offers. To receive the Distinguished Service Award, the nominee shall be an individual who has made significant contributions, over a period of 10 years or more, to NYSRPS and their local regional partner/affiliate.

### OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

To receive the Outstanding Service Award, the nominee shall be a professional in the field and/or an organization who, over a period of at least five years, made outstanding contributions to enrich the lives of individuals or groups of individuals in neighborhoods, communities, or the State of New York, through recreation, parks, and conservation.

### YOUNG PROFESSIONAL AWARD

The Young Professional Award is presented to a current parks and recreation professional who exhibits the attributes of an emerging leader, as displayed through their initiative, innovation, and contributions to the park and recreation field. Nominees should possess a record of career advancement, be engaged in professional and/or community organizations, and demonstrate outstanding service to their agency. Must be a NYSRPS member and have less than five years experience in the field of parks and recreation in their current position.

### DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN/ORGANIZATION

The Distinguished Citizen/Organization Award recognizes a citizen, community park board member, volunteer, or organization who has demonstrated exceptional efforts towards enhancing and supporting parks and recreation in their community and/or New York State. Nominees may be recognized for a record of cumulative service or for their endeavors related to a single project or activity of significance.

### ELECTED OFFICIAL/BOARD OF THE YEAR

The Elected Official/Board of the Year Award will be presented to an individual who provides exemplary support to parks and recreation. This individual has made significant contributions to the parks and recreation field through active participation, advocacy or through policy and legislation. This individual can be at the local, county, regional, state or federal level.

### ROBERT W. MINER 'GOOD GUY' and FRANCES WALLACH 'GOOD GAL'

A member of any section of NYSRPS; an individual who is actively involved in the Society and in activities related to the field of leisure services; an individual who has unselfishly contributed time, expertise, and effort to further the principles and goals of the field of leisure services.

### THERAPEUTIC RECREATION

Nominee must be a member of NYSRPS or NYSTRA with a minimum of 5 years in the field. Nominee is deserving of recognition for dedication and commitment in the field of therapeutic recreation or in helping to provide programs for people with disabilities.

### ABCD AWARD

The individual should have gone "Above and Beyond the Call of Duty" by having made an outstanding contribution to the field of public recreation and parks, significant enough to have had a stimulating effect on recreation at a town, city, state or national level. This award is open to volunteers and part-time/seasonal, park or secretarial staff. This award is not intended for full time Park and Recreation Professionals. Membership in NYSRPS not required.

## AGENCY AWARDS

### EXCELLENCE IN LANDSCAPE DESIGN

The Excellence in Landscape Design Award projects include garden design, landscape art, sculptures and pathways, and improvements on landscape projects and maintenance.

### EXCEPTIONAL FACILITY DESIGN

The Exceptional Facility Design Award projects include indoor pools and indoor sports complexes, community centers, information centers, gymnasiums, picnic shelters, restrooms, lighting, water sewer systems and parking lots, or other amenities.

### EXCEPTIONAL PARK DESIGN

The Exceptional Park Design Award is for a project that contains facility and landscape components. Examples would be sports fields, playgrounds, splash pads, trails and linear parks, skate parks, dog parks, and outdoor aquatic facilities.

### PROGRAM OF MERIT

This award will be given to a department that has developed an outstanding ongoing program that is innovative, creative and unique in nature or that demonstrates a new twist on an old theme while still being consistent with current trends. This program must enrich a group, community, or individual and is characterized as an organized recreation or leisure activity that is offered either on a daily, weekly or seasonal basis. The program must be in existence for a minimum of two (2) years.

### INCLUSION PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE

The Inclusion Program of Excellence Award praises an organization or agency for their achievements pertaining to a program or project that increases awareness and benefits of parks and recreation for everyone. This award highlights and acknowledges the organization's effort and determination to provide inclusive opportunities and programming to their community.

### SPECIAL EVENT AWARD

To receive the Special Event Award, the nominated event shall be a specific, one-time or annual event held between February 25, 2023 and February 23, 2024 that made outstanding contributions to enrich the lives of individuals or groups in neighborhoods or communities in recreation, parks, or conservation.

### MULTIMEDIA

Presented to the agency that has most effectively created awareness and gained exposure through video/audio/electronic coverage including website, social media, special videos, etc.

## INDIVIDUAL/AGENCY AWARDS

### ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

This award recognizes a park and recreation professional or agency who has made an outstanding effort during the last one to five years to sustain and improve the environment and/or reduce the environmental impact made by the agency.

### OUTSTANDING CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP

The Outstanding Corporate Partnership Award recognizes a vendor, company, or individual who has significantly contributed to the field of parks and recreation and developed a strong partnership with NYSRPS, a local organization or agency. This vendor, company, or individual has shown great leadership and support to the parks and recreation field by providing equipment, volunteer time, in-kind services or other contributions to a project or program that benefits the community and demonstrates the importance of parks and recreation.

# 2024 Award Nomination Form

Photocopy this form for multiple nominations. Deadline is February 23, 2024. Nominations not postmarked by the deadline will be disqualified.

## NOMINEE INFORMATION:

Nominee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## NOMINATED FOR THE FOLLOWING AWARD: (Please Check)

### INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

- Lifetime Achievement
- Distinguished Service
- Outstanding Service
- Young Professional
- Robert W. Miner "Good Guy"
- Frances Wallach "Good Gal"
- ABCD Award
- Distinguished Citizen/Organization
- Elected Official of the Year
- Therapeutic Recreation

### AGENCY AWARDS

- Special Event
- Program of Merit
- Multimedia
- Excellence in Landscape Design
- Exceptional Facility Design
- Exceptional Park Design
- Inclusion Program of Excellence

### INDIVIDUAL/AGENCY AWARDS

- Environmental Leadership
- Outstanding Corporate Partnership

## REASON FOR NOMINATING:

Please describe how the nominee meets or exceeds the criteria. If necessary, attach a separate sheet with specific accomplishments, etc. Include letters of recommendation and other supporting documentation.\* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Nominated by: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please submit nominations by February 23, 2024**

\*Digital submissions are preferred and can be emailed as a single PDF file to:

MeganBall@ongov.net  
Megan Ball, Onondaga County Parks  
Questions? Call Megan Ball at (315) 453-6712x 6734

# Memorial Hall of Fame Nomination Form

The purpose of this special award is to posthumously recognize persons who lived or worked in the State of New York and have achieved prominence for their excellence in achieving outstanding and lasting contributions to the advancement of recreation and parks on the local, state, and/or national levels. Through this medium, we will pay tribute to these individuals so they may serve as shining examples and symbols for future generations.

## CRITERIA FOR MEMORIAL HALL OF FAME NOMINEES:

1. Nominees will be considered for their contributions to the recreation and park field on the local, state, and/or national levels. These contributions should be of long term impact upon the recreation and park movement.
2. Nominees are to be residents of/or worked in the State of New York at the time of prominence.
3. No nominee will be considered until at least one year following their death. This is a posthumous honor. The name, biography and photo of the honoree will be added to the Memorial Hall of Fame and displayed at the 2024 Annual Conference and all subsequent conferences and exhibitions.

## NOMINEE INFORMATION:

Nominee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Kin, if known: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number of Kin, if known: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Kin, if known: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Death: \_\_\_\_\_

## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF NOMINEE:

Please provide nominee's background as to where he or she was born, lived, and/ or worked at the time when in New York, plus high school or college attended, etc. Also, please include a photo of the nominee.

## REASON FOR NOMINATING:

Please furnish the Committee sufficient information to properly judge how your nominee has made an outstanding and lasting contribution to the advancement of the recreation and park movement on the local, state, and/or national levels.

Nominated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please submit nominations by February 23, 2024**

\*Digital submissions are preferred and can be emailed as a single PDF file to:

MeganBall@ongov.net

Megan Ball, Onondaga County Parks

Questions? Phone Megan Ball at (315) 453-6712 x 6734