The MRPA Professional Awards program recognizes individuals in Minnesota for outstanding achievements in parks, recreation and leisure services. A major goal of the program is to increase public awareness and appreciation of the excellent parks, trails, recreation and leisure services that are available. We invite your participation!

**PROFESSIONAL AWARD CATEGORIES:**

**Clifton E. French Distinguished Services Award**
This is the highest professional award given by MRPA to its members. Nominated individuals must:
- The nominated individual must be a professional MRPA member.
- The candidate must have 20 plus years of professional service.
- The candidate must be an active member of MRPA and our profession.

*History of Award:* Clifton E. French graduated from the University of Minnesota with a B.S. in 1948 and received his M.Ed. in recreation leadership in 1949. He worked as the Director of the University of Minnesota’s Coffman Union and Edina Parks and was the Executive Director of the Minnesota Recreation and Parks Association. He was the first superintendent of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District. He has been a wonderful role model for many recreational professionals around the country.

**Dorothea Nelson Award**
This award is given by MRPA to its female members. Nominated individuals must:
- The candidate must be female.
- The nominated individual must be a MRPA professional member who is actively involved.
- They must have 10 plus years of professional service.
- They must have a diverse background that showcases years of active involvement with MRPA.

*History of Award:* Dorothea Nelson majored in music and recreation at the University of Minnesota in 1918. She worked for the Chicago Recreation District and the Red Cross oversees recreation programs, based in Japan. In 1948 Dorothea became the first full time director of a suburban recreation department in Saint Louis Park, Minnesota. She was a strong advocate for female recreation programs.

**Jack Niles Award**
This award is given by MRPA to its male members. Nominated individuals must:
- The candidate must be male.
- The nominated individual must be a professional member who is actively involved in MRPA.
- They must have 10 plus years of professional service.
- The ideal candidate will have a diverse background that showcases years of active involvement with MRPA.

*History of Award:* Jack Niles received a Bachelors degree in education from the University of Wisconsin, La Crosse, and did considerable graduate work in physical education and recreation at the University of Minnesota. He worked for Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, Columbia Heights school district and an athletic and recreation officer at Fort Snelling. In 1948 he became the first recreation director for the community of South Saint Paul. He was well renowned for his visionary ideas related to parks and recreation.

**Horizon Award**
This award is given to an “up and coming” professional who possesses leadership skills, has made noteworthy contributions to the field of parks, recreation and leisure services and who is an active and vibrant contributor to MRPA sections, committees and/or events. Nominated individuals must:
- The nominated individual must be a professional member of MRPA.
- They must have provided under 8 years of professional service.
- They must be an “up and coming” professional who possess great leadership skills.
- They must be an active contributor to MRPA and our profession.

*History of Award:* This award was created in 2007 to fill the gap for the young professionals in the field of Parks & Recreation.

**Dr. Gerald B. Fitzgerald Award**
This award is given by MRPA to members who have demonstrated achievements in the areas of education, research and/or journalism. Nominated individuals must:
- The nominated individual must be a professional member of MRPA.
- May have instructed at a university/college, seminars, academies, workshops and/or professional development school to improve and enhance the field of parks and recreation.
- They may have presented in a classroom or at a conference about topics that are enhancing the field of parks and recreation.

*History of Award:* Gerald B. Fitzgerald graduated from Notre Dame University in 1930, received a masters from the University of Minnesota and completed his doctoral studies at Indiana University. He taught for the University of Minnesota and a school district
in the state of Illinois. He served as the president of MRPA and various other regional committees. He was well renowned for his innovative global thinking related to parks and recreation.

Tommy Johnson Award
The Awards Committee will select one “Award of Excellence” project or initiative to receive the “Tommy Johnson Award.” The successful “Award of Excellence” project or initiative will best exemplify the characteristics and values that Tommy Johnson was known for: innovation, futuristic, revolutionary and/or creative with ideas and initiatives that help establish future trends, philosophical change, sharing of new resources and new exciting concepts. All projects that receive “Award of Excellence” will be in consideration for the Tommy Johnson Award. The Tommy Johnson Award will be presented at the Annual General Meeting and Awards Banquet.

History of Award: Tommy Johnson graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1968. He was a supervisor and district manager for Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board. He was instrumental in introducing broomball, wrestling, fall soccer and ceramics into various parks departments. He also started a program to foster training and the certification of referees for youth sports.

Leadership Award
This award is given to an “outstanding leader” who possesses the skill, creativity and/or ability to motivate and create notable accomplishments, achievements or advancements in the parks, recreation and leisure services and who is an active contributor to MRPA sections, committees and/or events. Nominated individuals must:
- The candidate should have ongoing impact in the field of parks, recreation and leisure services.
- The nominated individual must be either a MRPA member or parks and recreation advocate.
- The nominated individual must have provided a minimum of 5 years of service to the field of parks and recreation either through full-time work or community leadership in the field.
- The nominated individual must be an active contributor to MRPA sections, committees and/or events as a professional parks and recreation advocate.
- The candidate must possess leadership, strategic planning, partner building, innovation and/or service to advance the field of parks and recreation on a local, state or national level.

History of Award: This award has been given out since 1962. Most recently, the Awards Committee felt that “Special Award” didn’t clearly represent the intent of the award. With the approval of the MRPA Board, this award will now be called the “Leadership Award”.

Legislative Award
This award is intended to recognize legislators for “outstanding contributions at the state or federal level on behalf of Parks and Recreation.” Nominated individuals must:
- Have served as a member of the State Legislature within the last 12 months.
- Have served as a member of the Minnesota’s Federal Legislative Delegation within the last 12 months.
- Support the MRPA Legislative platform, served on committees dealing with issues in parks and recreation and/or authored bills promoting parks and recreation.

Park & Recreation Board and Commission Award
This award is given to one member of a citizen’s advisory or policy-making board in the parks and recreation field. Nominated individuals must:
- The nominated individual member should be, or have been, significantly involved on a park and recreation board and/or commission.
- They have contributed by setting public policies, financing and advocating for parks and recreation.
- They have contributed by delivering high quality park and recreation services that have enriched the lives of people in their community.

Nomination Procedure (please read carefully):
This is an easy process. Simply complete the MRPA Professional Nomination Form and answer the questions listed below and submit it to Michelle Snider at the MRPA office no later than Friday, October 31, 2016. Remember...
- Completely fill out the MRPA Professional Awards Nomination Form, be as detailed as possible.
- All candidates must be a MRPA member to be nominated.
- Please make sure that the potential candidate meets the award criteria.
- Please complete a separate nomination form for each individual you nominate.
- The nominee will receive a form to submit with information needed for scoring. We encourage the nominator to review with the candidate.

Submission Procedure (please read carefully):
- Please submit typed responses on 8.5 x 11 inch pages in 11 or 12-point type.
- The application should be one pdf document.
- Please name your file accordingly: Category – Name of Individual, Current Employer. For example: Jack Niles – John Doe, Eagan Parks & Recreation.
- In your email, please list which nominations are attached by listing the file name.
- If you are concerned with the size of your email file, please plan accordingly.
- You must submit your application via email by Friday, November 18, 2016.
Nominee's/Agency's Information:

- **Award Category:**
- **Name:**
- **Address:**
- **City:**  
- **Zip:**
- **Agency:**
- **Email:**
- **Work Phone:**

Nominator's Information:

- **Name:**
- **Address:**
- **City:**
- **Zip:**
- **Agency:**
- **Email:**
- **Work Phone:**

Please write a paragraph detailing why you think the person is deserving of the award based on the award background and criteria. Also please be as detailed as possible in your narrative.

If you have questions regarding your nomination, nomination category or need any additional information contact the 2016 Awards Committee Co-Chairs:

- **Donna Tilsner**
  - (952) 833-9571
  - dtilsner@edinamn.gov
- **Chris Fleck**
  - (651) 714-3586
  - cfleck@ci.woodbury.mn.us

**Deadline for Submission to Michelle Snider** - snider@mnrpa.org
**Received via email no later than** Friday, October 31, 2016