



# Connecticut Recreation & Parks Association, Inc. Annual Awards & Scholarships

The 2026 CRPA Awards Program provides recreation professionals an opportunity to nominate those outstanding individuals who you believe deserve public acknowledgment for outstanding service in and around the field of parks and recreation. Please take the time to participate in this worthwhile program and submit a nomination for consideration.

**THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO RECOGNIZE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE MADE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION PROFESSION!**

Presentation of the awards will be made at the 66<sup>th</sup> Annual State Conference on November 24, 2026.

## Nomination procedures are as follows:

1. Any CRPA member in good standing may nominate candidates for each award.  
(*Membership is not required for nominees in select categories, as indicated below.*)

2. **The deadline for submitting nominations is September 4, 2026.**

Send form(s) to: CRPA 135 Day Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 2H, Newington, CT 06111 ♦ Phone: 860.721.0384 ♦ val@crpa.com

## Description of Awards

### HALL OF FAME

Created to recognize any individual or organization that has made extraordinary contributions to the recreation, park, golf, or conservation movement in Connecticut. The parks and recreation profession owes its existence and growth to the vision and dedication of individuals who have worked to improve the quality of life in Connecticut.

### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

This is the most prestigious award that CRPA offers. To receive the Distinguished Service Award, the nominee shall be a CRPA member and an individual who has made outstanding contributions, over a significant number of years, to the recreation, and/or parks field. Such contributions might be for outstanding leadership; committee work on a state or national level; outstanding service as a professional worker; research; promoting the profession; outstanding development of equipment, layout, or design.

### OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL AWARD

To receive the Outstanding Professional Award, the nominee shall be a CRPA member who has made outstanding contributions, over a period of 10 years or more, to the recreation and/or parks field.

### “R. PETER LEDGER” YOUNG PROFESSIONAL AWARD

Nominee must be a member of CRPA who has served 10 years or less and is deserving of recognition for achievements and accomplishments in the parks and recreation profession. **Winner of this award shall receive \$1,000** to be used for continuing education purposes (i.e. quarterlies, conferences, training institutes, etc).

### PARK MAINTENANCE PROFESSIONAL AWARD

To receive the Park Maintenance Professional Award, the nominee shall be from a CRPA member department or organization who demonstrates a commitment to the profession, implements innovative or cost-effective ideas, cultivates a positive work environment, and who has been in the recreation and/or parks field in Connecticut for a period of 5 years or more.

### PARK / FACILITY OF MERIT AWARD

This award will be given to a department who has developed or renovated an exceptional facility within the last 3 years. The director of the department/organization must be a current CRPA member.

### PROGRAM OF MERIT AWARD

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, seasonal, or annual basis. The program must be in existence for a minimum of two (2) years and the Director of the department/organization must be a member of CRPA in good standing.

### INCLUSIVE OR ADAPTIVE PROGRAM OF MERIT AWARD

This award will be given to a department that has developed an outstanding, ongoing inclusive or adaptive program which demonstrates a conscious effort to service people of all needs and abilities. This program must be offered either on a daily, weekly, seasonal, or annual basis. The program

must be in existence for a minimum of two (2) years and the Director of the department/organization must be a member of CRPA in good standing.

### SELECTED ORGANIZATION AWARD

The organization should have made an outstanding voluntary 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 may be awarded to a commercial and/or a nonprofit entity. **Membership in CRPA is not required.**

### “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 part-time & seasonal, park or secretarial staff. *This award is not intended for full time Park & Recreation Professionals.* **Membership in CRPA is not required.**

### VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The individual should be a volunteer who has made an outstanding contribution, whether it be through time commitments or other resources, 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. **Membership in CRPA is not required.**

### PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

The Nominee shall be an individual elected or appointed to public office, including but not limited to boards, commissions & committees, at any level of government, who has provided unselfish service in the interest of parks, recreation, conservation and/or community services. **Membership in CRPA is not required.**

### DOROTHY G. MULLEN / CRPA SCHOLARSHIP \$500.00

### GEORGE SANFORD / CRPA SCHOLARSHIP \$500.00

The Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association has established the Dorothy Mullen and George Sanford CRPA Scholarships to provide assistance to students majoring in recreation and/or park education. To qualify a student must have at least a 2.5 GPA in their major.

### HIDDEN HERO AWARD

An organization's success and excellence are rarely attributed to the efforts of any one individual. However, when an individual has made a significant and meaningful impact on their work place or community, special recognition is called for. The “Hidden Hero Award” recognizes and celebrates that incredible contribution as well as their outstanding dedication to CRPA, its members, and the State of Connecticut. These Heroes have instilled confidence in a supportive and positive way and selflessly taken on multiple responsibilities beyond what is expected by showing innovation and adaptability in solving problems and creating solutions. This award will be presented periodically to an individual who has done extraordinary work to improve a CRPA event, program, or initiative and is deserving of special recognition which may otherwise not be commended through CRPA's traditional awards categories.



# Connecticut Recreation & Parks Association, Inc. Annual Awards & Scholarships

I would like to nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for the following Award:

*\*Please note: one award category submission per person or facility.*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distinguished Service              | <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusive or Adaptive Program of Merit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding Professional           | <input type="checkbox"/> Selected Organization                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> R. Peter Ledger Young Professional | <input type="checkbox"/> ABCD                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Park Maintenance Professional      | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer of the Year                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Park/Facility of Merit             | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Service                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program of Merit                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Scholarships (2)               |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hidden Hero                            |

PLEASE FILL OUT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION COMPLETELY:

## Nominee

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(Facility of Merit) Facility Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Telephone: (Day) \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Nominator

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone: (Day) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please return this form by **September 4, 2026** to:  
CRPA, 135 Day Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 2H Newington, CT 06111  
E-mail: [val@crpa.com](mailto:val@crpa.com) ♦ Phone: 860.721.0384

Please submit this nomination form along with the criteria requested on the previous page.



# CRPA Annual Awards Criteria

On a separate sheet of paper, please provide us with the following information including any additional information you feel would help the Awards Selection Committee in making their decision.

Return **by September 4, 2026** to:

CRPA 135 Day Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 2H, Newington, CT 06111 ♦ Phone: 860.721.0384 ♦ val@crpa.com

*\*Please note: nominees can only be nominated in one award category; multiple entries will not be reviewed.*

## Distinguished Service & Outstanding, Young, & Park Maintenance Professionals

1. Name of candidate
2. Award category
3. Educational/training background (*school/degree/certifications*)
4. Current position, organization name and location, & number of years in current position
5. Brief career summary, stating positions, locations and length of service in each position
6. Describe ways in which the candidate has contributed to the profession through:
  - Professional affiliations and activities (*i.e., memberships & committees - include dates*)
  - Leadership in professional associations (*include dates*)
  - Contributions to professional conferences (*include dates*)
7. Capacity in which the candidate has served and/or advocated for their local park and recreation department through:
  - Program/facility development in the community
  - Development or implementation of an innovative or cost-effective idea which provided a solution to a problem
  - Include honors and awards received for such service (*include dates*)
8. Any other achievements of special note or additional services to the community
9. For all awards: Please provide two (2) letters of recommendation which highlight outstanding job performance of all aspects of assigned responsibilities and respect from the staff within the agency for which the individual now works
10. **For Park Maintenance Professional Award:** Provide examples of distinctive leadership as a support staff, crew leader, park supervisor, or a park ranger in which their dedicated service advanced the organizations mission or vision

## Selected Organization, Volunteer of the Year, & "ABCD"

1. Name of candidate or organization
2. Award category
3. Name of parks and recreation department assisting/volunteering/working for and years of service
4. Capacity in which the candidate has served or supported their local parks and recreation department
5. List any other services to the community

## Public Service

1. Name of candidate
2. Award category
3. Position held in public office (*include number of years*)
4. Capacity in which the candidate has served, advocated, or supported for the interests of parks, recreation, conservation and/or community services
5. List any other services to the community

## Park / Facility of Merit

1. Name and location of facility
2. Award category
3. Date renovation commenced
4. Date renovation was completed
5. Reason for renovation
6. Funding sources for renovation
7. Before and after pictures of renovation
8. Population of town/city
9. Number of people facility serves (*rough estimate*)

## Program of Merit & Inclusive or Adaptive Program of Merit

1. Name of program
2. Award category
3. Brief description of program, including what makes it exceptional
4. Year the program was developed
5. Funding sources for program
6. Population of town/city
7. Number of people program serves, including age range
8. Marketing material & media coverage, if any, for event
9. **For Inclusive or Adaptive Program of Merit Award:** Please provide details on how program has been modified to be inclusive or adaptive and how many individuals with disabilities the program has served

## Dorothy G. Mullen / George Sanford Student Scholarships

1. Name of student
2. Award category
3. College/Institution currently enrolled (*include start date & expected graduation date*)
4. Declared major
5. Provide official transcript (*copies are acceptable*)
6. Internships/Volunteer work in the parks and recreation field (*include dates & locations*)
7. List other awards or activities
8. Include a letter of recommendation from either a college professor or a parks & recreation industry professional

## Hidden Hero

1. Name of candidate
2. Award category
3. Organization name
4. Describe in a short paragraph the incredible contribution, above the expected responsibilities in their work or volunteer role, the individual has made to CRPA and its members statewide
5. Describe how this contribution was innovative and adaptive in creating a solution to a statewide problem
6. Please provide two (2) letters of support from CRPA members which echo the above sentiments