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The *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration* is the official publication of the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration. The *Journal* was established by the Academy to bridge the gap between research and practice for administration, educators, consultants, and researchers.

The *Journal* provides a forum for the analysis of management and organization of the delivery of park, recreation, and leisure services. The *Journal* will publish distinguished original manuscripts that will do the following:

- move theoretical management concepts forward in the field of park and recreation administration; and
- provide clear implications of theory and research for problem solving and action in park and recreation organizations.

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## THE ACADEMY

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The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration is an organization of distinguished practitioners and scholars committed to the advancement of park and recreation administration. Election to the Academy is based on recognized distinction as a professional park and recreation administrator or scholar and an active commitment to the objectives of the Academy. Through the *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration* and other projects, the Academy encourages scholarly effort by both recreation and leisure service fields.

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UNLV is located in the vibrant and dynamic city of Las Vegas and surrounded by the Mojave Desert. Serving 28,000 students, UNLV is emerging as a premier metropolitan research university. Located within the world renowned College of Hotel Administration, the Department of Recreation and Sport Management is comprised of eight faculty members with a student body of 200 undergraduates majoring in Recreation Management and 35 graduate students pursuing a master's in Sport and Leisure Services Management. The academic programs are integrated with opportunities in the greater Las Vegas Valley for research and professional experiences in all sectors of the recreation and sport industry. The college and department furnish space, clerical assistance, and the editor's support for publishing the *Journal*.

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The views expressed herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*.

## THE AMERICAN ACADEMY FOR PARK AND RECREATION ADMINISTRATION

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The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration was created in 1980 with 50 founding members. The Academy was formed to advance knowledge related to the administration of recreation and parks; to encourage scholarly efforts by both practitioners and educators that would enhance the practice of park and administration; to promote broader public understanding of the importance of parks and recreation to the public good; and to conduct research, publish scholarly papers, and sponsor seminars related to the advancement of park and recreation administration. Membership in the Academy is limited to 125 practicing professionals, of whom no more than 25% may be educators. In addition, members can hold emeritus status after they retire. Membership qualifications include serving not less than 15 years in a high level of administration in a park and recreation agency and/or an institution of higher education, demonstrated leadership, and a desire to contribute to the advancement of parks and recreation through participation in the affairs of the Academy.

In carrying out its mission, the Academy undertakes a number of activities. It sponsors the *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, which is designed to bridge the gap between research and practice for administrators, educators, consultants, and researchers. The *Journal* provides a forum for the analysis of management and organization of the delivery of park, recreation, and leisure services.

The Academy has established a videotape library of interviews with top professionals in the field. In addition to being of great historical value, the tapes in the *Legends in Parks and Recreation Library* contain many ideas on agency administration, working with board members, staff relations, organizational development, and creative management.

The Academy awards program has three components. The *Willard E. Sutherland Practitioner Award* is presented every three years for the best paper published by a practitioner in the *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*. The Best Paper Award is awarded every three years in recognition of a master's thesis or undergraduate paper that contributes the most to scholarly literature and improved practice of park and recreation administration. A similar award is given every three years for the best doctoral dissertation.

Members of the Academy were instrumental in forming the *American Institute of Park Executives/American Academy Foundation*. The purpose of the foundation is to support worthy projects in the parks and recreation field.

The Academy was instrumental in developing and launching an accreditation program for park and recreation agencies that is now being administered in cooperation with the National Recreation and Park Association.

During 1995, the Academy undertook an initiative to improve information available about recreation programs offered by park and recreation departments to deal with at-risk youth. It was lead sponsor of a national colloquium held in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1995. A series of regional colloquia were held in 1996 as follow-ups to the national meeting.

The Academy's *Young Professional Externship Program* is designed to provide a mentored experience for young professionals attending the National Recreation and Park Association Annual Congress. Participants in the program are selected based on nominations from Academy members.

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