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Dan Hendey, Sr. Education Manager & The Maintenance Institute (TMI)

Jane LaMar, Administrative & Marketing Assistant

Kealy Daye, Education Manager

PA RECREATION AND PARK SOCIETY 2025 AWARDS BANQUET



PRPS

UNIVERSITY

Unlocking potential. Shaping tomorrow.

TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025
78TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPO
HERSHEY, PA

SPONSORED BY RECREATION RESOURCE USA
& BURKE



PROGRAM

Welcome	Dave Hutner Recognition & Awards Committee
Presidential Citations	Ken Lehr, President
Recognition of Committees	Dave Hutner
Invocation	Tim Herd
Dinner	
Society Awards	Audrey Logar, Chair Recognition & Awards Committee
Closing Remarks	Dave Hutner
Photographs	Award Recipients
Closing	

2025 RECOGNITION & AWARDS COMMITTEE

Audrey Logar, CPRP, Chair, Camp Hill Recreation

Tammy Agesen, CPRE, AFO, Lancaster County Dept. of Parks & Recreation

Phil Brady, CPRP, AFO, Plymouth Township Recreation & Park Department

Heather Cuyler, CPRP, CPSI, Pashek + MTR

Dave Hutner, Cranberry Township Parks & Recreation

Daphne Klahr, Ed.D., CPRE, Reading Recreation Commission

Jason Lang, MS, CPRE, East Goshen Township Park & Recreation Department

Joe Seltzer, Montgomery County Parks

Jay Cerkan, A Pocono Country Place, POA

Jim Watenpool, CPRP, Retired

AGENCY OF THE YEAR AWARD BLUE RIBBON PANEL OF JUDGES

Michael Shiosaki, Director of Parks & Community Services, Bellevue, Washington

Jamie Rae Walker, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Urban and Municipal Park Specialist, Texas A & M University

Chris Clouden, MSL, Director, Lancaster County Parks & Recreation, South Carolina

Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society

Thank you to all volunteers who serve on the PRPS boards and committees.

Annual Conference & Expo Committee

Co-Chairs: Heavenly Smith & Kelsey Paul
Jay Cerkan, Billy Sellers, Sam Hewitt, Becky Richards, Amanda Pozutto, Matt Hutchison, Missy Stimer, Kevin Sanders, Paula Willis

Blogging Team

Gwen Loose, Jason Cerkan, Jeff Witman, Monica Tierney, Derek Muller, Mykal McCullough, Kate Moyer, Stacey Widenhofer, Ryan Griffiths, Teddy Fisher, Tim Herd, Emily Schnellbaugh

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Committee

Chair: Kathi Muller
Ally Brandt, Andrea Crouse, Ashley Broudy, Chalet Harris, Daphne Klahr, Debra Blair, Doug Knauss, Gina Batavick, Heavenly Smith, Judy Houck, Lisa Summers, Tonya Brown, Walt Mulholland, Gwen Vilade, Marissa Duffy, Dan Hendey

Education Committee

Brian Malcarne, Erin Long, Jen Fean, Jeremy Mortorff, Kelly Rebitz, Kylene Gill, Marissa Haynes, Tammy Agesen, Tyler Walker, Walt Mulholland, Kealy Daye, Dan Hendey, Niki Tourscher

Finance Committee

Chair: Jeremy Mortorff
Joe Minich, Heather Cuyler, Tim Herd

Governmental Affairs Committee

Chair: Doug Knauss
Andie Graham, Angie Nagle, Annette Logan, Don Holmes, Heather Cuyler, Becky Richards, Larry Williamson, Marci Mowery, Monica Tierney, Steve Stroman, Tom Ford, Tim Herd

Health & Wellness Committee

Chair: Kathryn Hunningen
Jason Lang, Ann Toole, Mike Kukitz, Cheri Matter, Tom Marino

Historical Committee

Chair: Bob Griffith

Leadership Development Committee

Chair: Tyler Walker
Dave Hutner, Jessica Cirilo, Heavenly Smith, Ashley Broudy, Ken Lehr, Courtney Fox, Bill Salvatore, Kelsey Paul, Erin Timby

Membership Committee

Chair: Todd Roth
Ashley Broudy, Cathy Wegener, Tammy Agesen, Erin Timby, Jason Cerkan, Judy Houck, Katie Kollar, Lynn Todd, Kelsey Paul, Marissa Haynes, Tyler Walker, Chloe Pauls, Dominic Roma, Doug Knauss, Tracy Robert

Recognition & Awards Committee

Chair: Audrey Logar
Daphne Klahr, Dave Hutner, Heather Cuyler, Jason Lang, Jim Watenpool, Joe Seltzer, Phil Brady, Tammy Agesen, Jason Cerkan

AGENCY OF THE YEAR AWARD

Butler County Parks & Recreation

Agency Director: Lance Welliver, Parks & Recreation Director

Butler County Parks & Recreation is the 2025 PRPS Agency of the Year for its exceptional contributions to enhancing the quality of life for its community through diverse and outstanding facilities, services, and programs.

Highlights of the department's accomplishments in the past five years include the rehabilitation of an ADA playground, a stream restoration in partnership with the PA Fish and Boat Commission, a complete overhaul of an existing waterpark, a historic Carousel restoration, full ADA accessibility at Alameda Park, enhanced mountain biking trails, and the construction of two new pavilions—one of which honors community First Responders. The department offers multiple sports, including flag football, softball, volleyball, paddleboarding, and yoga. The department also provides a 2+ acre dog park, which has become a regional destination. Finally, the department's special events, including holiday events, Community Days, and significant sporting events such as the Canadian-American Games, attract thousands yearly. In addition to its programming and parks, the department supports 57 municipalities in Butler County through its Local Park Renovation Grant Program. It has received over \$4 million in grants to enhance its parks and facilities.

Through strategic facility improvements, innovative programming, successful partnerships, and a commitment to community engagement, Butler County Parks & Recreation has achieved a significant distinction in Pennsylvania. They continue to provide high-quality recreation services that enrich the lives of their residents, foster community connections, and promote health and wellness across Butler County.

The Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society extends its sincere congratulations to all those being recognized this evening. Each individual, group, and agency is acknowledged for the positive impact they have made on those served by our profession.

A SUMMARY OF THE AWARDS PROCESS

The Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society Awards Program is a competitive process.

- The Awards Committee solicits nominations each year beginning with summer media announcements including the PRPS Weekly SCOOP and the PRPS website.
- Information and applications are available beginning in the summer on the PRPS website, by contacting the Recognition and Awards Chair, or the PRPS office. Those interested submit their entries electronically in January.
- Each member of the Recognition and Awards Committee receives an electronic copy of the nomination form for their review and evaluation against established criteria.
- Committee members vote anonymously and **do not vote** on their own agency submissions.
- The Agency of the Year Award is judged by an independent panel of experts in the field of parks and recreation.

*Following dinner & recognition of our colleagues' fabulous accomplishments, please join us for the **Back to the 90's Social** and celebrate PRPS's 90th Anniversary! Dance to live music from the 70's 80's and 90's with the band Velveeta.*

*Room: Red Room.
Starts at 8:00 pm.*

SAVE
THE DATE

2026
PRPS CONFERENCE &
EXPO

MARCH 24-27, 2026

Spooky Nook Sports
Manheim, PA



EXCELLENCE IN RECREATION AND PARKS

Blair County

Award-winning program: Fort Roberdeau Bluebird Trail

Agency Directors: David Kessling, President, Blair County Board of Commissioners; Glenn Nelson, Director, Fort Roberdeau

Program Leaders: Dr. Stan Kotala, Bluebird Trail Manager, Board Member of Fort Roberdeau Association; Alice Kotala, Fort Conservation Volunteer

The Fort Roberdeau Bluebird Trail serves the community with distinction by providing an attraction exemplifying three significant roles of parks: conservation, education, and recreation. Dr. Stan Kotala started the bluebird trail in 1992 with a goal focused on bluebird conservation. Today, the Bluebird Trail attracts families and groups to visit and participate in conservation education programs. The local community uses the trail for recreational walks with wellness benefits while relaxing in a natural setting populated with bluebirds and wildlife.

City of St. Mary's Parks & Recreation

Award-winning program: ADA Accessible Playground

Agency Director & Program Leader: Danielle Kugler, Parks and Recreation Director
St. Mary's transformed the 17,000-square-foot 30-year-old Leather's Playground into the largest ADA-accessible playground in the area. With the monetary help of more than 30 local businesses and organizations, grants through DCNR, Greenways, Trails, and Recreation, Community Development Block, and the department budget, the dream of having an ADA-accessible playground came to life.

Dover Area Parks & Recreation

Award-winning program: Sensory Santa

Agency Director: Chalet Harris, CPRP, CPSI, Parks and Recreation Director

Program Leaders: Chalet Harris, CPRP, CPSI, Parks and Recreation Director; Tracy Kreiger, Recreation Program Coordinator

Dover Area Parks & Recreation created Sensory Santa to reach members of the Dover community who struggled to attend and/or participate in traditional Santa events. Sensory Santa addresses sights, smells, sounds, and the size of the crowd and provides a unique Santa and Mrs. Claus experience for people with wide-ranging disabilities. Sensory Santa addresses many sensory elements to enable more York County families to engage in holiday events.

DISTINGUISHED MEMBER AWARD IN HONOR OF ROBERT D. GRIFFITH

Harry A. Norton, CPRP

Manheim Township Parks & Recreation

Since 1987, Harry Norton has helped to provide the Manheim Township community with exemplary park and recreation programs and facilities. During his career, he has helped to lead the department in various ways and currently serves as the Adult & Family Program Manager. His contributions to PRPS have ranged from serving as a District 2 Executive Committee member for seven years, being the State conference co-chair, volunteering for five conferences, and being a speaker for conference sessions. In 1997, PRPS selected Harry as the PRPS Outstanding New Professional. His expertise, outgoing personality, and willingness to help others make him stand out in the parks and recreation field!

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN HONOR OF FRED M. COOMBS

Judy Houck, CPRP

Spring Township Parks & Recreation

Judy Houck has been actively involved in parks and recreation for nearly 37 years, both as a student and professional. Her dedication to the profession is evident in her longtime service to the community and her ongoing commitment to PRPS, where she volunteered for the Park Resource Branch, served on 14 PRPS committees, and held leadership positions on the PRPS Board of Directors.

In her role with Spring Township Parks and Recreation, she has worked tirelessly to improve the township's 16 park and playground areas, ensuring exemplary maintenance and improvements. She has expanded programming and developed new partnerships within her community to enhance the Spring Township community's recreation, wellness, and educational offerings for residents of all ages. Judy's dedication to parks and recreation, commitment to serving her community, contributions to professional development, and mentoring new professionals distinguish her as a standard-bearer for all park and recreation professionals in Pennsylvania and nationwide.

COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARD

Alan Sentman
Farmstead Alliance

Alan Sentman is an extraordinary volunteer whose leadership and dedication to the Farmstead Alliance in Upper Moreland Township, Montgomery County, have positively impacted the organization and the surrounding community. Alan has volunteered thousands of hours for the Farmstead Alliance, ensuring the preservation and rehabilitation of the Colonial-era Farmstead at Farmstead Park. His dedication, vision, and tireless work have been instrumental in advancing the Farmstead Alliance's purpose - to preserve, rehabilitate, and maintain the Colonial-era Farmstead in the center of Farmstead Park located in Upper Moreland Township and to provide a distinct public space and experience for the community.

OUTSTANDING NEW PROFESSIONAL

Heavenly Smith
Susquehanna Township Parks & Recreation

Heavenly Smith is the Program Coordinator for Susquehanna Township, where she has revitalized recreational opportunities for residents following a three-year department shutdown due to COVID-19. Heavenly is actively involved in PRPS, completing the Leadership Development Academy and serving on the Leadership and DEI Committees. She is the 2025 Conference Co-Chair for the PRPS Annual Conference and the District 2 President-Elect. In February, Heavenly was named a 30 under 30 by NRPA, which recognizes top young park and recreation professionals who serve as everyday champions in their communities.

DISTINGUISHED MEMBER AWARD IN HONOR OF ROBERT D. GRIFFITH

Doug Knauss, CPRP, CPSI
Susquehanna Township Parks & Recreation

Doug Knauss, the Parks and Recreation Director for Susquehanna Township, is a dedicated park and recreation professional with over three decades of industry experience, tirelessly advancing PRPS initiatives, developing impactful community programs, and championing parks and open spaces. His contributions to PRPS include serving as the Government Affairs Committee Chairman, serving PRPS Districts 2 and 3 as President and Secretary, and being a PRPS Board of Directors member. Additionally, Doug has volunteered for numerous PRPS conference committees and, in 2011, served as a conference co-chair.

Lancaster County Department of Parks & Recreation

Award-winning program: PA Master Naturalist Lancaster Cohort

Agency Director: Robert Devonshire, Director of General Services

Program Leader: Tammy Agesen, CPRE, AFO, Parks Program Superintendent
Pennsylvania Master Naturalist (PAMN) is a statewide partnership initiative to connect people with their local ecosystems through intensive natural science training and local conservation service work. The Lancaster County Department of Parks and Recreation partnered with PAMN to ensure these Master Naturalists have the necessary volunteer leadership to address the most pressing conservation needs and challenges by coordinating and implementing yearly core training programs. Current volunteer projects include leading educational programs, citizen science surveys, invasive removal, trail maintenance, native plantings, social media campaigns, and environmental library assistance.

Lancaster County Department of Parks & Recreation

Award-winning program: Junior Ranger Academy

Agency Director: Robert Devonshire, Director of General Services

Program Leaders: Benjamin Arnold, Chief Park Ranger; Alex Manwiller, Park Ranger

The Junior Ranger Academy is a unique program that offers students the opportunity to learn the skills and knowledge integral to being a park ranger over a year. The program is free and designed so any child passionate about the outdoors can attend regardless of household income or prior experience. Through various experiences, participants can demonstrate their knowledge and skills, interact with multiple community organizations and agencies, develop a positive relationship with law enforcement, and gain a new appreciation for the environment around them.

Middletown Township Parks & Recreation

Award-winning program: Teen Talent Show

Agency Director: Paul Kopera, Parks and Recreation Director

Program Leader: Joanne Morelli, Program Specialist

Middletown Township's annual Teen Talent Show provides a unique platform for teens to showcase their talents in a safe, supportive, and public setting. This event has welcomed participants from across the region for over two decades. With acts ranging from singing and dancing to instrumental performers and balancing acts, the legacy of past participants has achieved national and global success. This event fosters community connections and boosts local pride among teens and their families.

EXCELLENCE IN RECREATION AND PARKS

Montgomery County Senior Games Executive Committee

Award-winning program: Montgomery County Senior Games

Executive Committee Co-Chairs: Katie Kollar, CPRP; Mike Richino, CPRP

Executive Committee Members: Katie Kollar, Upper Moreland Township; Mike Richino, Whitpain Township; Leigha Adduci, Upper Gwynedd Township; Ashley Broudy, Hatfield Township; Jane Delaney, Lower Providence Township; Derek Dureka, Upper Dublin Township; Andie Graham, Pottstown Borough; Jennifer Hartigan, Upper Moreland Township; Courtney Meehan, Lansdale Borough; Emily Moore, Whitemarsh Township; Dylan Muthersbaugh, Upper Merion Township; Sarah Prebis, Upper Gwynedd Township; Joanna Sharapan, Plymouth Township; Malcolm Smith, Whitpain Township; Erin Timby, Upper Dublin Township

The Montgomery County Senior Games (MCSG) is an exciting, week-long celebration of senior athletes, camaraderie, and friendly competition. Each year, the Senior Games allow older adults to engage in various sports and recreational activities, highlighting the importance of staying active and connected. The event is made possible through the collaborative efforts of 12 Montgomery County municipalities who serve on the Executive Board and additional volunteer support from eight other municipalities, local legislators, and community volunteers.

Upper Allen Township Parks Department

Award-winning program: Winding Hill Park North Sensory Garden

Agency Director: Chad Krebs, CPRP, CPSI, Parks Director

Program Leader: Eduardo Mera-Aguilar, CPSI, Assistant Parks Director

Motivated by last year's designation of all parks as Certified Autism Centers, the Upper Allen Township Parks Department worked to install a sensory garden that enhances visitors' connection with nature. In the spring of 2024, the department dedicated a Sensory Garden at Winding Hill Park. The Garden allows people of all ages and abilities to experience all five senses in a creative, easily accessible, and inclusive area. Plantings that engage all senses, although still immature, have delighted participants.

Upper Chichester Township

Award-winning program: Delco Inclusive Dance

Agency Directors: Brian Warren, CPRP - Director of Parks and Recreation; Ray Fuller, Director of Police & Emergency Services Administration

Program Leader: Aisha Hynson, Recreation Activities Coordinator

The Delco Inclusive Dance brought together over 100 attendees, celebrating children

of all abilities in Delaware County. Organized by Upper Chichester Parks and Recreation and the Director of Police & Emergency Services, this free event featured moon bounces, sensory areas, face painting, and dancing. With no budget, it thrived through volunteers and local sponsorships. The event highlighted innovation, inclusivity, and community collaboration, demonstrating the power of creativity in advancing social equity and accessibility in parks and recreation.

Upper Dublin Township Parks & Recreation

Award-winning program: Fire & Ice Fest

Agency Director: Derek Dureka, CPRP, Director

Program Leaders: Tammy Echevarria, CPRP, Assistant Director; Derek Dureka, CPRP, Director; Erin Timby, Recreation Coordinator; Colin Klauder, Recreation and Field Specialist

Don't hibernate, Celebrate!" Fire & Ice is a unique cold season event hosting entertainers and activities, including music, strolling performers, fire shows, tight-rope performers, a skating rink, ice throne, ice sculptures, inflatables, axe throwing, snow parties, curling, fire pits, s'mores and much more over the two-day event. The event is free, open to the public and attracts thousands of people each year. Staff, elected officials, community members and friends, gather and celebrate all that is GOOD in UDT, while trying something new or enjoying some good old-fashioned fun!

GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE PARK AWARD

Camp Hill Borough

Siebert Park

Agency Director: Audrey Logar, CPRP, Recreation Director

The enhancements to Siebert Park in Camp Hill Borough began as a stream restoration project designed to improve watershed health by reducing sediment in Blackberry Spring Run as part of the borough's MS4 pollutant reduction plan. The stream flows into Conodoguinet Creek, a popular spot for canoeing and kayaking and is adjacent to a popular trail and community park located across the street from a local elementary school. It is a valuable location for recreation and environmental education.

Recognizing the importance of the stream and trail to the community, Camp Hill expanded the stream project to include three enhancement components - reduction of water pollution, improvement of the multi-use trail, and the construction of a formal kayak launch to benefit the environment and community. In addition to the kayak launch and trail improvements, the project also included designing safe access points for children to have hands-on experience in the stream, installing pedestrian connections to the park, and installing educational signage donated by a local non-profit.