



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **St. Charles Park District Announced as Finalist for the 2013 National Gold Medal Awards in Parks and Recreation**

*St. Charles Park District to compete for prestigious honor in the park and recreation industry*

**St. Charles, IL** June 3, 2013 – The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA), in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), is pleased to announce the St. Charles Park District as a finalist for the 2013 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management. This year's proud sponsor of the Gold Medal Awards program is Musco Lighting LLC.

In 36-square miles, St. Charles boasts a winning combination of the arts, theatre, dining, retail, affordable housing, nationally-ranked schools and diverse green spaces. Residents enjoy nearly 33 acres of park land per 1,000 persons. The Fox River, a focal point for boating, biking and festivals, is a major natural asset winding through 181 park acres including two State-designated nature preserves, a 9-hole golf course, boat launches, fishing piers and more.

In the category of park districts serving populations of 25,001-50,000 residents, the St. Charles Park District will compete against three other finalists: the parks and recreation departments of Doral, Texas; Westerville, Ohio; and Winter Park, Florida. This year marked the eighth time the St. Charles Park District achieved "final four" status. In 1998, St. Charles Park District earned the prestigious Gold Medal.

Agencies are judged on their ability to address the needs of those they serve through the collective energies of citizens, staff and elected officials. St. Charles Park District joins three other finalists in the class that will compete for grand honors this year.

Park Board President Karrsten Goettel added, "Being named the best in the nation is truly an honor for the St. Charles community. Receiving this prestigious award is a testament to the St. Charles Park District, in particular its staff, and its mission to enrich the quality of life for its residents through excellence in programs, parks, facilities and services."

A panel of five park and recreation professionals reviews and judges all application materials. Judges are chosen for their considerable experience and knowledge in parks and recreation on both the local and national levels.

This year's finalists will compete for Grand Plaque Award honors this summer, and the seven Grand Plaque recipients will be announced live during NRPA's Annual Congress & Exposition in Houston, Texas, Oct. 8-10 2013.

Founded in 1965, the Gold Medal Awards program honors communities in the U.S. that demonstrate excellence in parks and recreation through long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development and agency recognition. Applications are separated into seven classes, with five classes based on population, one class for armed forces recreation communities and the State Park System Class awarded every other year. This year, AAPRA and NRPA will award the prestigious and highly sought State Park System Class Gold Medal award.

For more information on the Gold Medal Awards, visit [www.nrpa.org/awards](http://www.nrpa.org/awards) or [www.aapra.org](http://www.aapra.org).

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**The St. Charles Park District** is a special purpose government unit, founded in 1911 dedicated to enriching the quality of life of Park District residents through excellence in programs, parks, facilities, and services.

**The American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration** is a non-profit organization founded 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 recreation 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. For more information, visit [www.aapra.org](http://www.aapra.org).

**The National Recreation and Park Association** is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of 30,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, recreation initiatives, and conservation of natural and cultural resources. For more information, visit [www.NRPA.org](http://www.NRPA.org). For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit [www.parksandrecreation.org](http://www.parksandrecreation.org).

**Musco Lighting, LLC** is a company that has specialized in lighting systems for sports and large areas for more than 30 years. Musco has pioneered dramatic improvements in energy efficiency and affordable ways to control wasted spill light and glare. Permanent and temporary lighting services range from neighborhood fields to NASCAR super speedways. For more information, visit [www.musco.com](http://www.musco.com).

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