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Contact:
Jennifer Mensik, Marketing Manager
815-467-7275
jmensik@channahonpark.org

CHANNAHON PARK DISTRICT RECEIVES ILLINOIS DISTINGUISHED ACCREDITED AGENCY AWARD

(Channahon, IL) - - The Channahon Park District has been recognized as an Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency by the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA).

The two statewide associations administer the Illinois Distinguished Accreditation program with the goal of improving the delivery of park and recreation services to Illinois residents. “Illinois has a reputation for the best park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies in the nation,” said Peter Murphy, IAPD President and CEO. “The Illinois Distinguished Accreditation program provides an opportunity for these agencies to undergo a voluntary, comprehensive evaluation process to demonstrate that they have met state guidelines to provide exceptional park and recreation services to their community. The end result is to improve the quality of life for Illinois residents.”

“This program gives recognition to park and recreation agencies that go above and beyond in dedicating themselves to offering quality programs and services designed to fulfill their community’s needs,” said Debbie Trueblood, IPRA Executive Director.

A park district or recreation agency interested in applying for Distinguished Accredited Agency recognition undergoes a detailed, lengthy process of application and evaluation. A Joint Distinguished Park and Recreation Accreditation Committee (JDPRAC) comprised of members from IAPD and IPRA coordinates the process. “Agencies submit a self-evaluation and a formal letter requesting admission into the process,” said Bob Schmidt, IAPD Co-Chair of the JDPRAC. “If the committee determines the agency is eligible to continue the process, we send them an evaluation date.”

According to Schmidt, on the day of the evaluation, the agency presents documented information and gives a tour of pertinent facilities and parks for the evaluation team’s review.

The team reviews general management procedures, finance and business operations, facilities and parks, personnel, recreation services, legal documentation and other materials including mission statements, goals, and safety manuals.

Agencies that have achieved Distinguished Accredited status were recognized during the IAPD/IPRA Virtual Annual Conference January 28-30, 2021.

“There are tremendous benefits for an agency that achieves Distinguished Accredited status,” said Mike Clark, IPRA Co-Chair of the JDPRAC. “The agency’s application and review process is an excellent self-evaluation and agencies that apply realize increased operational efficiency and effectiveness. Communities can have confidence that their park district or recreation agency employs qualified professionals and has met professional standards.”

“The accreditation process is a comprehensive means to conduct a self-evaluation of our entire operation”, said Channahon Park District President Chris Caldwell. “To achieve the highest level of recognition is something that our entire staff should be proud of. I must say however, it is no surprise to me. I have always felt that our Park District is top-notch.”

In compliance with the program, the Channahon Park District will be reevaluated in six years to verify that they have continued to demonstrate sound management practices in providing quality park and recreation services to the community.

IAPD is a non-profit service, research and education organization that serves park districts, forest preserves, conservation, and recreation agencies. The association advances these agencies, their citizen board members and professional staff in their ability to provide outstanding park and recreation opportunities, preserve natural resources and improve the quality of life for all people in Illinois.

Established in 1944, IPRA’s mission is to provide and promote exceptional standards of education, networking, and resources for all professionals in the Illinois park, recreation, and conservation communities.

The Channahon Park District is a National Gold Medal winning agency and an Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency that covers more than 360 square miles and serves over 16,000 people in and around the Village of Channahon. The Channahon Park District maintains numerous parks and facilities, and plans a variety of programs and activities for all ages throughout the year. The mission of the Channahon Park District is to bring people together.

For more information contact the Channahon Park District at 815-467-7275 or visit www.channahonpark.org.

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