



Thursday, November 02, 2006

## ARPA SALUTES EXCELLENCE IN THE FIELD OF RECREATION AND PARKS

**Edmonton, AB** – ARPA acknowledged eight award and scholarship recipients at an awards dinner hosted in conjunction with the 2006 ARPA Conference & Energize Workshop at the Jasper Park Lodge – October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2006. The award winners included community volunteers, professionals/practitioners and post-secondary students who made outstanding contributions to the recreation and parks sector.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ▪ AABRD Undergraduate Scholarship       | <b>Heather Craig</b> (Edmonton)                       |
| ▪ AABRD Graduate Scholarship            | <b>Jennifer Peco</b> (Edmonton)                       |
| ▪ Halladay Memorial Student Award       | <b>Kristen Staldeker</b> (Red Deer)                   |
| ▪ Parks Excellence Award                | <b>City of Edmonton</b>                               |
| ▪ Excellence In Youth Development Award | <b>Centre for Creative Self Expression</b> (Edmonton) |
| ▪ A.V. Pettigrew Award                  | <b>GO2</b> (Calgary)                                  |
| ▪ Merit Award                           | <b>Greg Scott</b> (Red Deer)                          |
| ▪ Wild Rose Award                       | <b>Gary Debney</b> (Calgary)                          |

“We are pleased to salute these individuals, organizations and communities that demonstrated their dedication and commitment to improving the quality of life of all Albertans,” states Shelley Shea, ARPA President. “Recreation and parks are vital to the development and sustainability of healthy individuals, communities and environments. This was an important opportunity to acknowledge and showcase these leaders – past, present and future – who make this all possible.”

ARPA (pronounced A.R.P.A.) is a provincial, not-for-profit, charitable organization made up of volunteers committed to building healthy citizens and communities in Alberta through recreation, sport, arts, culture and parks. Serving Albertans since 1952, ARPA members include community and public recreation agencies, educators, corporate, elected/appointed officials, lay and student members.

For more information on the award/scholarship winners and categories, please refer to the attached Backgrounder.

-More-

For more information contact:

Shelley Shea  
President

Barb Ursuliak  
Awards Committee Chair

Ph: (403) 519-5588  
E-Mail: [Shelley.Shea@arpaonline.ca](mailto:Shelley.Shea@arpaonline.ca)

Ph: (780)  
E-Mail: [Barb.Ursuliak@edmonton.ca](mailto:Barb.Ursuliak@edmonton.ca)

### **AABRD LEGACY AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS**

In 1972, the Alberta Advisory Board on Recreation for the Disabled (AABRD) was formed to act as a catalyst in the promotion of recreation services for people with disabilities through existing generic recreation delivery systems. Twelve years later, the AABRD felt that its primary objective had been fulfilled and appointed ARPA to disseminate AABRD services, awards, and scholarships.

Support for the AABRD Awards is provided through a Legacy Fund, managed by the Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation.

#### **UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP**

AABRD Legacy Undergraduate Scholarship assists Albertans in advancing their Undergraduate-Level education in the area of recreation for people with disabilities (e.g., recreation administration, adapted physical education, rehabilitation medicine or other related programs).

#### **Heather Craig**

Heather Craig has clearly demonstrated her expertise in the field of recreation for people with disabilities since beginning her undergraduate education. Her varied work with both children and adults has included facilitating events such as cooking classes, activity nights, crafts, fitness lessons and social outings. Not only has she furthered her education through work experience, but she is dedicated to volunteering in her field, as well.

From October 2005 to September 2006, Heather was the student liaison for the Alberta Therapeutic Recreation Association. She attended regular meetings and helped maintain communication between the association, other students, and post-secondary institutions. She volunteered with the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital in Edmonton and was part of their 10 week Humor for Healing Program.

Heather should also be commended for her efforts in achieving academic excellence. She has taken a variety of courses to expand her knowledge in the area of recreation for special populations and maintained an excellent academic standing throughout. This past summer, Heather traveled to Thailand as part of the University of Alberta's "Play Around the World" practicum to complete her degree requirements and apply her learning to a foreign culture.

It is most appropriate that Heather Craig be recognized as this year's AABRD undergraduate award recipient for her achievements in the field of recreation for people with disabilities.

#### **GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP**

AABRD Legacy Graduate Scholarship assists Albertans in advancing their Graduate-Level education in the area of recreation for people with disabilities (e.g., recreation administration, adapted physical education, rehabilitation medicine or other related programs).

#### **Jennifer Peco**

Jennifer Peco recently completed a master's degree in adapted physical activity from the University of Alberta. The focus of her thesis - and her passion in life - is the opportunity for people with disabilities to be included in physical activities. During her time as a student, and to date, Jennifer has been involved in many extracurricular projects.

As program coordinator of the CPASP (Children's Physical Activity and Study Program) since 2004, Jennifer is responsible for the planning, marketing and implementation of inclusive recreation programs for children with and without disabilities. Because of her involvement in this program, she has been invited to make guest presentations in University of Alberta classes, including the Graduate Student

## Backgrounder

---

Speaker Series. She has also presented to occupational therapists and physiotherapists at the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital.

Jennifer played a key role in a pilot project for the Alberta Fitness Leaders Certification Association (AFLCA). In a joint effort with other professionals in her field, they developed the “Ever Active Kids” resource manual for adults teaching physical activity and fitness to children.

Above and beyond these accomplishments, Jennifer is also a member at large of the Graduate Student Society, the student representative on the Faculty Council for the Physical Education and Recreation Faculty, and a Board member for the Canadian Association for Disabled Skiers (CADS).

It is with pleasure that we acknowledge Jennifer as this year’s AABRD Graduate Award recipient for her incredible achievements and long-lasting contributions for people with disabilities.

## ARPA AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

### **HALLADAY MEMORIAL STUDENT AWARD**

To recognize a student enrolled in any undergraduate program related to recreation and parks, who has contributed to recreation and/or parks services through volunteer activities, work experience, studies and involvement in ARPA. This award is given in memory of Jacqueline Diane Halladay, 1959-1981, to honour “one who gave so much”. Jacqui served on ARPA’s Board of Directors from 1979-1980 and was instrumental in initiating the Student Standing Committee. Jacqui’s enthusiasm and inquisitiveness during Board meetings provided a fresh dimension which continually challenged the ‘veterans’.

### **Kristen Staldeker**

Kristen’s strong belief in the benefit and value of recreation and parks is echoed in her work, play and civic duties.

As a volunteer member of ARPA’s Board and Awards and Scholarship Committee, Kristen plays a vital part in bringing the student point of view to the committee. While attending Red Deer College, Kristen contributed greatly to Red Deer College Recreation and Leisure Society through her participation in organizing numerous events to promote the student recreation society. The success of the Society’s work is indicated by their receipt of Honorary Mention by the Students Association at Red Deer College.

When the Recreation Program at Red Deer College was being discontinued, a group of alumni undertook the organization of “Recky Revelry” in 2005. Kristen joined the Recky Revelry Planning Committee and also chaired the Wine and Cheese Social. As well, Kristen volunteered for years to help youth in swimming lessons and recreation skate programs.

Her work career is already extensive for a university student still completing her degree in Alberta Recreation Sport and Tourism at the University of Alberta. As a swimming instructor, Kristen has taught Red Cross Swimming Lessons, Junior Lifeguard Club, Women’s Water Polo, Aqua-aerobics and Senior Resuscitation.

This past summer, Kristen was able to pull all her experience together in her position as a counselor at Camp L.G. Barnes. Though she was hired as a life guard and camp counselor, Kristen soon discovered that, in order to give disabled clients the best possible camp experience, “other duties as required” included cooking meals, cleaning, animal husbandry, operation of turf equipment and entertaining clients. And with her low-key, quiet-mannered leadership style, she exceeded expectations.

Despite a full slate of personal interests that include wakeboarding, snowboarding, hip hop, jazz, ballet and lyrical styles of dance, Kristen has still found time to also undertake Level 2 American Sign Language Certification.

## Backgrounder

---

Considering her accomplishments, commitment, academic skill and personal characteristics, ARPA is pleased that this year's recipient is Kristen Staldeker.

### **EXCELLENCE IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

This annual award recognizes excellence in projects that focus on youth recognition using a youth development model. The award is being implemented as a result of the successful 2003 National Youth Development through Recreation Services Symposium held in Calgary. The award includes a cash recognition of \$2,000 to support future development of the winning project.

### **Centre for Creative Self Expression initiative**

"Beat of Boyle Street" is a recreation-based school program that creates positive messages for youth using hip-hop, rap and other artistic mediums. From this foundation, five young people initiated partnerships with the University of Alberta, the City of Edmonton, the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Affairs Committee, the Boyle Street Education Centre, Crystal Kids and Big Brothers, Big Sisters to develop an arts-based recreation centre called the "Centre for Creative Self-Expression."

The Centre was created through community development processes with involvement from the five youth volunteers. The Centre's objectives are to develop strong mentoring competencies among the youth, to provide access to relevant arts and leisure experiences, to teach relevant skills to work with agencies and officials in the community, and to provide support to other youth who are in need or trouble.

These dedicated young people and a faculty member from the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation at the University of Alberta make up the core group. To date, the group has had several community meetings, met one-on-one with community partners, and applied for grants. They have also facilitated informal hip-hop and rap sessions in public squares, written anti-racism and anti-bullying lyrics for workshops and performed at events to raise funds for young people in need.

The Centre for Creative Self-Expression is, without a doubt, making an impact on the lives of many young people by using art and recreation to connect with youth in need. By involving other young people in the planning and creative processes, the "Beat of Boyle Street" will be heard for years to come. It is with great pleasure that we offer them the Excellence in Youth Development Award.

### **PARKS EXCELLENCE AWARD**

This award was initiated by ARPA's Parks and Open Space Network to recognize achievements or innovative ideas for parks and open space operations and increase the profile of the parks and open space professionals in Alberta.

### **City of Edmonton Urban Parks Management Plan**

In 2004, the City of Edmonton maintained over 4,500 ha of parkland and open space, or about 6.5 hectares for every person in the city. This does not include 12,000 hectares of parkland located in the river valley. In a city that is experiencing great growth, the challenge of planning for the future of Edmonton's parkland is immense.

The challenge facing Parkland Services was to prepare a plan that would effectively acquire, develop and manage Edmonton parkland to 2016 and beyond. At the same time the team had to be respectful of past successes, existing legacies and evolving needs of the community.

The Project Team consists of: Lyall Brenneis, Manager of Parkland Services; Rob Marchak, Director of Parkland Services; Leslie McWeeny, Researcher/ Facilitator; and Bob Priebe Project Leader with Parkland Services. The team engaged citizens of Edmonton in countless meetings and hosted a series of workshops, meetings and presentations with internal city department staff, specifically targeted

## Backgrounder

---

groups, lobby organizations, multicultural groups, environmental groups, sports groups and 600 individuals who were interviewed through a telephone survey.

As the team is quoted in the Urban Parks Management Plan 2006-2016 Executive Summary (page 3):

*“City parks do not exist in a vacuum. Every city is a complex and intricate interplay between the private space of homes and offices, the semi-public spaces of shops and the fully public space of parks, plazas, street, preserves and natural areas. The Trust for Public Land envisions park systems which enrich cities and cities which nourish their parks.” Trust for Public Land*

The journey of Citizen Engagement led to City of Edmonton Council's endorsement of the Urban Parks Management Plan in June 2006.

UPMP is unique in that it builds on the strength of existing policy and approaches. UPMP has enhanced commitment to all segments of the population regardless of age, income, culture or level of ability. These commitments include providing safe park environments, providing year-round active and passive opportunities, a focus on creating and connecting gathering places in parks and open spaces, preserving natural heritage, shared stewardship, and effectively managing human and financial resources.

The new parks system will continue to build social capital, preserve natural capital, promote active living and contribute to the economic health of the city, making the City of Edmonton's "Urban Park Management Plan" a worthy recipient of the ARPA's Parks Excellence Award.

### **A. V. PETTIGREW AWARD**

To recognize communities in Alberta that have contributed the most to improving the quality of life of their citizens through recreation and parks – in areas of programs, services, facilities, parks and open spaces, or a combination thereof.

In honour of Albert (Bert) Victor Pettigrew. Known to many in Alberta and Western Canada as "Mr. Recreation" or the "Dean of Recreation", Bert retired in October 1972 from the Edmonton Parks and Recreation Department after 26 years of devoted service to Edmonton citizens. He was a founding and charter member of the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association. In honour of his years of service to people of Alberta and his profession, the ARPA inaugurated the A.V. Pettigrew Award in 1972.

### **GO2**

The GO2 initiative was launched in April 2006 in Calgary as a strategy to increase daily physical activity and enhance the overall quality of life of Calgarians. This community-based project was developed to address decreased physical activity levels in Calgary. GO2 will work to enhance opportunities for participation and to inspire the people of Calgary to get active. GO2 will develop community partnerships to maintain this energetic program.

Studies have shown that certain populations in Calgary and some geographical areas of the city tend to have higher rates of inactivity and are subsequently at a greater risk. Some of these at-risk groups include children, adults in the workplace and preschoolers. By partnering with summer programs, GO2 gets the message of physical activity out to children. Through another initiative tied to GO2 called "Steps to a Healthier You," City of Calgary employees are encouraged to be more active to, from and at work. Before GO2, recommendations for preschool children were unclear but now day care settings and preschool facilities will receive information and resources about keeping preschoolers active.

The City of Calgary's goal is to build a sustainable community of healthy citizens through this initiative and enhance residents' quality of life through the programs GO2 is bringing to Calgary. Because of this, the City of Calgary's GO2 initiative is this year's recipient of the A.V. Pettigrew Award.

# Backgrounder

---

## **MERIT AWARD**

This prestigious ARPA Merit Award honours individuals or groups who have contributed significantly to ARPA through recreation or parks development in Alberta. Nominees may be practitioners, volunteer leaders or board members in any recreation or park related agency.

### **Greg Scott**

Greg Scott is a strong, effective visionary whose beliefs are grounded in the benefits of recreation, parks and culture and reflected in his volunteer and career work.

Greg began his career in 1981 as a programmer for The City of Red Deer. His leadership was acknowledged by his peers when he became a Community Development and Planning Coordinator, and he currently holds the position of Manager of Recreation Parks and Culture for The City of Red Deer.

As an active member of ARPA, Greg has supported ARPA in numerous ways; he was part of the organization committee for the four ARPA conferences hosted in Red Deer and has served as an ARPA Board member for 10 years, including one year as President. Greg has acted as Board Liaison to the Sport Network and the Education and Professional Development Committee and continues to support ARPA by hosting meetings in City facilities.

Greg also led the formulation and development of the ARPA Vision 2015 Initiative. As the leader of a major change initiative for Red Deer's Recreation, Parks and Culture department, Gregg is putting the Vision 2015 initiative into action and using it as a foundation with which to prepare his own department for the future.

Greg Scott is a thoughtful, supportive and engaged team member. He is skilled in maximizing the expertise available from the board and membership; as a result, under Greg's leadership there is always cohesive action and credibility..

Three nomination letters state, "Greg lives The City of Red Deer's Cornerstone Values of Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence in all he pursues." This is indicative of the level of respect and admiration Greg has earned from colleagues and fellow ARPA members, making Greg the ideal recipient of the ARPA AWARD of MERIT.

## **WILDROSE AWARD**

ARPA's prestigious Wild Rose Award recognizes individuals or community service organizations and their dedication to recreation and parks, be it professional, lay or philosophic. It may be awarded to recognize long service, professional or significant personal involvement in support of recreation or parks endeavours on a provincial level.

### **Gary Debney**

Gary Debney blends his passion for creating play opportunities for children regardless of where they live with titles such as consultant, strategic planner, park designer, instructor, entrepreneur and play specialist.

Gary began his career as Regional Manager of Professional Environmental Recreation Consultants LTD before creating his own company in 1980 to provide human services consulting to the community services industry. Since 1988, Gary has worked as a Recreation Management instructor with the Departments of Recreation Studies and Business Administration at Mount Royal College, where he established an applied degree for Small Business Entrepreneurship Sport and Recreation.

Gary's professional experience is rooted in his academic achievements. After receiving a Leisure Education Diploma from Mount Royal College he continued his academic career with a Masters degree

## Backgrounder

---

in Business Administration from City University in Bellevue Washington. Gary also has extensive volunteer experience at the local, national and international levels.

In the mid '80s, as President and Treasurer of ARPA, Gary was instrumental in creating fiscal sustainability in our organization; many feel that this was a crucial turning point for ARPA. Gary then turned to CPRA where he served two terms as Treasurer and one as President, and championed the Canadian Playground Safety Institute Programs. Gary has once again returned to the CPRA Board of Directors, again serving as Treasurer. He has spent the last four years on the Recreation for Life Foundation as a key Board member where he again works to provide Alberta communities with enhanced recreation and parks development.

Gary's passion to blend work and play is perhaps best expressed through his current work with the Emmanuel Foundation for Recreation and Education and "Let them Be Kids".

In 2000, Gary formed the Emmanuel Foundation for Recreation and Education Development to recycle Alberta playgrounds for use in developing countries. Gary then realized that children in our own Canadian communities do not necessarily have opportunities for play, themselves. This led to the creation of an additional program in 2005 called "Let Them Be Kids".