



## 2026 State Awards Information Sheet

### Recognizing excellence in the field of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs in Georgia State Awards

GRPA Executive Director:  
Steve Card, CPRP  
[scard@grpa.org](mailto:scard@grpa.org)  
Phone: 770-760-1403

GRPA President:  
Dadrian Cosby  
[dcosby@bullochrec.com](mailto:dcosby@bullochrec.com)  
Phone: 912-489-9052

Awards Committee Chair:  
Sara Holmes  
[sholmes@tuckerga.gov](mailto:sholmes@tuckerga.gov)  
Phone: 470-5442595

GRPA President Elect:  
Morgan Rodgers  
[mrodgers@alpharetta.ga.us](mailto:mrodgers@alpharetta.ga.us)  
678-297-6103

Georgia Recreation and Park Association is proud to recognize and honor extraordinary people, programs, and agencies who serve throughout the great state of Georgia. Nominations for the award are solicited annually and scored by a panel of judges representing each of GRPA's districts and networks.

### 2026 Awards Timeline

- **Nomination Submission Timeline:** August 1 through September 1, 2026. Awards are submitted via the GRPA website: [www.grpa.org](http://www.grpa.org)
- **Nomination deadline:** September 1, 2026, at 5 p.m. (Please check for an email notification that the award nomination was received.)
- **Awards judging:** The committee shall judge all awards during the period of September 8 – 18, 2026.
- **Awards Due to Card:** September 25, 2026.
- **Notification of Winners:** The Awards Chair shall notify awards recipients no later than October 5, 2026.
- **Award Winner Photos Due and Table RSVP's:** October 10, 2026
- **Annual Conference:** November 2 – 5, 2026



## Requirements and Recommendations

- Before the awards submittal, the person making the nomination is to make sure the Supervisor/Department Director is aware before it is submitted. Additionally, if the nominee is a Department Director, their City/County Manager must be aware of the nomination before it is submitted.
- When submitting awards, first determine the appropriate network, award category, and population category before starting the submission. The Awards Committee recommends writing your nomination first within a Word document so that you can properly review and proofread it and confirm the word count before copying it into your online submission. Each award features eligibility criteria. The Awards Committee reserves the right to determine if nominations meet eligibility requirements.

## Network and Marketing Award Requirements and Reminders

- Agencies may submit a limit of one (1) nomination per category.
- Awards nominations must comprise achievements made during the period of
- **August 1, 2025- July 31, 2026.**
- The nominee must not have previously received the award for the nomination.
- Nominees must be a GRPA member in good standing and network specific to the award (Volunteers and the Distinguished Administrative Support Staff Awards are exceptions).
- Photos submitted must be at least 2 MB; High pixel (1920x1080); landscape preferred; no collage photos.
- It is recommended that nominees be prepared with 8-10 high-quality photos on file in the event they are requested for presentation.

## Non-Network Award Requirements and Reminders

- Nominee has not received the award previously.
- Agency of the Year winners are ineligible to win two consecutive years. Nominee/Agency must be a GRPA member in good standing.
- Photos submitted must be at least 2 MB; High pixel (1920x1080); landscape preferred; no collage photos.



## Tips

- Review the award criteria first! This will ensure you select the appropriate nomination to be submitted.
- Plan ahead. Have a timeline and plan to submit ahead of the award deadline.
- Stay on topic and organize your thoughts.
- Share the passion and the “why” you are nominating the nominee.
- Don’t overthink the award submittal.
- Be clear and answer every question.
- Make sure you follow the word limit or character limit. Do not write a novel.
- Review. Review. And review again prior to submittal online.



## 2026 GRPA State Awards Presentation Schedule

### **Business Meeting/Opening General Session of the GRPA Annual Conference**

#### Network Awards

- Administrative/Leadership Network
  - Distinguished Administrative Support Staff
  - Distinguished Professional Award
  
- Athletics/Aquatics Network
  - Distinguished Professional Award
  - Outstanding Program Award
  - Outstanding Special Event Award
  
- Programmers Network
  - Distinguished Professional Award
  - Outstanding Program Award
  - Outstanding Special Event Award
  
- Parks Maintenance/Operations Network
  - Distinguished Professional Award
  - Capital Project Award (>\$500,000)
  - Capital Project Award (<\$500,000)
  - Innovation in Parks Maintenance/Operations

#### Outstanding Marketing Campaign Awards

\*Awarded by agency population categories.

#### Service Awards

\*Presented in five (5) year increments to members in good standing with twenty (20) or more years of service.

### **Awards Banquet during the GRPA Annual Conference**

- Agency of the Year - Awarded by agency population categories.
- Promising Professional Award
- Mike Daniel Award
- Distinguished Professional of the Year
- Hall of Fame Award