

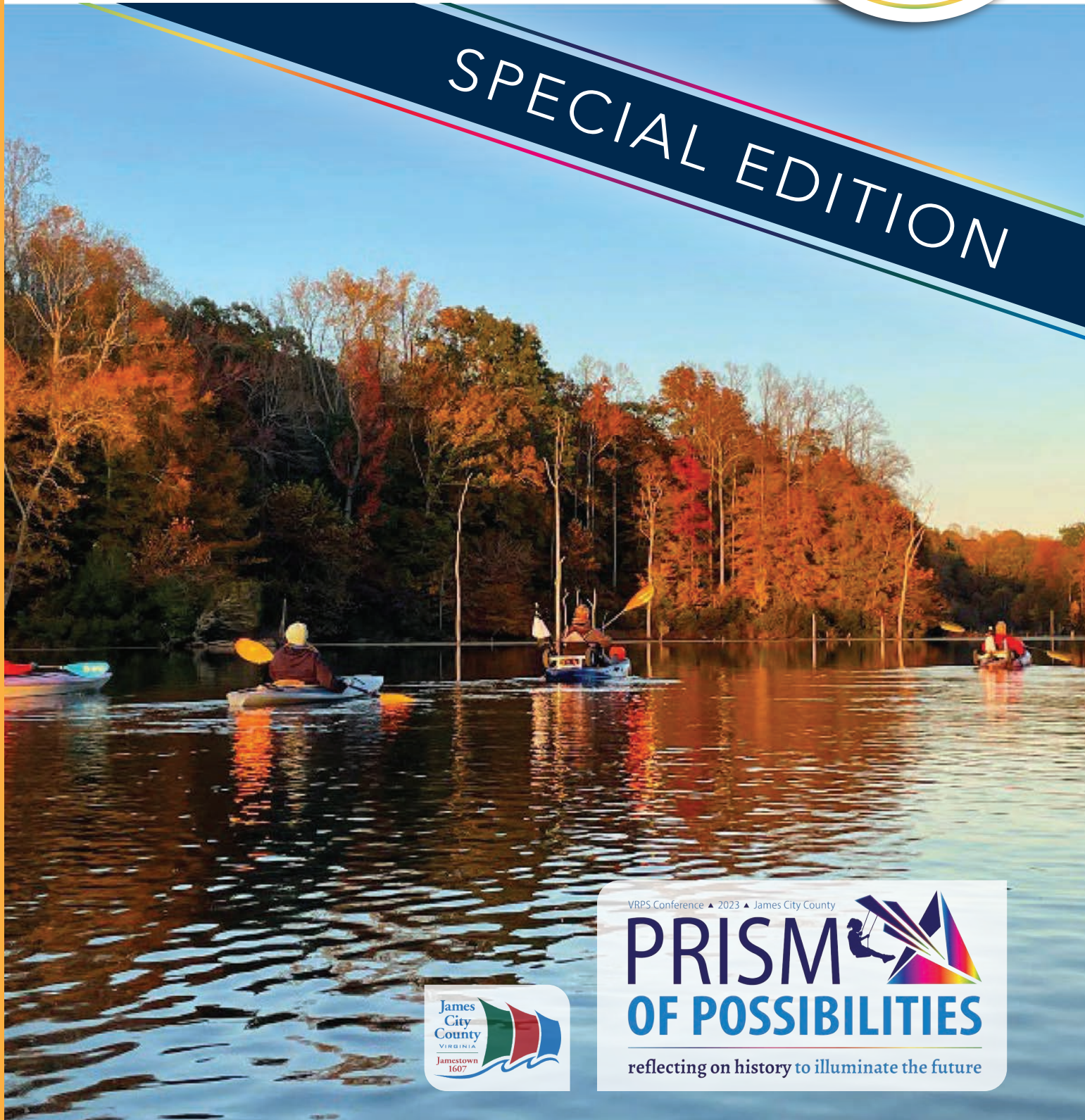


# Virginia Parks & Recreation

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF  
THE VIRGINIA RECREATION & PARK SOCIETY ■ SPECIAL EDITION 2023




SPECIAL EDITION



VRPS Conference ▲ 2023 ▲ James City County

## PRISM OF POSSIBILITIES



reflecting on history to illuminate the future

# Award-Winning Stories *of Excellence*



Bailey Kasten, CAE, ICE-CPP  
*Executive Director*

I hope you will have the opportunity in these pages to review this year's award winners and the variety of ways that VRPS members and their institutions have made rich contributions to their communities and to our industry last year. As a new leader in this organization, I am absolutely blown away by all the incredible work of VRPS members in communities big and small across Virginia.

If you were able to celebrate together with us in James City County at our annual awards banquet, then you were able to hear even more about engaging special events, meaningful projects and programming, creative marketing, beautiful facility improvements, and some Snapshot Moments that help to

tell the story of the excellence happening all over the Commonwealth in our parks, recreation centers, aquatic facilities, beaches, festivals, fields, stadiums, and so much more.

Telling these stories, telling YOUR stories is important. Raising up the hard work and dedication of your teams is a powerful tool as we share and advocate for the irreplaceable value of what you bring to our communities. By documenting and submitting applications for their great work, these award winners lift up parks and recreation into some well-deserved spotlight. We can all be proud of their great work and achievements.

Not to be overlooked, recognition plays another key role in re-energizing and

refilling our cups, staving off burnout, and remembering to take important moments to enjoy our work and remind ourselves why we show up and do what we do. Recognition from our peers reignites our passion- the thing that changes our job into a calling. What could be better than that? So please join me again in congratulating our impressive award winners, and I hope to see your story and excellence in these pages next year!

Warmly,  
Bailey Kasten, CAE, ICE-CPP  
Executive Director, VRPS

## 2022 VRPS AWARDS AND CITATIONS



**DISTINGUISHED  
PRIVATE SECTOR SERVICE  
AWARD**

**TRIANGLE  
SKATEBOARD ALLIANCE**  
James City County Parks & Recreation



**DISTINGUISHED  
PRIVATE SECTOR SERVICE  
AWARD**

**FREDERICKSBURG  
NATIONALS**  
Fredericksburg Parks, Recreation  
& Events





# 2022 VRPS AWARDS AND CITATIONS



## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

**ROBERTA KORZEN**

Fairfax County Park Authority



## DISTINGUISHED VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD

**ANNE LITTLE**

Fredericksburg Parks, Recreation & Events



## DISTINGUISHED VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD

**STANLEY BARNETT**

Gloucester County Parks, Recreation & Tourism



## OUTSTANDING NEW PROFESSIONAL AWARD

**SAMANTHA MATSON**

Roanoke Parks and Recreation



## OUTSTANDING NEW PROFESSIONAL AWARD

**MONICA KLOCK**

Fairfax County Park Authority



## BEST HEALTH AND WELLNESS INITIATIVE

**SUPERBOWL CHALLENGE**

Colonial Heights Recreation and Parks



*Population Under 25,000*



## BEST HEALTH AND WELLNESS INITIATIVE

**FAMILY FITNESS ZUMBA SERIES**

James City County Parks & Recreation



*Population 50,001-100,000*

## BEST HEALTH AND WELLNESS INITIATIVE

**MINI MILER**

Roanoke Parks and Recreation



*Population 50,001-100,000*

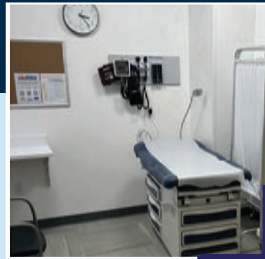
# 2022 VRPS AWARDS AND CITATIONS



**BEST HEALTH AND WELLNESS INITIATIVE**

**SULLY COMMUNITY CENTER HEALTH & WELLNESS PARTNERSHIP**

Fairfax County Neighborhood & Community Services



Population Above 200,000

**BEST HEALTH AND WELLNESS INITIATIVE**

**SULLY COMMUNITY CENTER HEALTH & WELLNESS PARTNERSHIP**

Fairfax County Park Authority



Population Above 200,000

**BEST NEW ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

**“RENEW” BOTTLE CAP MURAL**

City of Fairfax Parks & Recreation



Population Under 25,000

**BEST NEW ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

**GLOUCESTER COUNTY BEE CITY INITIATIVE**

Gloucester County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism



Population 25,001-50,000

**BEST NEW ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

**SOLAR INSTALLATION AT IVY CREEK PARK**

Lynchburg Parks & Recreation



Population 50,001-100,000

**BEST NEW FACILITY AWARD (BRICKS & MORTAR)**

**JOINT OPERATIONS CENTER**

Suffolk Parks & Recreation



Population 50,001-100,000

**BEST NEW FACILITY AWARD (BRICKS & MORTAR)**

**LORTON COMMUNITY CENTER**

Fairfax County Neighborhood & Community Services

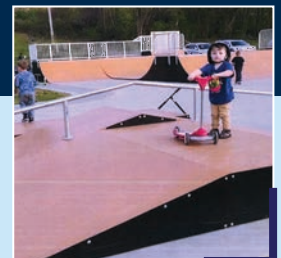


Population Above 200,000

**BEST NEW FACILITY (PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, BLUEWAYS, GREENWAYS OR TRAILS)**

**RADFORD SKATE PARK**

Radford Parks & Recreation Department



Population Under 25,000



# 2022 VRPS AWARDS AND CITATIONS



**BEST NEW FACILITY**  
(PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, BLUEWAYS,  
GREENWAYS OR TRAILS)

## RIVERFRONT PARK

Fredericksburg Parks,  
Recreation & Events



Population 25,000-50,000

**BEST NEW FACILITY**  
(PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, BLUEWAYS,  
GREENWAYS OR TRAILS)

## PUMP TRACK AT PEAKS VIEW PARK

Lynchburg Parks & Recreation



Population 50,001-100,000

**BEST NEW FACILITY**  
(PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, BLUEWAYS,  
GREENWAYS OR TRAILS)

## HAL AND BERNI HANSON REGIONAL PARK

Loudoun County Parks, Recreation  
and Community Services



Population Above 200,000

**BEST  
NEW PROGRAM**

## MOBILE RECREATION PROGRAM-REC2U

Fredericksburg Parks, Recreation &  
Events



Population 25,001-50,000

**BEST  
NEW PROGRAM**

## THE T-REX TRAIL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Roanoke County Parks,  
Recreation & Tourism



Population 50,001-100,000

**BEST  
NEW PROGRAM**

## CREATIVE NEIGHBORHOOD GRANT PROGRAM

Alexandria Recreation, Parks &  
Cultural Activities



Population 100,001-200,000

**BEST  
NEW PROGRAM**

## PARK EXPLORERS

Fairfax County Park Authority



Population Above 200,000

**BEST NEW  
RENOVATION/ADDITION**  
(BRICKS & MORTAR)

## HIDDEN OAKS NATURE CENTER

Fairfax County Park Authority



Population Above 200,000

# 2022 VRPS AWARDS AND CITATIONS



**BEST NEW RENOVATION/ADDITION**  
(PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, BLUEWAYS, GREENWAYS OR TRAILS)

## EVA WALKER COMMEMORATIVE GARDEN

Town of Warrenton Parks & Recreation



Population Under 25,000

**BEST NEW RENOVATION/ADDITION**  
(PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, BLUEWAYS, GREENWAYS OR TRAILS)

## BOOSTER PARK PLAYGROUND

Orange County Parks & Recreation



Population 25,001-50,000

**BEST NEW RENOVATION/ADDITION**  
(PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, BLUEWAYS, GREENWAYS OR TRAILS)

## BIGGERS PARK

Lynchburg Parks & Recreation

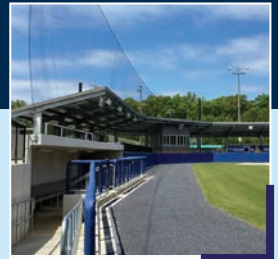


Population 50,001-100,000

**BEST NEW RENOVATION/ADDITION**  
(PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS, BLUEWAYS, GREENWAYS OR TRAILS)

## DOREY PARK BASEBALL STADIUM

Henrico County Recreation & Parks



Population Above 200,000

**BEST NEW SPECIAL EVENT**

## CHARLES CITY COUNTY FAIR

Charles City County Parks and Recreation



Population Under 25,000

**BEST NEW SPECIAL EVENT**

## SPOOKY FUN

Winchester Parks & Recreation



Population 25,001-50,000

**BEST NEW SPECIAL EVENT**

## DISABILITY AWARENESS TRICK OR TREAT

James City County Parks & Recreation



Population 50,001-100,000

**BEST NEW SPECIAL EVENT**

## SPOOKY PAWS

Hanover County Parks & Recreation



Population 100,001-200,000



# 2022 VRPS AWARDS AND CITATIONS



**BEST NEW SPECIAL EVENT**

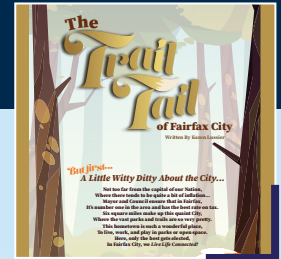
**EggSTREME EGG DROP**  
Norfolk Parks and Recreation



Population Above 200,000

**MOST CREATIVE MARKETING PIECE**

**THE TRAIL TAIL OF FAIRFAX CITY**  
City of Fairfax Parks & Recreation



Population Under 25,000

**MOST CREATIVE MARKETING PIECE**

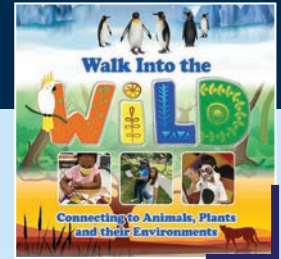
**GLOUCESTER DAFFODIL FESTIVAL WEBSITE**  
Gloucester County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism



Population 25,001-50,000

**MOST CREATIVE MARKETING PIECE**

**SACC 2022-2023 CURRICULUM GUIDE**  
Fairfax County Neighborhood & Community Services



Population Above 200,000

**MOST CREATIVE MARKETING STRATEGY**

**KAME COMIC BOOK**  
Goochland County Parks & Recreation



Population 25,001-50,000

**MOST CREATIVE MARKETING STRATEGY**

**FOR THE LOVE OF PARKS**  
Roanoke Parks and Recreation



Population 50,001-100,000

**MOST CREATIVE MARKETING STRATEGY**

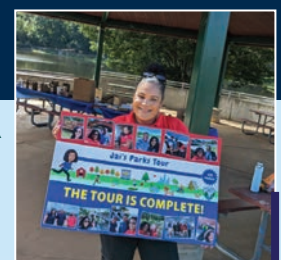
**CONNECTIONS & REFLECTIONS**  
James City County Parks & Recreation



Population 50,001-100,000

**MOST CREATIVE MARKETING STRATEGY**

**FCPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JAI COLE'S PARKS TOUR**  
Fairfax County Park Authority



Population Above 200,000

# 2022 VRPS AWARDS AND CITATIONS



## SNAPSHOT MOMENT

### FALLING IN LOVE WITH PARKS

Gloucester County Parks, Recreation & Tourism



Population 25,001-50,000

## SNAPSHOT MOMENT

### ELF IN THE SNOW

James City County Parks & Recreation



Population 50,001-100,000

## SNAPSHOT MOMENT

### “STAY POSITIVE”

Hanover County Parks & Recreation



Population 100,001-200,000

## SNAPSHOT MOMENT

### WATER MINE FAMILY SWIMMIN’ HOLE

Fairfax County Park Authority



Population Above 200,000

## BEST NEW DEI (DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION) INITIATIVE

### TUNNEL ACCESSIBILITY DAY

Nelson County Parks & Recreation



Population Under 25,000

## BEST NEW DEI (DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION) INITIATIVE

### LIBERTY AMENDMENTS MONTH NATURALIZATION CEREMONY

Town of Vienna Department of Parks & Recreation



Population Under 25,000

## BEST NEW DEI (DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION) INITIATIVE

### DOROTHY HART COMMUNITY CENTER GRADUATION

Fredericksburg Parks, Recreation & Events



Population 25,001-50,000

## BEST NEW DEI (DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION) INITIATIVE

### COMMUNICATION STATIONS

James City County Parks & Recreation



Population 50,001-100,000



# 2022 VRPS AWARDS AND CITATIONS



**BEST NEW DEI  
(DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION)  
INITIATIVE**

## **CYCLING WITHOUT AGE**

Lynchburg Parks & Recreation



*Population 50,001-100,000*

**BEST NEW DEI  
(DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION)  
INITIATIVE**

## **LEADERS AND LEGACY: WOMEN OF HANOVER COUNTY EXHIBITION**

Hanover County Parks & Recreation



*Population 100,001-200,000*

**BEST NEW DEI  
(DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION)  
INITIATIVE**

## **DEI DISCUSSION GROUP**

Henrico County Recreation & Parks



*Population Above 200,000*

**BEST NEW DEI  
(DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION)  
INITIATIVE**

## **YOUTH UNITY DAY**

Chesterfield County Parks  
& Recreation



*Population Above 200,000*

# NEXT STOP: LEADERSHIP

BY JUSTIN L. BULLOCK, M.A., CPRP  
2023 VRPS ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
SEPTEMBER 11, 2023



This organization has been so good to me through the years, VRPS allowed me to expand my knowledge and develop my leadership to where I am today. Recent focus groups reveal that members want to continue uniting, promoting, and improving the industry for future professionals. and this will serve as a major goal for me throughout my presidency.

The workforce is evolving, and we must continue broadening our search to land future professionals in the parks and leisure industry. VRPS is an integral source in this process. Our organization can develop professionals and create opportunities to capture and pass on institutional knowledge for our future. VRPS can change perceptions of parks and leisure services to show that we are a career path where you can do what

you love and maintain or elevate your quality of life.

I would like to take a few moments to speak to any young professional who has a desire for continuous improvement of their leadership within VRPS and the community you serve. I hope that this

may empower someone to take the next step and play a role as we advance our parks and recreation story. I hope that this may support and encourage someone to possibly fill the president's role...the position I proudly accept tonight. In my leadership journey, I've found three key concepts to remember as you work toward greatness.

## EVERY VETERAN HAS A FIRST DAY

No matter if you are an expert wizard or seasoned veteran each of us have that very first day on the job. There is always a learning curve to be overcome; however, by seeking the opportunities and resources to build and develop oneself (like the many offerings through VRPS), you will expand your knowledge and become a better leader. I've learned that your start does not determine your finish- but your attitude can affect your elevation.

As a youth sports administrator, I am often reminded of a phrase that I used to encourage volunteerism needs. "This is where players learn to play, coaches learn to coach, and officials learn to officiate. I've had many opportunities to work with first time athletic coaches. Some volunteers approached the chance and made a minimal impact with the coaching opportunity they had. While others read provided developmental content, attended hosted trainings, and asked questions. These often became your committed individuals-and developed into amazing leaders of young people through sport.

Every veteran has a first because day because no one enters with a know-how of all the answers at the beginning. However, these limitations can be overcome by simply arriving every day with the GRIT and tenacity of a champion. Having a good attitude,

doing your own valuable research, listening carefully, and asking questions will help you succeed as you venture in all your leadership opportunities.

## LEADERSHIP IS A CONTACT SPORT

Now when I say this, I am not associating leadership to support physical contact, injuries, or competitive environments. Although I have had many bloods, sweat and tear induced moments in the process of my working journey I'm referring to the ability to effectively communicate for the success of the goal.

One of the most important things that I've found to be required from a leader is communication. A leader can inspire others to want to accomplish their goal despite adversities that might occur. Successful leaders have a vision that describes where the organization is striving to obtain in the future.

In 2024, I want to make it a priority to begin championing the newly created vision of VRPS: to be an industry leader and trusted resource through connecting and advancing all involved in parks and recreation. Through our identified core values of advocacy, equity, leadership, lifelong learning, networking, and stewardship, we will advance our Society and our recreation professionals. I encourage you to consider how your skills can support the cause and get involved.

## PERSEVERANCE IS KEY

We all face challenges in life. Some are tougher than others, but no matter what your challenges are, perseverance is essential to overcoming them and improving your life and the lives of those around you. Major General Robert Dees said a resilient leader is effective when they possess the following traits: selflessness, integrity, character, courage, and wisdom. A resilient leader will overcome obstacles,

learn from mistakes, and appreciate our successes more. Perseverance will help you to achieve greatness!

For the past three years, it's been an honor to serve on the VRPS board. I have learned so much from the professionals I have been able to work with. Through the various matters the board has faced, we have remained resilient and worked to unite all engaged in parks, recreation, and leisure services in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## CONCLUSION

As we begin to re-brand VRPS for our future, now is the time for each of us to develop our key leadership essentials and utilize them to support VRPS. While I ponder about not only what will we teach them-I begin to ask myself the question where do we find them? In 2024, I want to continue engaging with our local colleges/community colleges and technical centers to speak to the career path of parks and recreation.

Using various tools and platforms we will interact with our professionals to engage and learn from one another. Our newly appointed Executive Director brings a wealth of knowledge and insight to our organization. I look forward to supporting her and seeing where VRPS can go under her leadership.

To the membership of VRPS, I vow to take this opportunity and to give you my best through the process. With every step I vow to be transparent and visible to the membership. I am here and happy to serve. However, I believe that each of us has a role to play. Your skills are needed somewhere within VRPS. I ask that each of you consider, "How can my leadership support VRPS?" With that, I look forward to getting to many more of you better and the chance to work together to support our great society and profession. Thank you.



# 2023 VRPS *James C. Stutts Fellows Award*



## John H. Carnifax Jr., CPRE

**Leading with excellence, humor and vision**, John H. Carnifax Jr. began his 41-year career in 1982 as a Recreation Supervisor at Brunswick Correctional Center in Lawrenceville, Virginia. He soon advanced to Director of Parks and Recreation for Louisa County. In 1997 he joined the James City County team as Superintendent of Parks and Facilities, further exploring his true passion - parks and the outdoors through his love for cycling, exercise, adventure, family, community and the profession. His outstanding leadership quickly moved him through the ranks to Deputy Director and now the current Director, outstanding leader, role model and mentor.

Leading the department to national accreditation and a National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) 2012 Gold Medal Award, John takes pride in serving our over 6.5 million residents and visitors annually, and these constituents also serve as advocates for parks and recreation. He ensures the best visitor experiences and quality of 17 parks including a beach, marina, campground, two recreation centers, two outdoor pools, an indoor and outdoor sports complex and sports stadium, senior center, an event hall, 49 miles of natural and hard surface trails for hikers, bikers and runners and numerous community partnerships, tourism initiatives, programs and special events.

By building positive relationships with elected officials, community partners, staff and citizens, John has spearheaded many key projects, further making the County a fan favorite of residents, a tourism destination and highlighting economic impacts of parks and recreation:

- Development of the County's Greenways Master Plan, Parks & Recreation Master Plan and assisted with the County's Comprehensive Plan updates resulting in such projects as the \$6.9 million Warhill Sports Complex (WSC) complemented with the 3,000-seat Sanford B. Wanner Stadium and Freedom Park, the County's first historical park.
- Development and management of numerous private and public partnerships such as the Go Ape Tree-top Adventures ropes and challenge course in Freedom Park, Billsburg Brewery at the Marina and the Williamsburg Indoor Sports Complex (WISC), providing a 75,000 square feet private indoor sports facility in a County park at no cost to local tax payers.
- Leadership of a 10-year Capital Improvement Program, including the acquisition and development of 1,000 acres totaling over \$45 million in improvements and design of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities in 12 new school projects.

**Leading by "walking around" and active participation**, is natural for John. Parks & Recreation is not just a job, it is a way of life. In his own words, "I try to lead by example, and I try to use our facilities. I believe in getting outdoors and trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle with exercise." John has been recognized on the national, state and local level including the NRPA Accreditation Team, VRPS Distinguished Service award, VRPS President's award, the James City County Board of Supervisor Chairman's award and the Parks & Recreation Employee of the Year award.

He has dedicated his time to many community projects such as the LEAD Historic Triangle Leadership Program, in which he was instrumental in developing the My Place Playground, the County's first inclusive playground for youth with disabilities.

John always works with a smile, an open-door policy" and routinely solicits input from staff, customers and the community and ensures teambuilding and opportunities for leadership development. **Every day, he challenges his team to be the best, ultimately making the James City County community the best place to work, live and play.**



# James C. Stutts Fellows Award Recipients



|      |  |   |      |                      |                           |
|------|--|---|------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1964 | Myrtle Patterson<br>Don Wingo<br>Lucy Patterson<br>Charles "Pappy" Nixon | City of Lynchburg<br>City of Norfolk<br>City of Norfolk<br>City of Newport News | 1990 | Tish Lindsey         | City of Danville          |
| 1965 | Jesse Reynolds<br>Howard Mast  | City of Richmond<br>City of Suffolk   | 1991 | Tom Blekicki         | Henrico County            |
| 1966 | Nan Crow   | City of Charlottesville   | 1993 | Eldon James, Jr.     | King George County        |
| 1967 | Cecil Gilkerson<br>Bill Castleberry                                      | City of Harrisonburg  | 1995 | Roger Pollard        | City of Alexandria        |
| 1968 | Mary Schwartz  | McGuire Veterans Hospital   | 1996 | Ned Cheely, III      | James City County         |
| 1969 | Ralph Wilson   |   | 1997 | C. William Boyce     | City of Virginia Beach    |
| 1971 | Calvin Schilling   | V.A. Hospital, Salem  | 1999 | Charles Hester       | City of Petersburg        |
| 1973 | Leon Curtis  | V.A. Hospital, Salem  | 2001 | Annie Thornton       | City of Richmond          |
| 1974 | Marion Moody Hormachea   | Virginia Commonwealth University  | 2002 | Robert Antozzi       | City of Fredericksburg    |
| 1975 | Ronald Reynolds<br>Don Hull  | Campbell County<br>Accomack County  | 2003 | Douglas Kennedy      | Virginia Wesleyan College |
| 1976 | James Greiner  | City of Portsmouth  | 2007 | Michael Poplawskii   | Newport News              |
| 1977 | William Garman   | City of Chesapeake  | 2008 | Cindy Curtis         | City of Virginia Beach    |
| 1979 | Fred Williams  | City of Richmond  | 2009 | Darrell Crittendon   | City of Norfolk           |
| 1981 | Ellett McGeorge  | Henrico County  | 2010 | Tom Clarke           | City of Roanoke           |
| 1982 | Darrell Shell  | Roanoke County  | 2011 | Beth Wood-Whitley    | City of Virginia Beach    |
| 1983 | Joe Hensley<br>Michael Wise  | City of Alexandria<br>Virginia Commonwealth University                          | 2012 | Cindy Jo Daniel      | County of Henrico         |
| 1984 | John Gilstrap  | City of Danville  | 2013 | Carol Steele         | Gloucester County         |
| 1985 | Lakey Logan  | City of Harrisonburg  | 2014 | Sean Gleason         | City of Colonial Heights  |
| 1986 | Ned Cheely, Jr.  | City of Virginia Beach  | 2015 | Greg Sager           | Hanover County            |
| 1988 | Susan Walston  | City of Virginia Beach  | 2016 | Nancy Ellis          | James City County         |
| 1989 | Muriel Barbour   | McGuire Veterans Hospital   | 2017 | Art Anselene         | Town of Herndon           |
|      |  |   | 2018 | Margaret Thorne      | City of Portsmouth        |
|      |  |   | 2019 | Cindy Roeder         | Town of Herndon           |
|      |  |   | 2020 | James C. Stutts      |                           |
|      |  |   | 2022 | Arlana Fautleroy     | James City County         |
|      |  |   | 2023 | John H. Carnifax Jr. | James City County         |

**2023 VRPS**  
*President's Awards*

Amy-Jo Hendrix, Town of Vienna  
James Mickle, BerryDunn  
Western Service Area

Young Professionals Network  
Outdoor Resource Group