



Congratulations, your Park has just been named a final-four candidate in the prestigious “Gold Medal Award” Competition

Consider the tips below to optimize the value of being selected as a candidate for this prestigious award.

Make sure you contact your local media and alert them that you have been chosen for this prestigious national award. Start building the momentum.

Imagine that **you have won**. Ask yourself, “How do we celebrate and thank our community in a timely fashion.” The point is to be prepared, to have a plan in place, and to be ready to implement your plan immediately after you’ve been declared the winner.

Have a plan in place for your hometown media. (radio, TV and newspapers)

- Personally contact the media before you leave town to let them know you will call as soon as the announcement is made. Give them the approximate time you expect to call. Win or lose, keep the media close.
- NRPA will provide a press release template. Make sure you add your own comments to make this your story.
- Connect with your local outdoor advertising company(ies) for an electronic billboard congratulating the city/county/state on the major accomplishment—an accomplishment that should make everyone in the community proud! This announcement may be considered a public service announcement because of the public interest. Ask to have the electronic billboard go up as soon as possible after the announcement and to remain on display into the week.
- Plan a media event at your office building or a prominent park location with your county executive/mayor, city council/board of supervisors, convention center members, or whomever else you have partnered with. This gives the media something visual to cover. The media event should take place the same day as the announcement to be considered more newsworthy and to earn a spot on the early-evening local news.

- Use your smart phone or video camera to take pictures of the award ceremony and e-mail them to your office for posting on your website. Images can be posted immediately after the award ceremony.
- Create and reserve space for a newspaper ad announcing the accomplishment of your city/county/state.

It's just been announced that you've won! Good thing you were prepared!

Now You're Home

After you've returned to your community, keep the momentum going. Be proud of the accomplishment, and let your community know the importance of being named the best in the nation.

- Contact local media to arrange interviews with your Parks Director to spread the good news of the accomplishment. Daytime local-news talk shows welcome in-studio interviews to discuss fresh and exciting community news such as this.
- Advertising and events may require some partnership monies. Contact local companies or organizations to see if they can help with funding. "Gold Medal Award Party sponsored by (_company name_). (_company name_) is proud to announce that our Park System is the Best in the Nation."
- Being associated with a Gold Medal Park System is good PR and goes a long way in showing good will in the community. Contact local companies and corporations to show them how they can benefit as Partners of the Parks.
- Throw yourself a party. Have a community party celebrating your cities/county/state's success. The party can be an addition to an existing event or can be created as a separate event. Keep the excitement high.

Branding, Branding, Branding

Reinforce your accomplishment in everything you do to reap ongoing good will in the community. Now is the time to develop a new “gold medal logo.” (If using the official Gold Medal logo, contact awards@nrpa.org.) This logo should be placed not only on communications, but also in facilities. Voice and audio promotions and communications must also refer to the “gold medal” win. Some ideas are presented below.

Identity Programs

- Letterhead, Envelopes, Business Cards
- Email signatures
- Contracts and agreements
- Invoices
- Inter-Office mail
- Website
- Signage at park entrances and Park buildings
- Signage at new or reconditioned play places, tennis courts
- Floor graphics at sport courts, swimming pools, ice rinks etc.
- Park flags, to hang below the US flag
- Stickers on Park vehicles including golf cars
- Entrance mats to facilities
- Seal on lectern

Voice & Audio Communications / Promotions

- Parks administration phone greeting
- “Thank you for calling your 20()Gold Medal Winning Park System, my name is _____, how can your (park system name) help you?”*
- Staff voice-mail messages
- Radio & TV ads and PSAs
- Announcements at all events such as concerts series introductions

Promotional Items / Ads

- Specialty items (such as magnets) to encourage community pride
- 36” helium balloons at park events
- Print ads
- Printed promotional material such as brochures/flyers
- Billboard signage
- TV ads

Congratulations on your win. By being prepared, having a plan, and implementing it upon the announcement of your win, you can apply ideas presented here to set yourself apart in your community for years to come.

To see specific examples of how the Milwaukee County Parks maximized exposure of the NRPA's most prestigious award, please see the pdf, *Winning the Gold*.

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