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**National Recreation and Park Association Receives \$60,000 Grant to Find and Celebrate Individuals Who Are Advancing Health Equity**

**Ashburn, VA. – Nov. 30, 2015** — The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) —the nation’s leading philanthropy on health and health care—has awarded the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) a \$60,000 grant spanning seven years to help establish the *RWJF Awards for Health Equity*.

The *RWJF Awards for Health Equity* is supporting a total of 10 national membership organizations in finding and honoring individuals who are successfully using systems changes to address health disparities within their communities. RWJF believes that it is critical to improve systems that influence the determinants of health —such as public safety, employment, housing, education—in order to improve lives and reduce health disparities.

During this seven-year program, NRPA will independently solicit and evaluate nominations from their membership and select a winner for the award. Winners will be announced at the NRPA Annual Conference as well as at an annual recognition and learning event at RWJF that will highlight the work of all 10 winners.

“As a nation, we will not be able to achieve a Culture of Health without ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to live in healthy environments, make healthy choices and receive quality health care” said Catherine Malone, DBA, MBA, program officer of the RWJF Awards for Health Equity. “By celebrating those who have successfully implemented systems changes related to the determinants of health, we hope to heighten awareness of the promising potential that systems changes have to eliminate health disparities in our society.”

“With the serious health concerns and disparities we face today, local park and recreation agencies are well-positioned in every community across the country to create environments that promote healthy, active living and support a Culture of Health,” said Barbara Tulipane, president and CEO of NRPA. “We are pleased to be a recipient of the *RWJF Awards for Health Equity* knowing it will strengthen our national awards program and compel our members to think about how their work impacts inequities in health.”

### **About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

For more than 40 years the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve health and health care. We are striving to build a national Culture of Health that will enable all to live longer, healthier lives now and for generations to come. For more information, visit [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org). Follow the Foundation on Twitter at [www.rwjf.org/twitter](http://www.rwjf.org/twitter) or on Facebook at [www.rwjf.org/facebook](http://www.rwjf.org/facebook).

### **About The National Recreation and Park Association**

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of 50,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit [NRPA.org](http://NRPA.org). For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit [ParksAndRecreation.org](http://ParksAndRecreation.org).

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