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***For Immediate Release***

**NRPA Announces 2020-2021 Board of Directors**

*Michael P. Kelly begins two-year term as board chair*

**Ashburn, Va. (Oct. 20, 2020)** — The [National Recreation and Park Association](https://www.nrpa.org) (NRPA), the nation’s leading advocate for parks and recreation, is proud to announce its new 2020-2021 Board of Directors. Long-time board member, Michael P. Kelly, general superintendent and CEO of the award-winning Chicago Park District, begins his two-year term as chair of the organization. Kelly, along with the entire NRPA leadership team, welcomes five new board members, all top female executives and senior leaders in their respective fields, to the NRPA Board of Directors.

Michael P. Kelly has served as general superintendent and CEO of the Chicago Park District since 2011. Prior to his appointment, Kelly served as the District’s chief operating officer, where he worked to provide executive management in areas, such as park operations, capital construction, repairs and maintenance, landscape services, security and other contract services pertinent to the operations of the park district. Kelly earned a JD from DePaul College of Law in Chicago, and a bachelor’s degree in political science from John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio.

“I, along with my esteemed colleagues, thank Michael P. Kelly for stepping into this leadership role during a pivotal time for NRPA,” said Kristine Stratton, NRPA president and CEO. “It’s an absolute pleasure to serve alongside someone with such great knowledge and passion for the field, and I look forward to the next two years while he serves as chair of this great organization. I also want to welcome the five outstanding women who have been selected to serve on the NRPA Board of Directors. Their unique perspectives and combined talents will undoubtedly strengthen NRPA and help propel the organization and the essential field of parks and recreation forward.”

NRPA’s five new Board members who will serve three-year terms are:

- **Kathy Abbott, president and CEO, Boston Harbor Now**

- **Angelou Ezeilo, Project WET; Project WILD; Project Learning Tree (EE Instructor), founder and CEO, Greening Youth Foundation**
- **Susie Kuruvilla, CPRP, CPA, executive director, Gurnee Park District**
- **Monica Hobbs Vinluan, senior program officer, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**
- **Lakita Watson, CPRP, executive director, Richland County Recreation Commission**

Abbott, Ezeilo, Kuruvilla, Vinluan and Watson join forces with the following diverse group of leaders who currently serve on the NRPA Board of Directors:

- **Michael Abbaté, FASLA, LEED AP, principal, Abbaté Designs**
- **Jesús Aguirre, CPRE, superintendent, Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation**
- **Kong Chang, community recreation specialist, City of Saint Paul Parks & Recreation**
- **Jose Felix Diaz, executive vice-president, Ballard Partners**
- **Victor Dover, FAICP, CNU Fellow, LEED-AP, co-founder, Dover, Kohl & Partners Town Planning**
- **Richard Gulley, board member, Balboa Park Conservancy**
- **Jack Kardys, president, J. Kardys Strategies, LLC**
- **Michael P. Kelly, general superintendent and CEO, Chicago Park District**
- **Karen Bates Kress, park advocate**
- **Joanna Lombard, Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences, University of Miami School of Architecture and Miller School of Medicine**
- **Carolyn McKnight, CPRP, owner, Eagle Methods Management Consulting**
- **Joshua Medeiros, Ed. D, CPRP, AFO, superintendent of Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services, City of Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services**
- **Ian Proud, director of insights & outreach, NA Outdoor Play, PlayPower, Inc.**
- **Kristine Stratton, president and CEO, National Recreation and Park Association (ex officio)**
- **Nonet T. Sykes, chief equity and inclusion officer, Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.**
- **Xavier Urrutia, chief of staff to the chancellor, Alamo Colleges District**
- **Greg Weitzel, MS, CPRP, director, Department of Parks and Recreation, City of Las Vegas, Nevada**
- **Phil Wu, (retired) physician consultant, Kaiser Permanente Northwest Region**

NRPA's governance structure reflects a Board composed of 15-30 individuals. Board members are representative of NRPA's membership, which includes leaders in the park, recreation and conservation movement; park and recreation professionals and

advocates; and individuals from academia, relevant corporations, partner organizations, and volunteer and civic groups.

To learn more about the 2020-2021 Board of Directors, [click here](#).

To learn more about NRPA's leadership team, click [here](#).

**To learn more about NRPA, visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org).**

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

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is the leading not-for-profit organization dedicated to building strong, vibrant and resilient communities through the power of parks and recreation. With more than 60,000 members, NRPA advances this mission by investing in and championing the work of park and recreation professionals and advocates — the catalysts for positive change in service of equity, climate-readiness, and overall health and well-being. For more information, visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org). For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit [www.parksandrecreation.org](http://www.parksandrecreation.org).