MEDIA ALERT

HPARD Receives NRPA Accreditation
HPARD is one of the largest agencies to receive honor in entire Nation

On October 15, 2008, The Houston Parks and Recreation Department was granted Accreditation Status through the National Parks and Recreation Association's CAPRA Accreditation program. For parks and recreation departments across the country, the CAPRA accreditation process is a best practices review of the agency. The Department will present the award to Mayor Bill White on October 21, at 1:00 p.m. on the steps of City Hall.

"CAPRA Accreditation is the gold standard that parks and recreation departments across the country strive for," said Joe Turner, Director Houston Parks and Recreation Department. "It is the ultimate self-assessment and peer review that a parks and recreation department, its staff and business practices can undergo."

The accreditation process is a voluntary evaluation from an outside / unbiased source, CAPRA, of a parks and recreation department. The department's business practices are evaluated against national best practices standards created by the National Parks and Recreation Association. Aside from the initial review the accreditation process has an ongoing internal review of the department's policies and procedures which help document all aspects of the department.

"Two years ago when we began this process we were looking for a way to determine, from an outside source, whether we were fulfilling our department mission of *'providing safe, well-maintained parks and offering affordable programs for the community.'* We are extremely happy to have received this honor and believe that CAPRA accreditation will serve as a way of ensuring that we are meeting and exceeding national standards." Turner concluded.

For more information on the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, please call (713) 865-4537 or visit us online at www.houstonparks.org.

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