Parks
Michigan Recreation & Park Association

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Still Strong & Growing

WE ADVOCATE / WE TEACH / WE INSPIRE / WE UNITE

The voice of Michigan's parks and recreation community

The Staff

2021 brought many exciting changes for the mParks Staff.

Jamie Valdez joined the team in March 2021 as an intern from Central Michigan University. Upon completing her internship in October, Jamie continued as a permanent member of the team as the General Event & Office Lead.

Anthony Iracki joined the mParks team in July 2021 to fill the role of the newly formed Education & Event Manager.

In June 2021, **Tina Nowakowski** transitioned to the new role of Director or Communications & Strategic Partnerships, and **Justin Lippe** transitioned to Director of Operations & Finance.

mParks said goodbye to **Hillary Ackerson** in March 2021 as she pursued a new career path.

Clay Summers

Executive Director

Justin Lippe

Director of Operations & Finance

Tina Nowakowski

Director of Communications & Strategic Partnerships

Anthony Iracki

Education & Event Manager

Jamie Valdez

General Event & Office Coordinator

Membership

BREAKDOWN OF 2021 MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES*

* as of 12/31/21

Agency Members	179
Additional Agency Members	1236
Board & Commission Members	590
Individual Professional Members	45
Vendor Members	53
Organizational Ally	10
Student Members	227
Individual Ally Members	14
Retired Members	37

Total number of members: **2,378**

Membership

While the pandemic caused some fear and unease within municipal budgets and in turn led to uncertainty within the mParks Membership, it was an overall strong year.

mParks represented 179 Agency Members (compared to 180 in 2020) with 1,236 members within those departments (1,251 in 2020).

Overall mParks closed 2021 with 2,378 members, 161 less than 2020. The largest drop being within the Student Membership category, which does not directly impact membership revenue as students at partner universities are eligible to receive mParks membership at no additional cost to the university or the student.

365 Delegates

3 Keynote Addresses

49 Breakout Sessions

105 Speakers & Panelists

Virtual Conference

While still learning to navigate the pandemic, the 2021 mParks Conference Committee had to make the difficult decision to pivot to a Virtual Conference.

Working with our longtime partners at Motown Digital, mParks created an event as close to the traditional Conference & Trade Show as possible. During the three-day event, hosted on Hopin, delegates were able to attend their choice of session, connect with each other via video speed networking sessions, engage using the chat feature, and reconnect each day for an all-conference session and Keynote speaker.

Virtual Conference

The event featured:

- 365 Delegates
- 3 Keynote Addresses
- 49 Breakout Sessions
- 105 Speakers & Panelists

Despite missing the obvious physical connection, the 2021 mParks Virtual Conference opened a new door for vendors and sponsors to connect with attendees. mParks supporters were able to play video advertisements before sessions, introduce speakers, and participate in more parts of the week than they have in person. Many strategies developed during the 2021 mParks Virtual Conference are being utilized in future in person events.

Award Winners

During the 2021 mParks Virtual Conference, mParks and Professional Recognition Committee had to opportunity to present the 2021 Design, Programming, and Marketing awards.

A new category was added to recognize the tremendous work park and recreation departments did to support and serve their communities during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The COVID-19 Special Awards were broken into two categories: Leadership, which recognized excellence in policy and decision-making; and Engagement, which recognized the impact on the community.

Park Design

- Geary Park Skate Park, Ferndale Parks and Recreation
- Grove Park Renovation, Midland Parks and Recreation
- Southfield City Centre Trail, City of Southfield Parks & Recreation
- Plaster Creek Family Park, Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department
- Hines Park Bike Park, Wayne County Parks

Facility Design

- CommUNITY skatepark, Ypsilanti Township Recreation
- Marketplace on the Green, Meridian Township Parks and Recreation
- Accessible Multi-Purpose Dock, Ingham County Parks
- Sterling Heights Community Center, City of Sterling Heights Parks and Recreation

Innovative Programming

- UNITY Project, Livonia Parks and Recreation
- July 4th Virtual Parade, City of Huntington Woods Parks and Recreation
- Dear Kevin, Huron Clinton Metroparks
- Youth Theatre Performing Arts Festival, City of Farmington Hills
- Quest for Adventure, Oakland County Parks and Recreation
- Give365, Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation
- Parking Lot Disco Daddy-Daughter Celebration, Romulus Parks & Recreation
- Virtual Theatre Programming, East Lansing Department of Parks, Recreation & Arts
- Drive-thru Halloween, Lansing Parks and Recreation

Covid-19 Engagement

- I Spy program, Oakland County Parks and Recreation
- Virtual Program Series, Howell Area Parks and Recreation Authority
- Virtual & In-Person Programming, Sterling Heights Parks and Recreation
- Together Livonia Cares, Livonia Parks and Recreation
- Learning Lab, Lansing Parks and Recreation
- Programming Response Plan, Orion Township Parks & Recreation
- Programming Response Plan, Huron Clinton Metroparks
- Return-to-Recreation, City of Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

Covid-19 Leadership

- Reactivation Plan, Neighborhood Club
- Response Plan, Michigan DNR
- Summer Camp Action Plan, City of Farmington Hills

Marketing

- Graphic Design Piece - Outdoor Discovery Book, Farmington Hills Special Services
- Integrated Marketing Campaign - Social Distancing Campaign, Huron-Clinton Metroparks
- Social Media Campaign - Park Madness, Lansing Parks and Recreation
- Website - Your Local Outdoors Story Map, Michigan DNR

The following Individual Awards were also presented during the 2021 mParks Virtual Conference:

Local Elected Official

- Bob DePalma, Groveland Township Supervisor and George Kullis, Holly Township Supervisor

State Elected Official

- Senator Jim Ananich, Michigan's 27th Senate District

Commitment to Excellence

- Lori Irwin, Central Michigan University

Grand Award

- Polly Products

Award Winners

The pandemic led to another opportunity to try something new. It was important to mParks that the Individual Award Winners received the same celebration as years past. 2021 was also scheduled to be a Hall of Fame year, so the Professional Recognition Committee made the innovative decision to combine the 2021 Award Winners banquet and the 2021 Hall of Fame into a single event.

The event was one of a kind, it brought together park and recreation leaders across the state, spanning multiple generations. For many, it was the first time they had seen other mParks members in more than a year and the electricity was felt throughout the entire night.

Individual Award Winners

- Park Resource Leadership - Mike Boyd, Oakland County Parks and Recreation
- Recreation Leadership - Jonathan LaFever, Canton Leisure Services
- New Professional - William Keppen, City of Livonia Parks and Recreation
- New Professional - Keith Kooperman, Saline Parks & Recreation
- Fellowship - Darrin Duistermars, Holland Charter Township

Hall of Fame Class of 2021

- Ann Conklin
- Lois Jackson

Needs Assessment

Throughout the second half of the year, mParks conducted a statewide Needs Assessment. The Needs Assessment, designed to guide mParks future educational opportunities, began with both in-person and virtual listening sessions across the state, followed by surveys and thorough analysis.

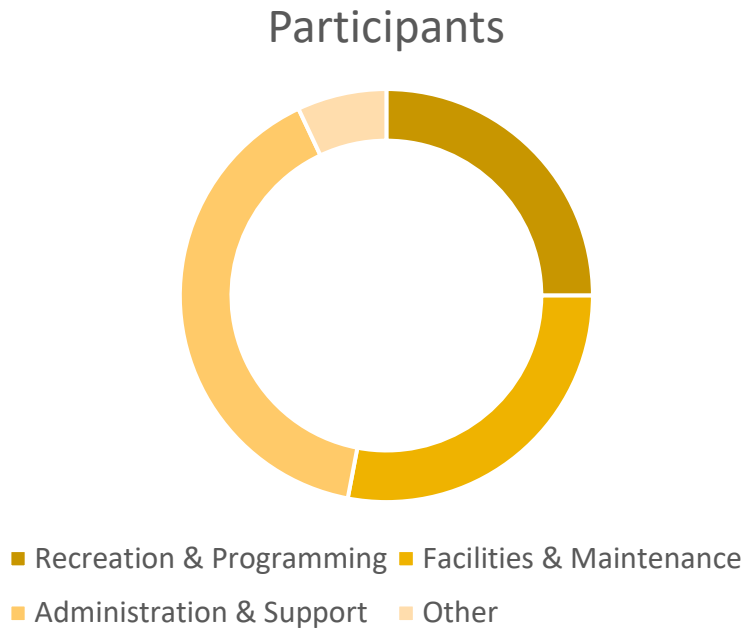
With the help of the Collaborative Training Network, mParks members all across the state had the opportunity to share their input on the type of educational opportunities they want to see in the future. mParks will be using these results to create trainings, workshops and summits that will help our members grow in their careers and better serve their communities.

- 303 completed the online survey
- 140 professionals participated in listening sessions across the state

The Assessment analyzed barriers to educations, obstacles with leadership, as well as wants and needs of the participants.

46% of participants indicated they would like to obtain a professional certification in the next 3-5 years.

Needs Assessment



Most participants:

- would travel 90 minutes or less for training
- prefer training to take place in Sept-Feb
- have a slight preference for in- person training verses online or blended learning

Financial Report

2021 Revenue

2021 Expenses

2021 REVENUE	
Membership Dues	$183,288.78
Advertising	$19,810.00
Registration	$1,225,356.04
Sponsorships	$70,879.00
Donations	$188.00
Commission	$11,965.71
Misc Income	$674.10
Admin Income	$20,133.00
Grants	$45,000.00
TOTAL	**$1,577,294.63**

2021 EXPENSES	
Event/Membership	$1,051,175.02
Operation Expense	$72,324.22
Administrative Expense	$6553.25
Wages and Benefits	$289,543.29
Taxes and Insurance	$9,531.50
Dues and Subscriptions	$3,088.00
Design/Print/Publish	$20,404.12
Bank & Credit Card Fees	$10,942.08
Professional Fees	$14,475.00
Contract Labor	$8,790.93
TOTAL	**$1,486,827.41**

NET: $90,467.22

Financial Report

Despite the obstacles and challenges faced throughout the year, mParks continued to grow financially. The 2021 Fiscal Year ended with a net gain of $90,467.22 (compared to a loss in 2020.)

mParks operates on an accrual system –deferred revenue and accounts receivable are recorded when they occur. The Ways and Means Committee meets regularly to review the financial statements and to provide input on the processes of the organization.