

HALL OF FAME



Ron Merritt

RON MERRITT

MINOT PARK DISTRICT

2022

Former NDRPA President Ron Merritt is the 27th individual inducted to the association's Hall of Fame.

Merritt has been very involved with NDRPA over the years, having served in several roles, including professional development chair from 2007-2008, President in 2009-2010 and chair of the Legislative Committee from 2010 to 2015.

In 1991, Merritt earned a bachelor's degree in zoology from North Dakota State University. He started his career as a zookeeper for Minot Roosevelt Park Zoo, and within six years became zoo director.

In 2005, he took the position of executive director of Minot Park District. He earned many honors while serving with the zoo and park district, including two successful Association of Zoos and Aquariums accreditations for the zoo, the Minot Chamber of Commerce Above and Beyond Award and the Mayoral Coin. Under his leadership, Minot Park District received the 1996 Golden Egg Award for the penguin exhibit and the 2009 NDRPA Golden Egg Award for Jack Hoeven Park. Merritt received the 2014 NDRPA Fellow Award – now known as the Distinguished Professional Award. He also is a certified park and recreation professional and attended NRPA's Directors School in 2019 and 2022.

During Merritt's tenure as president, NDRPA led the effort to increase the concession bidding threshold for political subdivisions and the state from \$500 in estimated annual gross sales to more than \$25,000 during the 2011 state legislative session. Merritt was instrumental throughout the entire legislative process, including testifying before legislative committees to ensure the bill passed. Merritt also provided support for hiring the association's first full-time executive director and the completion of the Economic Contribution Study.

He has also been an active community member, including participation in the Minot Chamber of Commerce, Minot Convention and Visitors Bureau, Community Leadership Institute, State Museum Association Board of Directors, Souris Valley Amateur Radio Club, and Minot Rotary Club.

All NDRPA Hall of Fame members are recognized with plaques at the North Dakota Sports Hall of Fame in the Jamestown Civic Center.

Advancing parks, recreation and conservation for an enhanced quality of life in North Dakota.

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