

HALL OF FAME



Karen Assel

KAREN ASSEL

ND PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

2023

Karen Assel of Bismarck is the 28th individual inducted into the NDRPA Hall of Fame.

Assel joined NDRPA as a student member at the University of North Dakota in 1979 and as a professional and allied organizational member with the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department in 1980. She served 38 years with the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department and chaired the NDRPA Membership Committee and served as an officer on the board from 1983 to 1984.

Assel was active on several annual NDRPA conference committees, including the Therapeutic Recreation Conference Committee, Awards Committee and State Hershey Track and Field Meet Committee. She was instrumental in collaborating with NDRPA on the Prairie Rose State Games during its 25-year run, while serving as a liaison to NDRPA to support continued funding and eligibility for the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Program.

Assel's impact extended beyond state recreation and parks. She was involved with the National Recreation and Park Association, National Association of Resource Planners, National Congress of State Games, Rocky Mountain State Park Executives, Reservation Program Managers Organization, Bismarck Cancer Center, Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation, Great American Bike Race Organizing Committee, Dorothy Moses Elementary PTO and Bismarck High School Advisory Board.

During her career, Assel received the NDRPA Award of Excellence for recognition of outstanding leadership; NDRPA Touch of Excellence Award for Hershey Track and Field Meet coordination; North Dakota Young Career Woman Award; North Dakota Federation of Business and Professional Women Award; Jack Brown Award of Excellence as part of the Prairie Rose State Games Board; and the Cal Renner Award of Excellence, the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department's Highest Honor.

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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