



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: September 9, 2022

TO: Parks and Recreation Department Employees

FROM: Andy Field, Parks and Recreation Director

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2022 Parks and Recreation Department Employees of the Year

It is my pleasure to announce our Parks and Recreation Department Fiscal Year 2022 Employees of the Year.

The Parks and Recreation Department will choose SIX Employees of the Year, annually: two in classifications represented by the Municipal Employees Association (MEA), or classified/unrepresented, two represented by AFSCME Local 127, and two hourly employees. These six Department Employees of the Year (EOY) each receive a \$500 cash award and 24 hours of discretionary leave (prorated for employees in part-time and hourly positions, per Administrative Regulation 95.91, Employee Recognition and Award Programs). Like the Employees of the Quarter, the Employees of the Year are nominated by the employees' peers. Nominations are approved by each Division's Deputy Director and forwarded to the department's Rewards and Recognition Committee for selection. All Mayoral Department Employees of the year are automatically considered for Citywide Employee of the Year. The Citywide Employees of the Year have not yet been selected.

With so many outstanding and richly deserving employees, the selection of just six of our employees for Fiscal Year 2022 Department Employee of the Year was quite difficult. I am well aware that the Parks and Recreation Department is fortunate to have more than its share of hard-working, caring, dedicated and talented employees who ALL deserve recognition and thanks, and not all of these employees are chosen or nominated for this recognition.

I sincerely appreciate those of you who take the time out of your busy schedule to nominate deserving employees, both for Employee of the Quarter and Employee of the Year, and I encourage you to keep it up. Showing our appreciation and recognizing each other for hard work and accomplishments is key to forging a strong and effective department, one where we all feel appreciated and valued for our efforts and contributions.

I certainly value all Parks and Recreation employees. It gives me great pleasure to have a program that encourages you to recognize and value each other. So please keep those

wonderful EOQ and EOY nominations coming—they are greatly appreciated not just by me, but by those who are working so hard to keep Parks and Rec the **Best Darned Department in the City!**

Please join me in congratulating our Parks and Recreation Department's Fiscal Year 2022 Employees of the Year:

Parks and Recreation Employees of the Year represented by AFSCME Local 127:

Eddie Bojorquez, Equipment Operator I:

Eddie strives to improve the outcome of the many projects he is assigned. He is a highly motivated and positive person, who brings excellent internal and external customer service to all he does. Additionally, he is a pleasure to work with and is always willing to help and share his knowledge with the team. This is especially displayed when he trains new staff as he is the go-to person with valuable departmental knowledge due to extensive OCA experience. Eddie is a strong leader with great communication skills, who creates a positive work environment that is greatly appreciated by his peers. He is a very dedicated, reliable, responsible, hardworking individual and highly enthusiastic about his job. He is always trying to better himself, strives to learn new assignments and takes on new tasks to help Mission Bay Park, along with other sections within the department.

Jose Luis Briones, Light Equipment Operator:

Jose Luis Briones (Joe) is an exceptional employee. He possesses the heart of service and there is no one more dedicated to his position, peers and providing outstanding playing conditions for the City's golfers. He regularly volunteers to come in to fill open shifts and never turns down an overtime opportunity when the Mission Bay Golf Course needs him the most. He has even come in when he was on vacation because the team needed an extra person to get the course ready for daily play. He is not only very giving with his time, but he is a very hard worker that produces excellent results. Joe is an amazing asset for the Golf Operations Division and very deserving of this award.

Parks and Recreation Employees of the Year represented by MEA or Classified/Unrepresented:

Mark Brown, Golf Operation Assistant:

Mark Brown is a quintessential employee and a great representative of the City of San Diego. His efforts have exceeded standards and it is testament to his dedication to the Golf Operations Division. While vacancy rates have made it challenging for the division to adequately staff golf courses, Mark has always been willing to pick up additional shifts to assist in providing recreational opportunities to our customers. No task is too big or too small for Mark, whether it's working outside shuttling golf carts or picking up golf balls at the driving range. He is willing to go the extra mile to ensure operations continue to move forward, always giving maximum effort. Mark has a strong desire to improve morale and his willingness to share his ideas with management to raise everyone's spirits is much appreciated.

Erika Weikel, Park Ranger:

Ranger Erika loves to learn, teach, and share the wonders of nature with visitors. Her knowledge of plant and animal life, and the importance of saving our habitats sparks interest in people of all ages. Her enthusiasm makes patrons want to visit again, become involved, and volunteer. She does not back down from challenges or difficult situations. Some highlights of her year were saving a man from an overdose by providing chest compressions; assisting with a second overdose victim; helping a young woman who was experiencing homelessness, and with help from police officers, get her away from an unsafe situation. She was invited by the Association for Environmental Education to be a guest speaker at a workshop in the Sierras where she presented information on the duties of a Park Ranger and set up an outreach booth to promote the City's Park Ranger program. In addition to her various duties as a Park Ranger in Tri-Canyon Parks, Erika mentors youth volunteers, manages restoration volunteer work, trains naturalists who lead walks for youth, and assists our partners such as San Diego Canyonlands and The Friends of Tecolote Canyon with projects.

Parks and Recreation Employees of the Year- Hourly:

Mark Leo, Recreation Leader II:

This year, Mark was responsible for organizing and implementing a variety of virtual programs for isolated, older adults', 55 and better, including: Zumba, Otherwise Improv, Poetry Party, Poetry Legacy, Yoga and Bingo, all on Zoom. Mark was eager to learn about virtual programming and readily embraced this new process in offering programs. He often sent emails to participants 3 days before, as well as same day, to remind them to attend the virtual activity. Then, he assisted them if they had a difficult time registering for a program or logging on during program time. Additionally, he planned and implemented in-person AgeWell Services (AWS) dances and several other programs. He went above and beyond in marketing AWS programs whenever he spoke to an older adult on the phone, via email, virtually and during in-person programs. Mark was instrumental in the overall success of the AWS Social Call program. An important communication and connection service for 150 isolated seniors throughout the year. Additionally, Mark reopened the Balboa Park Senior Lounge, which had been a much-loved location for older adults to visit, enjoy a complimentary cup of coffee, have an opportunity to interact with peers and make new friends. Since it's reopening, the lounge has hosted over 4,500 older adults.

Ian Balcazar, Pool Guard I:

Ian Balcazar was awarded as the 2022 Aquatics District Swim Coach of the Year! He transformed the Martin Luther King Jr. swim team, from a team of 3 participants to 28 dedicated swimmers. Ian has brought life back to the MLK Jr. Pool. The demographic of pool users is now a true reflection of the surrounding community members. Ian is dedicated to the community. He is patient, kind and provides individual, genuine attention to each of the kids on his team and to those in his swimming lessons. Ian ensured approximately 12 of his swim team participants had the opportunity to participate in the San Diego Junior Lifeguard Program at the beach, which is the highest number of scholarship recipients ever from the MLK Jr. Pool. Ian has excellent communication skills and is noted for professionally

Page 2
Parks and Recreation Department Employees
September 9, 2022

communicating with parents and members of the public. Ian is a great role model, mentor, leader, and all-around employee.

Thank you **Eddie Bojorquez, Jose Luis Briones, Mark Brown, Erika Weikel, Mark Leo, and Ian Balcazar** you make the Parks and Recreation Department and me very proud!

Our department is truly fortunate to have so many talented and caring employees with a true heart of service, and a passion for giving back to the community. I am proud to head a department with SO many excellent, dedicated employees, and my appreciation goes out to all of you for making Parks and Recreation the best darned department in the City.

The Parks and Recreation Department ROCKS!!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Field". The signature is cursive and fluid.

Andy Field

AF/ef

cc: Kristina Peralta, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Karen Dennison, Parks and Recreation Department Assistant Director
Tom Tomlinson, Parks and Recreation Department Assistant Director
Louis Merlin, Administrative Services Deputy Director
Parks and Recreation Department Rewards and Recognition Committee Members
Jon Terwilliger, Human Resources Deputy Director
Jennifer Manos, Senior Human Resources Analyst