

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## SPAR Receives \$30,000.00 Grant to Support Out-of-School Time Programs

Shreveport, LA., April 16, 2014 – Shreveport Public Assembly and Recreation (SPAR), in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), has received a \$30,000 grant and in-kind nutritional training materials valued at \$10,000 to support its out-of-school time healthy food access and nutritional literacy programs. The gift is part of a \$2.3 million grant NRPA received from the Walmart Foundation to support out-of-school time programs in 50 park and recreation agencies. The purpose of the grant is to:

- Increase the number of healthy meals children in low-income communities receive through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) during out-of-school
- Provide evidence-based, age-appropriate nutrition literacy to children that create behavior change by teaching the importance of healthy eating.
- Implement nutrition and physical activity standards that increase access to healthier foods and increase opportunities for physical activity.

SPAR's grant will help increase access to healthy foods and improve opportunities for physical activity. Grantees will also receive additional support for meals provided through USDA afterschool and summer feeding programs as well as nutritional literacy materials to help ensure life-long healthy habits for Shreveport's youth.

This grant supports NRPA's new campaign—Commit to Health—which encourages the implementation and evaluation of Healthy Eating, Physical Activity (HEPA) standards in park and recreation sites across the country. NRPA's goal is to have at least 2,000 participating sites in five years.

According to the USDA's 2010 Hunger report, 16.2 million American children live in food-insecure households. The same report finds that 19.5 million low-income children receive free or reduced meals during the school year, but fewer than 3 million of these children participate in the Summer Food Service Program. During summer months, these children may not have access to quality food to help them grow—making SPAR''s work during out-of-school times that much more critical. "Across the country, community parks and recreation are a vital health resource for all people," said Barbara Tulipane, President and CEO of NRPA. "This generous grant from the Walmart Foundation will allow park and recreation agencies to expand the critical work they do to improve quality of life and foster life-long healthy habits among the youth in their communities."

"The grant award is invaluable when it comes to improving the overall health of Shreveport's youth. SPAR is also excited about the nutritional literacy component involved in this grant that will better educate youth on the importance of healthy eating," said Patrick Wesley, Assistant Director of SPAR.

## **About National Recreation and Park Association**

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of roughly 40,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit <a href="https://www.NRPA.org">www.NRPA.org</a>. For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, <a href="https://www.parksandrecreation.org">parks & Recreation</a>, visit <a href="https://www.parksandrecreation.org">www.parksandrecreation.org</a>.