



Contact: Kathleen Avitt, Executive Director  
New Jersey Recreation and Park Association  
1 Wheeler Way  
Princeton, NJ 08540  
609-356-0480  
kavitt@njrpa.org

## Press Release:

### **Linden Department of Parks and Recreation Receives Excellence in Visual and Cultural Arts Programming Award**

Linden Department of Parks and Recreation was presented the Excellence in Visual and Cultural Arts Award for *“The Crafting Corner Playground Program”* at the New Jersey Recreation and Park Association (NJRPA) Annual Awards Dinner at Summit Family Aquatic Center in Summit, NJ. Ralph Dunham (Recreation Director), Angelo Monaco (Day Camp/Playground Coordinator), Valerie Graham (Craft Supervisor), Rooks Crawford (Recreation Leader) and Elected Officials were present on Wednesday, May 19, 2021 to accept this award.

Challenged with creating Arts and Crafts programming during a socially distant summer, the staff of the Linden Recreation Department, incorporated “The Crafting Corner” into their Virtual Summer Camp program. Designed to appeal to children between the ages of 5 through 18, this program offered 50 different craft lessons that participants could complete in the safety of their own homes.

Marketed through the weekly newsletter, program information and weekly materials pick up forms were sent through the email feature of Community Pass. Families were invited to pick up pre-registered “Craft Kits” through contactless delivery at their local recreation center. Linden Recreation Staff created 50 instructional videos that demonstrated how to successfully complete the established crafts.

Eighty seven families picked up the craft kits required to complete the program which cost approximately \$5000.00 in supplies and staff hours. Families reached out for extra supplies at the end of the program to continue the crafting of their favorite projects.

The positive feedback from those who participated in Crafting Corner prompted the staff to extend the program into the Fall options for Senior Citizens programming.

The purpose of the New Jersey Recreation and Park Association’s Awards Program is to honor and identify dedicated leaders, employees, and volunteers in the field of Parks and Recreation, and to recognize the State’s outstanding Recreation and Park agencies for excellence in programming, publicity and facility design. The goal of the Awards Program is to focus State attention on the achievement of Park and Recreation agencies, to recognize the continuing efforts of staff and volunteers, and to acknowledge support extended by member agencies.