



2016 HELEN I. PONTIUS NATIONAL AWARD OF MERIT

The National Board of Women in Leisure Services, Chi Kappa Rho, Inc. is pleased to announce that Eileen Lohner-Turk, of the Delta Chapter, has been selected to receive the 2016 Helen I. Pontius National Award of Merit.



The Helen I. Pontius National Award of Merit has been presented to an extraordinary member since 1966. The Helen I. Pontius (HIP) Awards Committee, comprised of former HIP award recipients, recognizes Eileen as a member who has made significant contributions to the organization; has created a foundation for members to share ideas, broaden their interests, and sharpen their professional skills; and has demonstrated a high standard of involvement and achievement in her community.

The HIP award is the single most prestigious recognition awarded by the organization. On an annual basis, chapters can nominate one member for the award. The Delta Chapter nominated Eileen for her successive leadership within the organization, the mentorship and friendship she has provided to colleagues in the recreation field, and for her volunteer service and love for the greater community of Oceanside, California.

Eileen is currently the Parks and Recreation Division Manager for the City of Oceanside. Some would argue that her career in the field began at birth. Her father, Paul Lohner, was a 30-year parks and recreation professional. Eileen seamlessly followed in her dad's footsteps. His love and passion for work was infectious and no desk job would satisfy Eileen's professional interest. Before entering high school, she began volunteering for Pleasantville Day Camp Program as an arts & craft junior camp counselor. During her high school and collegiate years, Eileen worked during the summer months as a swim instructor, tennis coach and taught groups of young people how to play New Games. Eileen augmented her professional experience with a Bachelor of Science degree in Recreation Management from Springfield College in Massachusetts. Her continued education includes the prestige of becoming a Certified Park and Recreation Professional in the state of New York.



Since coming to California in 1989, Eileen has greatly served the recreation profession. Her years of service on the National Board began in 2006 as the National Delegate representing the Delta Chapter. She continued her National Board career through 2011, including one year as the National Board President from 2009 to 2010. At the chapter level, Eileen served as the secretary and vice president. Her dedication to the chapter is cemented by the completion of a six-year term as the chapter's President from 1999 to 2005.

On a personal note, Eileen is beloved by the Oceanside community. She is an active volunteer with several service groups including the Friends of Oceanside Parks, Soroptimist International of Oceanside-Carlsbad, and the Women's Resource Center of Oceanside. Through her volunteer service, Eileen has positively impacted the lives thousands of residents. To quote Kristi Hawthorne of Oceanside Living Magazine, *"Eileen is a great ambassador for the City of Oceanside. She's a cheerleader for Oceanside and a positive force. She's a unifier and a doer, ready and able to get things done. Her attitude is contagious and she's able to inspire others around her."*



Professionally, Eileen is a leader and mentor. Jane H. Adams, former director of the California Park & Recreation Society, wrote a strong letter of support in favor of Eileen's HIP award nomination. Jane said, *"One of Eileen's strengths is her outgoing personality. She is a natural networker; easily meeting people and connecting them with other people who can help them achieve their goals. Eileen is a good role model who promotes parks and recreation while enjoying life herself."*

For her outstanding professionalism, leadership, imagination and creativity, infectious personality, and leadership in the field of recreation and leisure services, the Delta Chapter, along with the National Board, is proud to recognize Eileen Lohner-Turk as the 2016 Helen I. Pontius National Award of Merit. Eileen will be formally celebrated and recognized at the National Luncheon scheduled for Wednesday, September 21, 2016 in Chicago. The Delta Chapter will also recognize her achievement at a chapter event in October.