

NiNOW
Special Awards Edition



NAI Professional Awards

Through its awards program, NAI recognizes outstanding achievements and showcases the successes of NAI members and others working to advance the profession of interpretation. NAI members are exposed to outstanding and inspiring programs and professionals. The individuals below were nominated by their peers.

Dr. Robert D. Bixler
NAI Fellow

Rob Bixler's interpretive career has spanned from front-line interpretive naturalist to administrator to academician. For 20 years at Clemson University, he has taught interpretation, introducing an entire generation to our profession. His influence on our profession is far reaching having advised over 30 master's students and hundreds of undergraduates, all of whom are now successful front-line interpreters and interpretive leaders around the country. As testament to his superb skill, he is recipient of two of his institution's most prestigious awards: The Excellence in Teaching Award (2016) and the Excellence in Research Award (2008). A talented consultant, Rob's expertise is widely sought after. He has worked with the National Park



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Service, U.S. Forest Service, Cleveland Metroparks, and the National Urban & Community Forestry Advisory Council.

Rob has dedicated his life to linking original empirical research with practice. His work has been featured in the Journal of Interpretation Research, which serves as a forum for scholarly discourse on the issues facing interpretation. Rob is a regular contributor, but has also guided the intellectual discussion of our profession as Associate Editor of the Journal for twenty years.

Researcher, mentor, teacher, and interpreter. Rob's influence on interpretation is impressive, and will be felt for many years to come.
--Ray Novotny

Carl Casavecchia
Master Interpretive Manager

For 30 years, Carl Casavecchia has been a fixture with the Cleveland Metroparks. Starting as a frontline interpreter, Carl rose up the ranks to become manager of the Garfield Park Nature Center and Bedford Reservation. There, he mentored over 60 aspiring interpreters, many of whom went on to leadership positions in agencies around the country. For many years he has served on the Guest Service Training Team responsible for training over 600 full-time and 150 part-time employees. As the current Special Projects Manager, Carl chaired the 100th anniversary celebration. This was a staggering undertaking and involved capital projects, a Centennial tree project, exhibits, school programs, bus tours, and a documentary. Most impressive was his leadership in researching, writing and publishing the 244-page hardcover book titled The 100 Year Trail: A Centennial Celebration of Cleveland Metroparks. --Ray Novotny



Phil Sexton

Master Interpretive Manager

As District Interpretive Coordinator, Phil supervises interpretation at seven state parks. Besides the usual staff supervision, program development, and exhibit design, he has over 700 state park volunteers! As Film Coordinator for the Capital District, Phil assists film producers in bringing their vision to the screen. In this role, he serves as a technical expert and coordinates with resource specialists and curators to tell the story of California's rich history. Phil is often an on-screen interview subject who has been featured in multiple documentaries. In addition, he is credited as a railroad history consultant for the AMC Network television show *Hell on Wheels*. As a master collaborator, Phil was instrumental in creating an ongoing educational partnership with the UC-Davis history project for "Teaching the Transcontinental Railroad" and the Stanford University Chinese History Project. --Ray Novotny

**Douglas Allan Horvath**

Master Frontline Interpreter

Doug Horvath has earned a reputation as a tireless and gifted interpreter with the ability to craft dynamic programs and engage diverse audiences. His program development skills are impressive. From crafting live animal outreach programs for preschoolers, natural adventures for day care centers, partnering with senior centers to get seniors outdoors, offering teacher trainings on Green Schoolyards, or creating a "Woodlands and Wizards" and "Habitat Heroes" program for a YMCA camp, Doug's interests are far ranging. Additionally, he still finds time to teach CIG classes, contribute to *Legacy* magazine, train 80 maintenance staff in interpretive hosting techniques, and chair the Miami Valley Leave No Child Inside collaborative and the Dayton Regional Green Children and Nature Committee. He is the 2015 Project WILD Facilitator of the Year. Doug is truly a master interpreter, and a force of nature. --Joshua York



Heather Hucka

Master Frontline Interpreter

Heather Hucka has made Story County Conservation an interpretive leader for all of Iowa. Her mastery of 28 different outreach programs and 16 field trip offerings, each with a distinct theme, would be a challenge for anybody, but Heather does it all, and with passion and dedication. Heather took the Summer Youth Program to new heights by developing caving explorations and local overnight paddling and camping trips to encourage confidence in the outdoors and team building. Eventually, this would expand into more ambitious trips around the country. Her leadership and dedication has exposed Iowa youth to life-changing backpacking experiences in the Smoky Mountains, Black Hills, and Rocky Mountains. As Iowa State Coordinator, she wrote and subsequently administered a nearly \$18,000 grant that provided financial assistance to 54 interpreters from Iowa to attend a national conference. --Victoria DeVos



Ron Russo

Outstanding Senior/Retired Interpreter

A distinguished 37-year career culminated when Ron retired as Chief Naturalist of the East Bay Regional Park District in 2003. Since his "retirement," Ron has authored over 20 articles that have been featured in Legacy and Natural History Magazine, as well as the magazines of the British Plant Gall Society and the Washington Native Plant Society. He has published original research in California Fish and Game and created his own publication, Plant Galls of California and Other Western States. An expert on plant galls, he has discovered 90 species of gall organisms that were previously unknown to science! In recognition of his contributions, two new species have been named in his honor. Ron is not resting on his laurels. He continues to write and publish about science and interpretation and is truly one of NAI's most prolific retirees. --Ray Novotny



Virginia Delgado

Outstanding New Interpreter

In only three years, Virginia Delgado has established herself as an emerging interpretive leader. In her first year at Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, Virginia led three one-week-long sessions of the Teen ECO Action program. Designed to engage youth from underserved communities, this program uses outdoor exploration and recreational skill development to introduce youth to natural resource careers. As a result of her excellent work, this program received the California Park and Recreation Society Creating Community Award of Excellence. Building on her previous success, Virginia designed and led a pilot interpretive internship program that provided local high school students with a paid professional development experience that included leading public programs and activities. As a result of Virginia's mentoring, half of those interns would be hired into entry-level positions with the park district. --Ira Bletz



Cem Basman

Meritorious Service Award

Four decades of interpretation have seen Dr. Cem Basman excel in nearly every conceivable aspect of interpretation: front-line interpreter, interpretive manager, interpretive consultant, academic, mentor, writer, and editor. He served as NAI President and Vice-President for Administration. Under his leadership NAI experienced one of the largest phases of growth in our organizations history, including the creation of the current professional certification program. Cem established the Journal of Interpretation Research, the first peer-juried journal for heritage interpretation and served as editor. Cem's work behind the scenes was tireless through his chairmanship of multiple national committees including: Personnel, national elections and nominations, national professional ethics, and the bylaws reorganization taskforce. Cem's leadership and dedication to NAI have been strong and sustained, and we are all profoundly better as a result. --Ray Novotny



Jeff Miller

Meritorious Service Award

A career change at age 50 brought Jeff Miller to the California State Parks and to NAI. In short order he decided to "get involved" in NAI. In ten years Jeff immersed himself in NAI at all levels. This includes stints as the Region 8 Director, a term on the National Board of Directors, contributing to Legacy magazine, serving as a Legacy awards judge, and serving as chair of a national conference. He earned three professional certifications and served on the CIH Curriculum Review Committee and as a peer reviewer for CIT packets. In addition, Jeff loves to share. This has resulted in presentations at Regions 8 and 9 conferences, five national conferences, and two international conferences. And if that wasn't enough, as chair of the Enos Mills Campaign Fund he raised over \$40,000. Talk about becoming involved! --Ray Novotny



Interpretive Media Awards

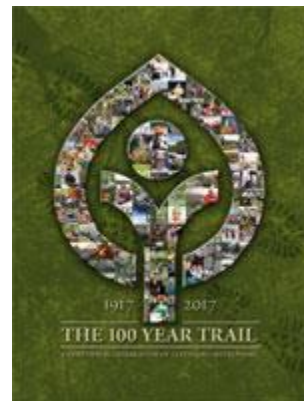
The Interpretive Media Awards Competition promotes excellence in the delivery of natural, cultural, and historical nonpersonal interpretive services. Through the exchange of ideas we increase the level of excellence in our profession.

Book

1st Place

The 100 Year Trail: A Centennial Celebration of Cleveland Metroparks
Cleveland Metroparks

Provides a well-rounded trek through Cleveland Metroparks' first 100 years of history-making adventures.



Digital Media

1st Place

Ozark Highlands Radio
Arkansas State Parks

Promotes and preserves the music and traditions of the Ozarks, through radio and emerging media, inviting you to explore your own personal connections to Ozark culture.



2nd Place

Craigdarroch Castle: An Augmented Reality Experience

NGX Interactive and Craigdarroch Castle

An augmented reality app that brings the rich stories and lively history of the castle to life.



Interior Exhibit

1st Place

Logoly State Park Visitor Center
Taylor Studios, Inc. and Arkansas State Parks

A unique storytelling approach immerses visitors intimately into the story of the Logoly forest.



2nd Place

Kinzua Bridge State Park Visitor Center and Park Office

106 Group, Blue Rhino Studio, Argentine Productions, and Kidzibits

Enticing multisensory and multimodal elements showcase the beauty of the park's natural environment.



3rd Place

Natural Regions Gallery at Indiana State Museum

Taylor Studios, Inc. and Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites

Conveying the wonder and importance of Indiana's lost or at-risk landscapes by placing the visitor in lush, immersive, and stunningly realistic dioramas.



Waysides

1st Place

Rosebrough Tiger Passage

Cleveland Metroparks

Educating and influencing the consumer behavior of zoo visitors through a greater understanding of the reasons Amur tigers are endangered and preventative measures to combat additional loss.



2nd Place

Kinzua Bridge State Park Visitor Center and Park Office

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Short Video

1st Place

Unconditional Surrender: The Dover Hotel

Harpers Ferry Center, Fort Donelson National Battlefield, and Aperture Films, Ltd.



The story of the Dover Hotel, the site of the surrender of Fort Donelson, which changed the course of the Civil War and made Ulysses S. Grant a household name.

2nd Place

Meet the Missileers

Harpers Ferry Center, Minuteman Missile National Historic Site, and Boston Productions, Inc.

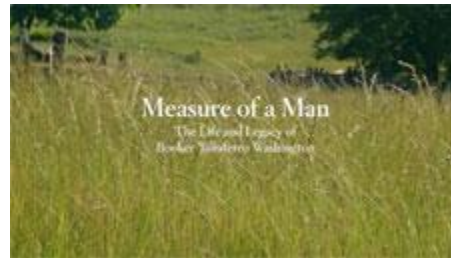


During the Cold War, US Air Force missileers were stationed in underground launch control centers and missile silos across the Midwest, waiting patiently for orders that-thankfully-never came.

3rd Place

Measure of a Man: The Life and Legacy of Booker Taliaferro Washington

RBH Multimedia, Inc. and Booker T. Washington National Monument



Part of the park's current interpretive direction, to have a comprehensive interpretation of Washington's life, replacing an outdated, "piecemeal" approach of interpretation.

Long Video

1st Place

Generations

Silver Fir Media and the National Park Service

Visitors explore the rich history and ecology of the Big South Fork NRRRA, proving you're never too young or old to set off on an adventure.



Site Publication

1st Place

Junior Ranger Activity Book
Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks

A variety of activity styles allows kids to find what they enjoy, even if they have a hard time with reading and writing.



2nd Place

Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve Junior Ranger Booklet
Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve

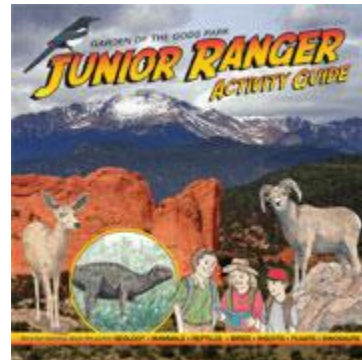
A fun, flexible, well-tested tool to help adults facilitate opportunities for kids to connect with nature and history.



3rd Place

Junior Ranger Activity Guide
Garden of the Gods Park

Engaging youth in the enjoyment, education, and stewardship of Garden of the Gods Park.



Legacy Magazine Awards

All articles in Legacy magazine are eligible for an award. The following pieces were selected by a panel of editorial judges.

Outstanding Feature Article

Cal Martin
"Of Finches of Men"

July/August 2016



Outstanding Column or Commentary

"Observational Ecology:
Renewing the Study of Nature"

March/April 2016



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