NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SELECTS RICHMOND FOR URBAN AGENDA INITIATIVE

RICHMOND, CA., – The National Park Service (NPS) joined Richmond Mayor Tom Butt in announcing the selection of Richmond as one of 10 cities in the nation to be selected as a NPS Model City -- a component of the NPS Urban Agenda Initiative. Included in the Urban Agenda is the placement of an Urban Fellow in each city. The goal of the initiative is to create and deploy a coherent system of parks, programs and partnerships within an urban landscape that will positively impact and enhance the city’s economic vitality, historic preservation, natural and cultural resources, outdoor recreation, youth and education opportunities, urban design and sustainability. The 10 cities selected are Boston, Detroit, New York City, Philadelphia, Jacksonville, Richmond (CA), Richmond (VA), St. Louis, Tucson and Washington, D.C.

The Urban Fellow will work with local government, stakeholders and private entities to identify recreation and preservation priorities, and assist with developing plans to reach those goals. Existing NPS programs including the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program, Historic preservation Tax Credit program, Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program and others will help facilitate recreation and historic preservation in Richmond’s urban settings.

“The National Park Service’s Urban Agenda creates a framework to connect parks, programs and partnerships in a way that will engage more people to the work the National Park Service is doing in communities across the country, including Richmond,” said National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis. “This is an ambitious plan, and the City of Richmond will be an essential partner as we look for new ways to engage in a public dialogue and connect more people to National Park Service programs, parks and opportunities.”

The NPS focused on Richmond because of its long-term partnership with the Rosie the Riveter / World War II / Home Front National Historical Park in addition to Richmond’s contribution to the mobilization of America’s industry and the changes in production techniques; the struggle for women’s and minority rights; the labor movement; the growth of pre-paid medical care; advances in early childhood education and daycare; recycling and rationing; major shifts in population; and changes in arts and culture.

(more)
In Richmond, former City Planner, Kieron Slaughter, was selected as the Urban Fellow and will serve as a liaison between the NPS and the City to establish priorities and develop plans for the program.

“We are fortunate to have a strong partnership with the National Park Service and the Urban Agenda Initiative will only excel the benefits to community we enjoy from having the Home Front National Historical Park in the city,” said Mayor Tom Butt. “Having Kieron as the Urban Fellow will ensure that the goal of extending the legacy of our National Parks is met with success.”

Slaughter was the project planner for the Bicycle, Pedestrian and Parks Master Plans in addition to projects that involved improvements to the Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historic Park and the San Francisco Bay Trail. In addition, Slaughter is a former resident of the City of Richmond. One of the first events to come from the NPS and City partnership was the Richmond Rosie the Riveter Rally held on August 15, 2015 at 1:00 pm. The Rosie Rally commemorated the 70th Anniversary of the end of World War II at the Rosie the Riveter Memorial in Marina Bay Park in Richmond. The event attracted more than 1,000 women dressed as Rosie the Riveter in an effort to break the Guinness World Record for people dressed as Rosie the Riveter.

The Urban Agenda is a program of the National Park Service Centennial, which will be celebrated in 2016. The Centennial will create opportunities for matching funds to augment new and existing programs that connect urban populations with history, culture and the outdoors. In particular, the NPS focus areas in youth engagement, improving transit systems and ecological resiliency will present many new opportunities for cities and NPS to partner to meet mutual goals. Furthermore, the Urban Agenda supports President Obama’s 21st Century Conservation agenda that calls for full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund and a $326 million NPS Centennial Fund. If enacted by Congress, this would provide an additional $25 million for the Urban Parks and Recreation Fund which assists economically distressed urban communities like Richmond with the revitalization and improvement of recreation opportunities.

Visit nps.gov/urban for more information on the Urban Agenda, and nps.gov/rori for more information on the Rosie the Riveter / World War II Home Front National Historical Park.

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