



BRYAN COUNTY RECREATION DEPT. DIRECTOR SAMOSE MAYS LEADS IN DEVELOPMENT OF MINORITY RECREATIONAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

BRYAN COUNTY, GA – SEPTEMBER 29, 2020 – Dr. Samose Mays, Bryan County's Parks and Recreation Department director, recently teamed with several other parks and recreation leaders from around the nation to form the Minority Recreational Leadership Academy. The new organization was formed to provide support to minority recreational professionals in regard to career advancement, academic empowerment, internships and mentoring within the parks and recreation industry which, typically, does not have substantial levels of minority representation.

Scholars with diverse academic backgrounds lead the organization, coordinating and organizing forums that address current industry topics, education sessions, programming, professional development, networking opportunities, and the advancement of academic subject matter. In addition, the academy's membership includes administrators, maintenance personnel, athletic programmers, authors, and professors.

The MRLA is starting as a monthly newsletter with educational articles composed by recreational professionals from around the country. The articles will be of a diverse selection of topics to help individuals advance in the field of parks and recreation. Although the program is in its early stages, it already caught the eye of the Georgia Recreation and Park Association. GRPA voted at its September board of trustees meeting to support the MRLA and help distribute the newsletter on its platforms.

Mays said he was inspired to lead the Minority Recreational Leadership Academy's creation partly by his speaking engagements and travels around the nation. He is an expert in the area of bullying prevention and frequently is invited to give presentations at parks and recreation conferences in other states. As he met experts in other parks and recreation subfields and grew

his connections, he realized they could all pool their knowledge and create some outstanding resources and opportunities to help those looking to get ahead.

“We all thought it would be great to see more minorities working in parks and recreation, but many up-and-coming leaders don’t see it as the professional field for them for a variety of reasons – they don’t see other minorities working in the industry; they aren’t sure how to find opportunities and get involved; they don’t really know what the jobs entail; they don’t realize what an amazing future and career they could have,” Mays said. “Well, we’re here to change that. We’re ready to provide pathways to success, provide support, advance careers, and help increase the involvement and participation of minorities in the parks and recreation field. We’re starting small with the newsletter, but this is only the beginning. We have plans to expand as our programs take hold.”

Mays earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Georgia Southern University and his doctorate in sports management at North Central University in 2016. He has served as Bryan County’s recreation director since March 2014. No stranger to public speaking, Mays also has served as an instructor at Georgia Southern University.

For more information on the Minority Recreational Leadership Academy, please visit <http://mrlainfo.com>, or to sign up for the MRLA newsletter, email mrlanewsletter@gmail.com. For more information about the Bryan County Recreation Department, please visit www.bryancountyga.org.

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