

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **CITY OF KITIMAT WINS BCRPA PROGRAM EXCELLENCE AWARD** ***Kitimat honoured with 2019 Program Excellence Award***

**Whistler, BC (May 2, 2019)** - The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) today presented its Program Excellence Award for members with a population under 15,000 to the City of Kitimat for its Kitimat Mini Mud and Mud Games program. The award recognizes a creative, successful and innovative program which may serve as a model for other recreation and parks agencies to enhance their services.

The Kitimat Mini Mud and Mud Games are team-focused recreational events open to all ages, providing active participation to both children and adults. The fun-filled Mud Games competition includes an eight kilometer course made up of 31 obstacles, utilizing as much of the natural environment as possible. A continuous shuttle service is provided to rotate spectators along the course so they may watch friends and family make their way through the obstacles. The course is designed by a local resident on his personal property, and constructed by multiple sponsors specifically to challenge participants mentally and physically.

The Mud Games began as a partnership between the District of Kitimat, the local Chamber of Commerce and a local business owner to bring together the community and invite participants from around the region to take part in a fun, entertaining, and team-building competition. The weekend originally included one event for participants aged 12 and over, but was met with so much enthusiasm from children under 12 years old, the event organizers designed a smaller, more manageable course for children, called the Mini Mud Games.

The mandate of the District of Kitimat's Leisure Services is to promote a healthy lifestyle both physically and mentally within the community while encouraging the development of sportsmanship, leadership, skills and development, self-esteem, enjoyment, and creativity within the recreation community. The Kitimat Mini Mud and Mud Games were designed to reflect and support this mandate.

"It is our pleasure to present the City of Kitimat with this Program Excellence award for Kitimat Mini Mud and Mud Games. This program engages community members of all ages in a unique, homegrown outdoor recreation program that while offering up a physical and mental challenge for participants, also provides an opportunity for deeper engagement and community connection for all," said Rebecca Tunnacliffe, CEO of the BC Recreation and Parks Association.

The Program Excellence Award is one of four provincial awards presented at the BCRPA's annual Symposium today in Whistler. The conference brings together members of the recreation and parks sector from across BC, including elected officials, volunteers, members of the business community and others interested in enhancing the physical and mental health, wellness, connectedness and quality of life of their communities.

Images Available  
Background included

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**BACKGROUND**

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) is the voice of public recreation and parks, and champions the sector's development of healthy people and connected communities. Representing over 90% of the provinces' local governments, we play a central role in supporting the enrichment and improvement of the quality of life of British Columbians. Our work as a not-for-profit organization focuses on creating community connectedness and well-being based on the knowledge and recognition that recreation and active living, as well as access to parks and the natural environment, have significant impacts on our physical and mental health.

Since 1958, the BCRPA has provided leadership, training and support, fostering the principles of accessibility and inclusiveness, to help its members meet provincial and local mental health and physical activity priorities.

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