

# 2016 Award Recipients

The Benton H. Box Award - Dr. Wayne Freimund

The William C. Everhart Award - Julia Washburn

The Walter T. Cox Award - Ann Springs Close

The Dwight A. Holder Award - Dr. Keenan Adams

The Fran P. Mainella Award – awarded alternate years

The Robert G. Stanton Award - Dr. Lavelle Merritt

The Institute for Parks Distinguished Service Award - Ron H. Walker

## **The Benton H. Box Award**

The Award is named in appreciation of Dr. Box's distinguished career as an educator/administrator, especially as Dean of the College of Forest and Recreation Resources at Clemson University, which he led to national and international recognition for academic excellence and for leadership in fostering private innovation in resource management. The Award recognizes the teacher who by precept and example inspires in students the quest for knowledge; or the administrator who fosters a learning environment and encourages curriculum innovation to inculcate an "environmental ethic" as the rule of conduct involving resource management, development and utilization; or the private practitioner whose management over a sustained period demonstrates leadership in preserving, enhancing, renewing and restoring a livable environment.

**The Benton H. Box Award was awarded to Dr. Wayne Freimund for recognition as a teacher who by precept and example inspires in students the quest for knowledge and encourages curriculum innovation to inculcate an “environmental ethic” as the rule of conduct.**



*Dr. Benton H. Box, Dr. Wayne Freimund, and Dr. Jeff Hallo*

**Dr. Wayne Freimund** has served on the Park, Tourism and Recreation Management faculty at the University of Montana since 1993. He teaches courses in Advanced Protected Area Management, Advanced Visitor Management, Planning for Recreation and Tourism, and National Parks and American Culture. He has extensive research experience in U.S. National Parks and Forests on planning, visitor management and community involvement, including winter use management at Yellowstone National Park and Going to the Sun Road planning at Glacier National Park. He has formally advised 12 Ph.D. students and 19 M.S. students. He was Co-Director of the International Seminar on Protected Area Management (ISPAM) for 15 years. ISPAM has served over 550 protected area managers from 83 countries. Dr. Freimund is also a member of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas. Dr. Freimund has worked extensively in southern Africa on integrating social and ecological systems associated with protected areas. He has held several administration positions at the University of Montana including Wilderness Institute Director, Chair of the Department of Society and Conservation, and Interim Dean of the College of Forestry and Conservation. He did his undergraduate and Doctoral work at the University of Minnesota and his M.S. at West Virginia University. He and his wife Tammy live in Missoula Montana.

## The William C. Everhart Award

The Award is named in appreciation of the distinguished career of Bill Everhart as field interpreter, researcher, administrator, author, and creator of the National Park Service's Harpers Ferry Center for creative design and communication, which has received national and international recognition for excellence. The Award recognizes sustained achievements during a career or in a specific episode that illuminate, provide creative insights to, and that foster an appreciation of our natural and cultural heritage.

**The William C. Everhart Award was awarded to Julia Washburn for recognition of sustained achievements during a career or in a specific episode that illuminate, provide creative insights to, and that foster an appreciation of our natural and cultural heritage.**



*Julia Washburn with Dr. Brett Wright*

As National Park Service Associate Director for Interpretation, Education, and Volunteers, **Julia Washburn** is responsible for the Volunteers-In-Parks program, Harpers Ferry Center for Media Services (publications, exhibits, audio-visual production, and historic furnishings), and NPS relationships with cooperating associations, non-profit organizations that support educational, scientific, historical,

and interpretive activities. She also manages all areas of interpretation and education, which across the country annually swear in almost 600,000 Junior Rangers and conduct more than 57,000 curriculum-based education programs.

Washburn started her career with the NPS in 1989 after serving two years in the Peace Corps as a volunteer science teacher in Sierra Leone, West Africa. Washburn's first NPS job was as a park ranger at Fort Dupont Park in Washington, D.C. She has also worked at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, W.Va., and at Rock Creek Park, D.C., where she was Chief of Resource Management, Interpretation and Education. Washburn served as co-chair of the National Park Service's Education Council and was a chief architect of the Interpretation and Education Renaissance, a movement to revitalize interpretation and education across the NPS.

In 2000, Washburn left the Park Service to join the National Park Foundation as Senior Vice President for Grants and Programs where she led a team who delivered millions of dollars in grants and in-kind services to parks and their partners. In 2007, Washburn founded a consulting firm to provide strategic and interpretive planning, education program design, and management support services for conservation, preservation, and environmental education organizations.

She also teaches adjunct at George Washington University in the museum education graduate program.

## **The Walter T. Cox Award**

The Award is so named in appreciation of Dr. Cox's distinguished career in education and public service, especially his tenure as President of Clemson University and as the Director of the Santee-Cooper Authority. The Award recognizes sustained achievement in public service on the firing line, where the public interest meets the private interest in public policy formulation and administration; distinguished leadership and support of innovation in conflict resolution of policy initiatives that enhance the

quality of life; personal achievements during a career or in a specific episode that provides inspiration and leadership to others in serving the above purposes.

**The Walter T. Cox Award was awarded to Ann Springs Close for sustained achievement in public service providing leadership in administration of public lands and for policy formation affecting our natural and cultural resources.**



*Ann Springs Close with Fran Mainella*

**Ann Springs Close** was raised in Fort Mill, SC. She is one of South Carolina's most dedicated environmentalists and philanthropists. She has served on the Springs Close Foundation board since 1946 and has served as Chair since 1983. She was instrumental in the development of the Anne Springs Close Greenway, which is a 2,100-acre multi-purpose recreation and greenspace in Fort Mill, SC that was awarded the American Greenways DuPont Award in 1995 by The Conservation Fund and The National Geographic Society. She was Director of Springmaid Equestrian Camp in Fort Mill, SC for 15 years. She has also served as founding member of Palmetto Conservation Foundation and was Chair of Palmetto Trails, which is dedicated to developing a 300-mile trail from the mountains of upstate South Carolina to the coastal shores.

She served as Chair of the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) and board member from 1981-1993. NRPA awarded her the Ralph C. Wilson Award in 1990 and the Pugsley Award in 2001. During this same period (1984-86) she served on the board of The Wilderness Society. For all of these accomplishments, Ann received the South Carolina Wildlife Federation Legend of Conservation Award in 2011.

## **The Dwight A. Holder Award**

The Award is named in honor of Mr. Holder's illustrious career as an entrepreneur and public servant. As Chairman of the South Carolina Parks, Recreation and Tourism Commission he led South Carolina's parks into a new era of service to the people of South Carolina and the nation. The Award recognizes outstanding work by doctoral candidates in the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management; a member of the Department faculty for original research, scholarly writing, and innovative and inspired teaching; the faculty adviser and graduate student as a team, for initiatives that foster understanding of and provide new insights into the promotion, management, wise use and enjoyment of South Carolina's natural and cultural heritage in perpetuity; and distinguished academic leadership by a member of the Department faculty. (Mr. Holder passed away in Spring 2006).

**The Dwight A. Holder Award was awarded to Dr. Keenan Adams, for outstanding work and sustained achievement that foster understanding, wise use, and conservation of natural and cultural resources.**



*Dr. Keenan Adams and Dr. Drew Lanham*

**Dr. Keenan Adams** received a full athletic scholarship to play football at Furman University where he received a B.S. in Biology. Keenan was awarded his M.S. degree in Forest Resources (avian and disturbance ecology) and PhD in Wildlife Biology with a concentration in human dimensions from Clemson University. He received a plethora of academic awards during his graduate school tenure including the Douglas R. Phillips Award for Graduate Students in Forestry, multiple “Best Presentation” and “Best Poster” at professional conferences, and travel fellowships. Keenan was significantly engaged in the Clemson campus. He served as the Graduate adviser for Omega Psi Phi, instructed and assisted six courses, and worked as a mentor in the athletic department for five years.

In 2006, he began his professional career as biologist trainee with the U.S. Forest Service. Keenan secured a job with his dream agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as an assistant manager at Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in 2009. In 2010, Adams was named the deputy project leader for the Pelican Island NWR Complex in Vero Beach, FL. He was an integral to establishing the Everglades Headwaters NWR, one of the Nation’s newest Refuges. In 2012, Keenan accepted a Refuge System Headquarters biologist position in Fort Collins, CO. He led the redesigning of the Refuge System’s spatially explicit decision support tool that allocates over 100 million dollars of annual land protection funding. In November of

2014, Adams was promoted to Division Chief of Biological Resources for the Mountain-Prairie Region becoming the youngest person selected for a Division Chief. In his current role, Keenan administers the Inventory and Monitoring program, Conservation Planning, Invasive Species, Ecological Assessment, the Wildlife Health Office, and serves as the lead biologist for eight states. Adams has become a fanatic for “Western Hunting”, enjoys birding, wildlife photography, fly-fishing, and is an avid traveler. Keenan is a strong proponent of having a healthy work/life balance and believes in the power of laughter.

## **The Fran P. Mainella Award**

The Award is named in appreciation of the dynamic career of Fran Mainella as the first woman Director of the National Park Service. As Director, she focused some of her many efforts on creating systems of connected parks and developing innovative partnerships to expand services. Director Mainella was previously the Director of the Florida State Park Service and the Executive Director of the Florida Recreation and Park Association. The Award recognized sustained and innovative achievement by a woman in the management of North America's natural, historic or cultural heritage.

## **The Robert G. Stanton Award**

The Award is named in appreciation of the remarkable career of Robert Stanton as the first African-American Director of the National Park Service. Among the many accomplishments of Director Stanton was expansion of the interpretation of diverse cultural meanings inherent in National Parks and increased participation by racial and ethnic minorities as both visitors and employees. The Award recognizes sustained and innovative achievement in promoting racial or ethnic diversity in the management of North America's natural, historic and cultural heritage.



**The Robert G. Stanton Award was awarded to Dr. Lavelle Merritt for sustained and innovative achievement in promoting racial or ethnic diversity in the management of North America's natural, historic and cultural heritage.**



*Dr. Harrison Pinckney, Dr. Lavelle Merritt, and Robert G. Stanton*

**Dr. Lavell Merritt, Jr.** is the Program Manager of the National Park Service ProRanger Program located at Texas A&M University, in CollegeStation, Texas. The ProRanger Program is a National Park Service Law Enforcement recruitment, training and career placement program. Since beginning the program in 2009 over 65 students have participated.

Dr. Merritt has been a National Park Ranger since 1998. He has worked in several parks around the country including; Fort Necessity National Battlefield, Friendship Hill National Historic Site, Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site, National Capital Parks-East, and Lyndon Baines Johnson National Historic Park. While working at National Capital Parks-East in southeast Washington, DC he worked closely with the community and youth, coordinating education and natural resource stewardship programs.

Through his career Dr. Merritt participated as a wildland fire fighter and has been on a search and rescue team. He was a Peace Corps volunteer in Ethiopia in 1996 and 1997.

Dr. Merritt earned his PhD in Recreation, Park and Tourism Science from Texas A&M University in December of 2009. His dissertation evaluated the Negotiated Rulemaking Process at Cape Hatteras National Seashore. During his time working on his PhD at Texas A&M Dr. Merritt was on a six-month detail with the National Park Service Southeast Regional Office recruiting students to the NPS. He conducted lectures and recruitment presentations with hundreds of undergraduate and graduate students. He was also responsible for creating new partnerships between Texas A&M University and the NPS and has mentored graduate students conducting research in the National Parks. He is the author of a book *Evaluating a Negotiated Rulemaking Process. Public Land Management at Cape Hatteras National Seashore* published by Lambert Academic Publishing. He has also published research articles in several journals.

## **The Institute for Parks Distinguished Service Award**



*Dr. Lawrence Allen, Ronald H. Walker and Dr. Robert Powell*

**Ron H. Walker** was the inaugural Chairman of the Board of Advisors for the Institute for Parks at Clemson University (2007-2015). Ron H. Walker has an extensive record

of accomplishments and service in business, government, and international consulting. Most recently, Mr. Walker was a Senior Partner for more than twenty years with Korn/Ferry International, the World's largest Executive Search Firm.

Mr. Walker's extensive and distinguished record of government service includes Special Assistant to the President of the United States from 1969 to 1972 where he was the founder and first director of the White House Advance Office. He was responsible for planning and coordinating all Presidential travel both domestic and international. Those visits included all 50 states and 25 countries. He personally directed the preparations for the President's historic trips to the People's Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

President Nixon appointed him the eighth Director of the National Park Service in December, 1972 where he served until 1975. He was charged with the preservation and care of 300 National Park System units encompassing 30 million acres of land. He administered a budget of \$350 million and managed 15,000 employees who served the 230 million people that visited America's parklands annually.

Mr. Walker has served as a consultant to the White House Personnel Office. He has also served as a senior advisor to four Presidents and on Special Diplomatic assignments abroad. In addition, he has served as a senior advisor to nine Republican Conventions, highlighted by his Chairmanship and position of CEO of the 1984 Republican National Convention in Dallas, Texas. At the request of President Ronald Reagan, he also chaired the 50th Presidential Inauguration.

Mr. Walker has served on numerous boards, both public and private, including the Richard M. Nixon Foundation (Chairman), the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), Kennedy Center, Vice Chair of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, past chairman of the Freedom's Foundation at Valley Forge, the National Park Foundation, Grand Teton

National Park Foundation, Ford's Theatre, and Vice Chairman of the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution.

Ron Walker was born in Texas in 1937 and raised in India, Iraq, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia, while his father was with the U.S. Government and the Ford Foundation. Mr. Walker attended the University of Arizona where he studied government and American History. He currently serves as a member of the University of Arizona Presidential Leadership Foundation.

Upon graduation, he received a commission in the United States Army and served at Fort Knox, Fort Bragg and the Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa) from 1961-64, rising to the rank of Captain.

Anne Collins and Ron Walker were married in 1959. They have three daughters, Lisa Walker Hart, Marja Walker and Lynne Walker McNeas. They have two grandsons, Hugh Walker Hart and John Henry Hart (Jake).

After almost forty years in the Washington, DC area, the Walkers divide their time between Tucson, Arizona and Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Mr. Walker's other interests include fly-fishing, hiking, golf, cooking, photography reading, and any National Park.