

**2018 Potomac Chapter ASLA Lifetime Achievement Awardee
John G. Parsons, FASLA
Landscape Architect**



John Parsons (left) receives Lifetime Achievement Award from Potomac Chapter President Steve Cook

John Parsons, a 40-year veteran of the National Park Service, served as Associate Regional Director in Washington from 1977 to his retirement in 2008 where he represented the Secretary of Interior on the National Capital Planning Commission and the District of Columbia Zoning Commission. He was also Chairman of the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission.

He directed the planning, development, land acquisition, legislative and cultural resource programs for the 80,000-acre National Park System in and around Washington, DC.

Mr. Parsons was awarded the Department of the Interior's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Medal, and is a fellow in the American Society of Landscape Architects which awarded him the 2003 LaGasse Medal in recognition of his leadership in protecting and enhancing National Parklands. In 2006, he was awarded the Herbert Adams Medal by the National Sculpture Society for his support of sculpture in national memorials. In 2008, The Mayor of The District of Columbia presented him with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his significant contributions in historic preservation in the Nation's Capital.

Experience

Associate Regional Director, Lands, Resources and Planning, National Park Service, National Capital Region, 1977-08

- Member, District of Columbia Zoning Commission
- Chairman, National Capital Memorial Commission
- Member, Washington Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, Transportation Planning Board
- Lead the efforts to create three major waterfront parks in Georgetown, Alexandria and Anacostia, the parks along Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the White House, the redevelopment of the National Mall, Washington Monument Grounds and Constitution Gardens.
- Served as Vice Chairman of National Capital Planning Commission and chaired two subcommittees which produced the "Historic Preservation Element" and the "Parks, Open Space, and Natural Features Element" of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.
- Directed the establishment of five new units of the National Park System: Monocacy National Battlefield, Mary Mcleod Bethune National Historic Site, Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Park, Clara Barton National Historic Park and Carter G. Woodson National Historic Site.
- Directed the legislation, location and design of 25 memorial proposals which are at various stages of implementation. Included are: The 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence, Vietnam Veterans, Lyndon B. Johnson, Kahlil Gibran, Women who served in Vietnam, Law Enforcement Officers, Korean War, Armored Forces, Women in Military Service to America, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Black Civil War Soldiers, George Mason, Mahatma Ghandi, Japanese American Patriots, World War II, U.S Air Force, U.S. Navy, Martin Luther King, Victims of Communism, Dwight D. Eisenhower and John Adams Memorials.
- Directed major boundary expansions of and subsequent land acquisition within Harpers Ferry, Manassas, Antietam, Monocacy, Piscataway and C&O Canal National Historical Parks which resulted in 35,000 additional acres of parkland.
- Managed the Cultural Resource Program for the Parks within the Region. Disciplines within this function were Historic Architect, Historian, Archeologist, Historic Landscape Architect and Curators of Historic Objects and Artifacts.
- Created innovative land exchanges and zoning regulations to protect landscapes adjacent to parklands from adverse private development.

- Chief, Park Planning, NPS, NCR 1972 -77

- Park Planner NPS DSC 1971-72

- Landscape Architect, NPS, DSC 1968-71 Team member and author of master plans for existing and proposed parks within the National Capital System Such as Mammoth Cave National Park, and Fort Pulaski, Moores Creek, Cowpens National Historical Parks and the Appalachian Trail.

- Chief Landscape Architect, Rhode Island Department of Public works 1965-67

- Rhode Island Development Council, Chief Planner for the first Rhode Island Outdoor Recreation Plan 1965

Education

Rhode Island School of Design, Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture 1965 ,President of the Student Body, 1964

Memberships

American Society of Landscape Architects

- Past President of the Potomac Chapter
- Past Delegate to the National Society "Under 35 Task Force," which dealt with young members' involvement in the national society during the 1970s
- Elected as a Fellow - 1984
- Chairman, Public Practice Steering Committee 1993 - 1999

American Society of Landscape Architects Foundation, Member of the Board of Directors

Lambda Alpha International, Member, honorary land economics society

Hobbies

Photography, Woodworking, Painting in watercolor, Canoeing and Fly fishing