IIRSA Professional Staff Development Program

The Illinois Intramural Recreational Sports Association (IIRSA) Professional Staff Development program has been implemented to provide professional staff members financial assistance for expenses related to attending the NIRSA Annual Conference.

The goal of this initiative is to assist Illinois professionals and institutions in need and to increase representation at the NIRSA Annual Conference from institutions that are traditionally underrepresented, including but not limited to community colleges and institutions with enrollment fewer than 2,000 students. By including the wide range of higher education institutions within Illinois, the state association and the students we serve will benefit from having new perspectives, new opportunities, and expanded professional networks to exchange knowledge.

In addition, the professional staff member receiving this assistance will enhance their professional and personal development through educational sessions, discussions with colleagues, and tours of facilities. As a result, they will be better prepared to address the needs of their students on each respective campus.

Scholarship Eligibility

To be considered for the scholarship to attend the *NIRSA Annual Conference*, professional members must:

1. Be an IIRSA member https://www.illinoisirsa.org/memberships
2. Be currently employed at an Illinois college, university or community college while applying for the scholarship and during attendance at the workshop
3. Be working within a recreation department or closely related student services office

Selection Criteria

1. Candidates must meet all eligibility requirements to be considered for selection
2. Candidates and their submitted responses will be rated on the following:
    a. A personal desire to attend and limited financial support from current institution
    b. Leadership and involvement in the field of recreational sports
    c. Involvement with local campus activities
    d. Potential for future contributions to the recreation profession
    e. **Use of AI is not permitted**. Your response should be based on your experience.

Selection Committee

The Scholarship Committee will consist of *at least* three (3) professionals and one (1) student member(s) of IIRSA. Committee members from varying and diverse institutions will be appointed by the IIRSA State Director. The State Director will act as an ex-officio member, voting only to break any ties that occur during the selection process.

Execution of Awards

The number and amount of awards offered annually will vary. The final allocation will be determined by the financial state of the scholarship fund. All decisions, including but not limited to the amount of assistance awarded, how many scholarships are awarded, requests to reallocate funds from recipients, etc.will be left to the discretion of the Scholarship Committee, with final ratification from the IIRSA Executive Committee.

The maximum allowable scholarship award in any given year, regardless of the conference, will be equal to the NIRSA Professional Member early bird registration for the NIRSA Annual Conference.

Obligations of Recipients

1. Recipients must notify the IIRSA Scholarship Committee Chair or their designee in writing to claim their award. Please note what the award would be like to use for (i.e. travel, lodging, registration).

2. Recipients should note if they have received any additional funding/scholarships (i.e. Scholarship through the NIRSA Foundation).

3. Recipients must attend the annual conference during the academic year in which they received the scholarship or forfeit their award. If any award recipient is not able to attend the conference, the scholarship may be awarded to the next highest ranked applicant or returned to the scholarship fund.

4. Recipients must provide IIRSA with receipts for expenses after completing registration. The recipient will be reimbursed in the dollar amount of the award.

5. Recipients are expected to serve in a volunteer capacity while at the annual conference. The State Director is available to assist recipients who are interested in obtaining assignments to determine appropriate opportunities.

6. Recipients are expected to attend the State Meeting at the Annual Conference to be recognized. If a recipient is unable to attend, they must contact the Chair of IIRSA Scholarship Committee.

Please complete the IIRSA Scholarship Application here: https://forms.gle/qaUC8JggL356uxcWA

Monday, October 19 - Professional Scholarship Application Opens
Friday, December 4 - Professional Scholarship Application Closes
Monday, December 21 - Notification of Award

For questions or additional information, please contact Ashley Sims, IIRSA Scholarship Committee Chair
E-mail: asims19@depaul.edu