



# Annual Report 2018



**Parks and Recreation Ontario**

Healthy People | Vibrant Communities | Sustainable Environments



# A MESSAGE FROM PRO'S LEADERS

Parks and recreation is commonly seen as a source of play and leisure, a place people can go to throw a ball, have a picnic, or take a class. But our sector is so much more than that. We are community health leaders, conservation advocates, and equity champions. We help ensure that everyone has access to the programs and spaces that contribute to social, physical, and emotional health. We play a vital role in the economic and environmental well-being of Ontarians and their communities. In short, we affect real social change.

This past year, we supported our members through new political realities, changing demographics, and the ever present issue of budgetary constraints. PRO brought together thought leaders from across the country at our conferences to tackle critical issues such as inclusion, technology, and resource allocation. We saw our flagship programs expand and we worked to create more tools and resources. In this report, it is clear to see that we have made great strides in advancing the benefits of parks and recreation. This would not be possible without our members.

At PRO, we know that our strength lies in our diverse membership. We rely on our members to inform our policy submissions, training events, and advocacy positions. Since 1995, PRO has worked to provide our members with the tools they need to ensure the vitality of parks and recreation in their communities. But we are always striving to do better. In 2018, we embarked on a series of conversations with members from across the province to find out how we can best serve them and what our strategic priorities should be moving forward. As we hear more from our members, we are eager to begin work on our new strategic plan that is responsive to the needs of the sector. A relevant and compelling strategic plan needs to be created by the sector and for the sector and we will be working hard to ensure we reflect the diversity of the sector.

On that note, we would like to extend our thanks to the members, stakeholders, and partners who have played such a pivotal role in ensuring the success of the sector. We couldn't be more proud to say that so many of Ontario's service providers stand behind the work we do.



**Jan Wilson**  
*Chair*



**Cathy Denyer**  
*CEO*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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 Marion Price  
 Pari Rajagopalan  
 Jennifer Reynolds



### POLICY LEADERSHIP

Public policy at all levels supports and enables equitable access to quality recreation and park opportunities.



### SUPPORTING WELLBEING

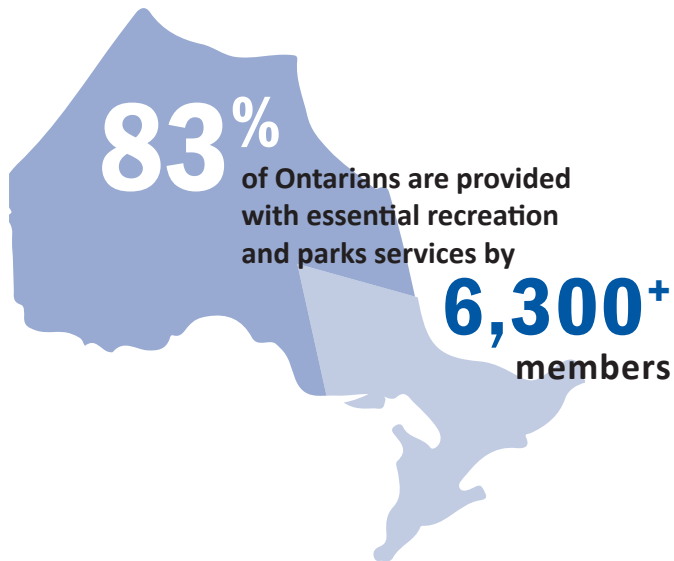
Stakeholders will have enhanced capacity to deliver quality programs and services that will help people to lead healthier lifestyles.



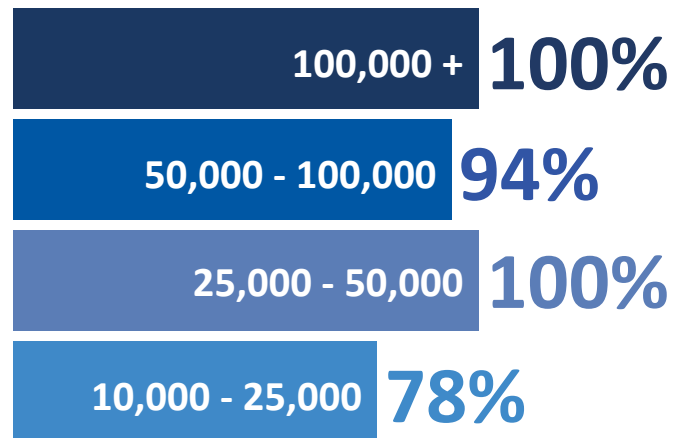
### QUALITY STANDARDS

Through the HIGH FIVE® Standard, organizations are delivering quality programs that contribute to the holistic health of participants.

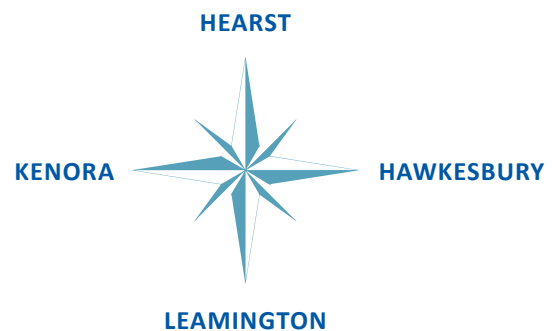
# OUR MEMBERS. OUR STRENGTH. YOUR PRO.



## PRO MEMBERS (%) BY POPULATION SIZE OF MUNICIPALITY



## MEMBERSHIP REACH IN ONTARIO



## OUR VISION

Healthy People  
Vibrant Communities  
Sustainable Environments

## OUR MISSION

Advance quality recreation and parks through advocacy, standards, tools and training

# POLICY LEADERSHIP

2018 was a year of political change in Ontario. With a new provincial government and many new members of municipal council across the province, it was more important than ever that PRO play a leadership role in public policy. With a unified voice and a clear vision, PRO has been able to positively influence legislation, regulation and develop policy to enhance access to recreation and parks.

## NEW GOVERNMENT, NEW APPROACH, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

During more than a decade of Liberal leadership, PRO had established itself as a trusted advisor with government. In the lead up to the 2018 election, PRO mounted a campaign, positioning the importance of recreation and parks with the three leading parties. PRO used powerful data to illustrate the far-reaching benefits of investing in recreation and parks for economic, health and social benefits.

The PC government acted swiftly and issued several pieces of legislation that would affect recreation and parks. PRO was poised with responses to the proposed legislation to ensure that the government considered the impact on communities.

As promised, the PC Government kept the minimum wage at \$14 per hour, allowing municipalities and non-profit recreation providers to adjust. The omnibus Bill 66, Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act, affects numerous pieces of legislation, ranging from the Planning Act to the Child Care and Early Years Act. Thanks to PRO's continued efforts, this proposed legislation would allow children who are four and five years old to take part in authorized recreation programs before and after school. This means children entering JK (aged 3.8 years or older) could participate in authorized recreational programs, instead of those entering Grade 1.



## POOL REGULATIONS

Before the election, the Liberal Government finalized the regulations under the Health Promotion and Protection Act. The modernization of these regulations was a three-year process and PRO was a key stakeholder in the consultation process. PRO also led efforts to educate the sector on the new regulations, supported by its partners Canadian Red Cross and Lifesaving Society.





## CANADIAN PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION

As one of the 13 provincial/territorial partners that make up CPRA, PRO played a leadership role on many national files. CPRA co-lead the implementation and monitoring working group for the Framework for Recreation in Canada. PRO received funding from CPRA to enhance the Municipal Audit Toolkit, a resource that helps municipalities align with the goals and priorities of the Framework.

PRO provided support for CPRA's advocacy efforts on several pieces of legislation including Bill S-228, the proposed Bill that would limit marketing of less-healthy food to children.



## REPRESENTING THE BREADTH OF RECREATION

Parks and recreation play a vital role in the daily lives of Ontarians and many different provincial ministries have programs and policies that support the sector. PRO represents the sector on many provincial task forces, both with government and with allied stakeholders.

Here are a few of the partnerships and advisory groups that PRO contributed to in 2018:

### GOVERNMENT

#### Ministry of Education

Recreation Stakeholder Working Group

#### Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Recreational Water Stakeholder Group

#### Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport and Ministry of Transportation

Ministers' Advisory Panel on Cycling;  
Ontario Trails Strategy Steering Group;  
Rowan's Law Advisor

### SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Healthy Eating in Recreation Settings Project  
Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance  
Ontario Collaborative on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity  
Ontario Mentoring Coalition  
Outdoor Play Canada Steering Committee

**“PRO has great ongoing communication with their members, beneficial for keeping everyone up to date with ever changing standards.”**

*– PRO Member*

# SUPPORTING WELLBEING

PRO supports the wellbeing of Ontarians by building capacity within the recreation sector and beyond through training and resources. In today's competitive and results-driven world, research, training and thought leadership are critical to ensure the growth and sustainability of our sector. In 2018, more than 18,000 certifications offered by PRO were held by professionals, students and volunteers working across Canada.

## CONFERENCES

PRO has three flagship events designed to meet the educational and professional needs of the sector: the Educational Forum and Trade Show; the Aquatics Conference; and the MBA Symposium on Youth Development. To ensure parks and recreation staff and volunteers are on the leading edge of service provision, session content continues to expand through presentations from across Canada and beyond. New discussion sessions have also been included to enhance networking opportunities and to share best practices.

## LEARNING AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Here's just a small sample of the wide range of topics covered at PRO events:

- Open data in the recreation sector
- Rural tourism: harnessing local amenities
- Factors driving facility design
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Working effectively with first responders
- Dead water, the silent killer
- The customer is always right
- Healthy aging for older adults
- Preparing for the legalization of cannabis

## WORKSHOPS AND WEBINARS

PRO offers workshops and webinars on trends, issues and important legislative changes. PRO partnered with sector experts for three webinars on the implementation of new regulations governing the operation of public pools and spas and held two information sessions on Yardstick, a tool to help communities benchmark their parks operations and open spaces. PRO also continued to offer its targeted, intensive workshops for camp and after school program staff.

The Parks and Recreation Management Certificate Program was created to build capacity in the sector and provide future leaders with skills required to advance their careers. Since its launch in 2016, more than 120 individuals have successfully completed the program, which is offered in partnership with the Schulich Executive Education Centre at the School of Business at York University.



*Parks and Recreation Management Certificate Program (PRMC)  
Class of October 2018*



## SPOTLIGHT ON MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

PRO has a powerful and dedicated membership and we are committed to continually enhancing our programs to better meet the diverse needs of the sector. 2018 marked the beginning of a new, multi-year member engagement plan. In March, PRO hosted a think tank for senior leaders at the PRO Forum and CEO Cathy Denyer continued these conversations in meetings with members across the province. We also launched an e-newsletter, PROFile, focused on legislation, advocacy and trends.

One of the key activities in this first year was a member survey. Just over 700 people, or about 12% of PRO's members, responded to the survey. The results confirmed that members highly value PRO's programs and services. The data will help PRO create a long-term plan and enhance current offerings.

As education, training and networking were most important to members, PRO will take advantage of technology and new opportunities to meet sector needs throughout the province.

What are the most pressing issues for PRO Members?



Result from Membership Survey 2018

PRO does an excellent job representing the Parks & Recreation industry and advocating on our behalf with provincial and federal levels of government."

– PRO Member

## A FOCUS ON YOUTH

Since 2005, PRO has been the leading organization for Play Works, the Ontario Partnership for Active and Engaged Youth. The Play Works Youth Friendly Recognition Program is now firmly established as a benchmark of excellence, with 45 youth friendly communities recognized across the province. Play Works is pleased to say that nearly 40% of Ontario young people live in Youth Friendly Communities!



**PLAY WORKS**  
The Ontario Partnership for Active Youth.

2018 was the last year of a three-year Ontario Trillium Foundation grant to support youth engagement in Ontario. Since the beginning of the project, PRO has supported the creation and helped sustain of 18 Youth Advisory/Action Committees in rural Ontario. A day-long workshop on Rural Youth Engagement was created and hosted in 14 locations across the province and for more than 350 registrants, and nearly 100 attended the *Do you have what it takes to be an Adult Advisor* webinar.

## BUILDING LEADERS: GREEN JOBS

The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association secured Government of Canada funding via Employment and Social Development Canada to support a "green jobs" program for youth. The Green Jobs initiative will provide meaningful job experiences for 1,000 youth working outdoors in parks and natural areas.

PRO administered this subsidy program in Ontario and Manitoba. In Ontario, more than 200 youth in communities across the province were employed in a huge range of jobs in the sector.



# QUALITY STANDARDS

Quality can be defined as the standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; or the degree of excellence of something. High quality recreation and parks make a significant contribution to the overall health and wellbeing of Ontarians. That is why quality stands as the third pillar in PRO's strategic plan.



The best way to play™

As Canada's quality standard for children's programs, HIGH FIVE® continues to reach more communities and children each and every year. Organizations are embracing the holistic approach to quality that encompasses training, policies and evaluation.

With the expansion of HIGH FIVE to include Healthy Aging, the standard is now able to meet the needs of Canada's older adults.



**HIGH FIVE®**  
**Registered Organizations**  
in 12 provinces and territories



**Accredited Organizations**  
committed to the highest level of quality assurance, including the first outside of Ontario, St. John's, Newfoundland



**Children**  
having quality experiences in programs using HIGH FIVE®



**New Trainers**  
in Principles of Healthy Aging



**Certified**  
in the Principles of Healthy Aging







## QUALITY EXPERIENCES NEVER GET OLD

With a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, PRO worked with subject matter experts to develop and deliver a new training, the HIGH FIVE Principles of Healthy Aging. Already 825 practitioners have been trained across Canada. To complete the suite of resources, PRO has worked with researchers and practitioners, such as the Canadian Centre for Active Aging, to modify the QUEST 1 and QUEST 2 tools to be applicable for older adult programs, which are scheduled for release in 2019. PRO is connecting with new partners such as retirement homes and seniors' centres to ensure that all older adults have access to quality services.

## BENCHMARKING FOR QUALITY RECREATION AND PARKS

More communities are assessing their assets and how they respond to constituent needs. To help parks departments do this, and to benchmark services against best practices, PRO has partnered with the Ontario Parks Association and Yardstick to help local communities tell their story. Yardstick is a benchmarking tool for recreation facilities and parks that delivers "need to know" information to establish and maintain quality services. In our knowledge- and data-driven sector, tools like Yardstick will ensure PRO's members and stakeholders are enhancing quality for all programs and services.



## ALWAYS EVOLVING – ALWAYS IMPROVING

For over 15 years, PRO has worked with its partners to make HIGH FIVE Canada's recognized standard for quality recreation and sport. In 2018, PRO began a significant review and enhancement of the Principles of Healthy Child Development training. The review includes both training content and delivery format, recognizing the changing nature of our sector and our society. Along with the review of this core training, PRO has also begun a significant national consultation to learn how we can continue to evolve and improve administration and training delivery.

While we began work on existing training and systems, PRO also collaborated with a variety of stakeholders on new initiatives like the Tips for Consideration for Accessibility. These Tips help trainers deliver PHCD in organizations that run inclusive camps and other programs. We also worked with our aquatic partners to streamline administration and update training tools for those working on the pool deck.

HIGH FIVE Accreditation continues to be a benchmark of excellence in our sector. In 2018, 17 organizations became Accredited or were re-verified, including the first outside of Ontario, St. John's, NL.

“By incorporating the HIGH FIVE® principles into our martial arts training we have happy children who are looking forward to coming to class.”

– HIGH FIVE® Registered Organization

## HIGH FIVE ACCREDITED ORGANIZATIONS

Alison Neighbourhood Community Centre  
 Boys and Girls Club of Durham  
 Boys and Girls Club of Greater Kingston & Area Inc  
 Boys and Girls Club of Niagara  
 Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa  
 Boys and Girls Clubs of Kawartha Lakes  
 City of Barrie  
 City of Burlington  
 City of Hamilton  
 City of Mississauga  
 City of St. John's, NL  
 City of Toronto  
 City of Windsor  
 County of Brant  
 Dovercourt Recreation Association  
 East Scarborough Boys and Girls Club

Futures Gymnastics  
 Greenway Chaplin Community Centre  
 Kinbridge Community Association  
 Langs Farm Village Association  
 Municipality of Port Hope  
 PSP Petawawa Community Recreation  
 Rainbow Programmes for Children  
 St. Alban's Boys and Girls Club  
 Toronto Kiwanis Boys and Girls Clubs  
 Town of Ajax  
 Town of Bracebridge  
 Town of Essex  
 Town of Halton Hills  
 Town of Milton  
 Town of Oakville



## YOUTH FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

### CITIES

Barrie  
 Brampton  
 Brantford  
 Brockville  
 Burlington  
 Cambridge  
 Guelph  
 Hamilton  
 Kingston  
 Markham  
 Mississauga  
 Pickering  
 Sarnia  
 Sault Ste. Marie  
 Greater Sudbury  
 Thunder Bay  
 Welland  
 Windsor

### MUNICIPALITIES

Brooke-Alvinston  
 Kincardine  
 Meaford  
 Port Hope  
 South Huron  
 West Nipissing Oquest

### TOWNS

Ajax  
 Aurora  
 Bracebridge  
 Essex  
 Gananoque  
 Halton Hills  
 Hanover  
 Milton  
 Minto  
 Newmarket  
 Oakville  
 Richmond Hill  
 The Blue Mountains  
 Whitby  
 Whitchurch-Stouffville

### CANADIAN FORCES BASES

Petawawa

### FIRST NATIONS

Wikwemikong Unceded  
 Indian Reserve No. 26

### COMMUNITIES

East Scarborough,  
 Toronto

### TOWNSHIPS

Rideau Lakes  
 Wilmot

### COUNTIES

Brant  
 Norfolk



# AWARDS PROGRAM

	COMMUNITY UNDER 30,000	COMMUNITY OVER 30,000
EXCELLENCE IN PARK OR FACILITY DESIGN	<b>Nokiidaa Trail</b> <i>Town of East Gwillimbury, in partnership with York Region and Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority</i>	<b>Snakes &amp; Ladders Park</b> <i>Town of Richmond Hill</i>  <b>HONOURABLE MENTION</b> <b>Trafalgar Park Community Centre</b> <i>Town of Oakville</i>
EXCELLENCE IN OPERATIONS	<b>2018 York Region Parks and Forestry Challenge</b> <i>Town of East Gwillimbury</i>	<b>David Dunlap Observatory: Astronomy and Science Programming</b> <i>Town of Richmond Hill</i>  <b>HONOURABLE MENTION</b> <b>Camp Ignite</b> <i>City of Burlington</i>
EXCELLENCE IN ACCESS AND EQUITY	<b>Fair Access</b> <i>York Region, DAC Inc., Town of East Gwillimbury and Holland Landing Public School</i>	<b>Limitless Guelph</b> <i>City of Guelph</i>
EXCELLENCE IN AQUATIC FACILITY DESIGN		<b>Windsor International Aquatic and Training Centre</b> <i>City of Windsor</i>
EMERGING LEADER AWARD	<b>Anna Rookyard</b> <i>Town of Oakville</i>	
AQUATIC LEGACY GRANT	<b>Stefanie Lauppe</b> <i>Town of Orangeville</i>	
HIGH FIVE® CHAMPION AWARD	<b>City of Toronto</b>	
BOB SECORD STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARD <i>and</i> HUGH CLYDESDALE BURSARY	<b>Erin Wilson</b> <i>Centennial College</i>	



# TREASURER'S REPORT

In my first year as Board Treasurer, I am pleased to present my Financial Report for the year ended December 31, 2018. This year we have engaged the Chartered Professional Accounting firm of Fruitman Kates LLP. Fruitman Kates has worked with PRO staff and the Board to audit the financial statements, and we look forward to a strong partnership in the coming year. As reflected in the Annual Report, PRO has continued to practice sound fiscal and operational management, while offering high quality, relevant programs and services within the parks and recreation sector.

In a rapidly changing environment, PRO has maintained a coherent and responsible expenditure management strategy, which is augmented with revenue earned from a relevant portfolio of offerings and services. These efforts have resulted in an operating surplus of \$130,017 for the fiscal year 2018.

The 2018 operating surplus will allow for \$120,017 to be invested in the Board restricted Research and Development Reserves, and will be used to fund a planned series of quality improvements and initiatives to be implemented during 2019. This strategy will continue the work that commenced in 2017 to lay the foundation for PRO to remain as a relevant and essential partner within the sector. The portfolio of products and services in key areas will be enhanced to add value to PRO's stakeholders, partners, customers, and members. The surplus has also allowed PRO to invest \$10,000 in its general reserve to be used for risk management of future operations.

In 2019, PRO will continue its commitment to the provision of public policy support, and will again

bring a diverse portfolio of pertinent educational opportunities directly to the sector. The Educational Forum and Trade Show, the Aquatics Conference, the Parks and Recreation Management Certificate, and the MBA Symposium are amongst some of the programs that are well received by our sector and will be reviewed again for relevancy as we move into the future. PRO continues its commitment to delivering the respected HIGH FIVE program and 2019 will see PRO reinvest significantly to enhance content and delivery methods. PRO members are supported by an array of modalities including a newly released PRO database, the Job Mart service, and a soon to be deployed knowledge hub.

I look forward to continuing to support PRO in 2019 as it develops the new Strategic Plan for 2020 to 2024, and implements the 2019 operating budget. It has been an honour to assume the role of Treasurer and to be able to support the professional staff as it implements its initiatives and plans for the continued success of the organization.



**Romas Keliacius**  
*Treasurer*

SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION*		AS OF DECEMBER 31	2018	2017
<b>ASSETS</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents			991,747	713,036
Accounts receivable			70,962	86,945
Inventory			45,973	54,854
Prepaid expenses and sundry assets			43,770	61,344
Deposits			12,643	12,643
Capital assets			26,141	18,239
			<b>\$ 1,191,236</b>	<b>\$ 947,061</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>				
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities			282,939	224,369
Deferred contributions			357,393	301,805
<b>NET ASSETS</b>				
General fund			465,737	374,072
Restricted fund			85,167	46,815
			<b>550,904</b>	<b>420,887</b>
			<b>\$ 1,191,236</b>	<b>\$ 947,061</b>
SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS*		AS OF DECEMBER 31	2018	2017
<b>REVENUE</b>				
HIGH FIVE®			1,400,206	1,422,321
Education and training			663,681	637,096
Grants			412,221	594,113
Membership services			385,213	365,209
Contract services			48,313	2,971
Corporate services			44,583	37,622
			<b>2,954,217</b>	<b>3,059,332</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
HIGH FIVE®			975,819	1,147,224
Education and training			596,100	526,420
Special project expenses			412,869	594,113
Communications and public relations			345,093	295,491
Corporate services (Note 5)			339,084	291,269
Membership services			155,235	197,094
			<b>2,824,200</b>	<b>3,051,611</b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenditures</b>			<b>\$ 130,017</b>	<b>\$ 7,721</b>

\*The complete Audited Financial Statements are available at the Parks and Recreation Office 416-426-7182, and can be downloaded from PRO's website: [www.prontario.org](http://www.prontario.org)

# STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Working in collaboration is essential in order to leverage resources and maximize the impact of initiatives. PRO is proud to work with many organizations across the province to advance the field of recreation and parks through training, resource development and advocacy.

## 4-H Ontario

Arts Network for Children and Youth  
 Association of Municipalities of Ontario  
 Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada – Central Region  
 Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging  
 Canadian Coaches Association  
 Canadian Forces  
 Canadian Parks and Recreation Association  
 Canadian Red Cross  
 Lifesaving Society  
 Northeastern Ontario Recreation Association  
 Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario  
 Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance  
 Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

## Ontario College and University Coordinators

Ontario Dietitians in Public Health  
 Ontario Mentoring Coalition  
 Ontario Public Health Association  
 Ontario Parks Association  
 Ontario Recreation Facilities Association  
 Ontario Society of Physical Activity Promoters in Public Health  
 Ontario Trails Council  
 Ophea  
 ParticipACTION  
 Rural Ontario Institute  
 Sport for Life Society  
 YMCA Ontario



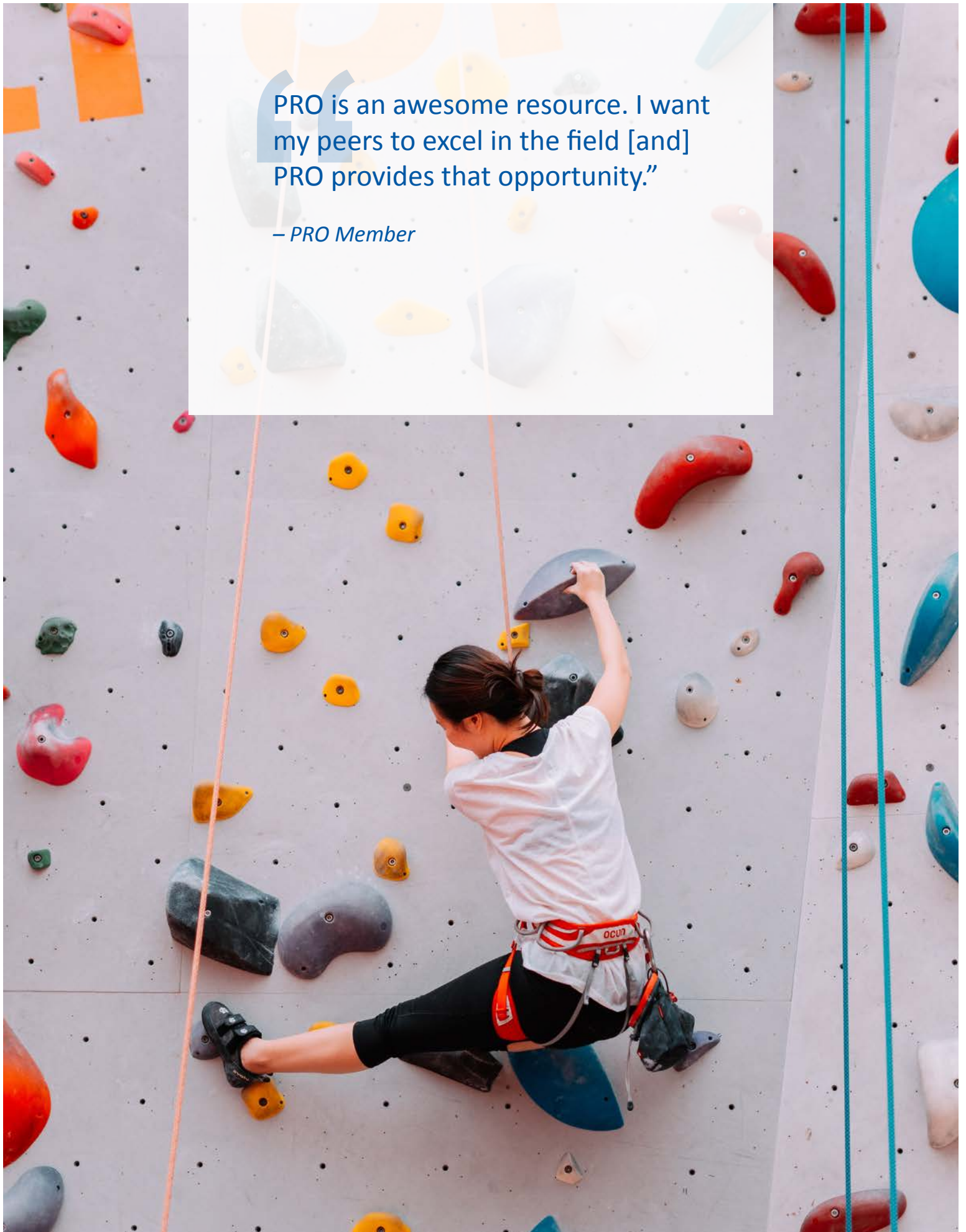
I think the annual educational forum is a great practitioner oriented event, and really the only one that is relevant to – and draws participation from – all aspects of the field.”

– PRO Member



PRO is an awesome resource. I want my peers to excel in the field [and] PRO provides that opportunity.”

– PRO Member





PARKS AND RECREATION ONTARIO

Healthy People | Vibrant Communities | Sustainable Environments