

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every once in a while, a unique individual comes along who, through their vision and unique abilities, makes great contributions to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Interpretive Services and Outreach Program. Park Ranger Ryan C. Braaten is one of those individuals.

Ranger Braaten's imagination and exceptional computer skills have resulted in numerous innovative uses of technology, helping to reach traditional visitors and attract new visitors and audiences. His exceptional abilities to develop mission-based interpretation based on specific objectives and themes, combined with his advanced skills in computer technology, make a very powerful combination that is a recipe for success. Using podcasts, Quick Response (QR) codes, cell phone tours, and creative PowerPoint presentations, Ranger Braaten communicates in many innovative ways with non-traditional audiences and those who view the site through electronic devices.

Ranger Braaten's interpretive programs are outstanding. His interpretive programs exemplify current interpretation standards. He is skilled at making connections with diverse audiences through the use of age appropriate educational activities, tangibles, intangibles and universal concepts. His programs help visitors relate to Bonneville Lock and Dam and respond to calls to action to help conserve natural resources. Some of Ranger Braaten's programs have been adopted at other Corps sites.

Ranger Braaten's creativity led to drastically increased donations, thereby allowing for the purchase of interpretive displays and props, creative display media, fees for guest speakers, and much more.

Mr. Braaten works well with other staff, volunteers and cooperating association staff. His supervisor hears frequent compliments about his programs. His interpretive programs are outstanding. His outreach efforts were so successful, it led his supervisor to designate him as the outreach coordinator.

According to Bonneville's Resource Manager, Greg Webb, "Ranger Braaten is highly praised by the public, coworkers, teachers, and staff from other agencies."

Ranger Braaten's contributions to interpretation have already spread around the Corps nationally, generating positive and widespread benefit to the agency. Examples of his work are included on the course reference DVD for the Interpretive Services PROSPECT Courses. For these and the reasons explained in the following pages, we believe Ranger Ryan C. Braaten is deserving of the national "Hiram M. Chittenden Award for Interpretive Excellence."