

# Visions in Leisure and Business

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Volume 1 | Number 1

Article 20

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1982

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Patrick B. Stinson

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### Recommended Citation

Stinson, Patrick B. (1982) "NIRA to NESRA," *Visions in Leisure and Business*: Vol. 1 : No. 1 , Article 20.  
Available at: <https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/visions/vol1/iss1/20>

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NIRA TO NESRA

BY

PATRICK B. STINSON

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NESRA  
20 NORTH WACKER DRIVE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60606

ABSTRACT

Article traces the development of employee services and its rapid growth into a major force in the field of personnel administration.

NIRA TO NESRA

The National Industrial Recreation Association (NIRA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the principle that employee recreation, fitness and services programs are essential to effective personnel management. Our members are the directors and suppliers of such programs in business, industry, government and the military.

NIRA promotes employee programs as a means of improving productivity by fostering good relations among employees and between employees and management. It assists member organizations in developing, promoting and improving such programs as employer sponsored, non-negotiated benefits.

Established in 1940, NIRA is the only association in its field. Today it serves more than 2,500 members in the United States, and Canada and Mexico. Its members direct not only recreational activities in sport and travel, but also conduct such varied services as employee stores, educational opportunities, fitness and health programs, hobby clubs and community service projects.

NIRA has serviced the many companies engaged in providing activities for their employees, not only has this field grown in numbers but also in stature. The general public's, employees' and managements' awareness of the benefits derived from these programs are at an all time high. In order to stay abreast of this progress, effective January 1, 1982, NIRA has become the National Employee Services and Recreation Association (NESRA).

It all began when a subcommittee from the NIRA Board of Directors chaired by NIRA Consultant, Mel Byers, CIRA, was asked to study the possibility of a name change for our organization to more clearly define the responsibilities the membership represents. Last October, it was recommended that a referendum be sent to the membership to change the NIRA name to NESRA -- National Employee Services and Recreation Association. Of those responding, 79.2% voted in favor of the proposed name change.

The term employee services represents the variety of programs and activities the members are responsible for. The members have experienced growth in many of the service oriented areas such as ride sharing, adult education, merchandise discounts, blood banks, United Way -- the list goes on and on. These services are not replacing the original programs -- merely expanding to reach the needs of the employees. To have an effective employee services and recreation program, one must provide programs and activities that reach the highest

percentage of employees as possible.

There will be two other name changes associated with the change of the organization's name. When the National Industrial Recreation Association, the Certified Industrial Recreation Administrators and Certified Industrial Recreation Leaders designations will parallel this change by becoming Certified Employee Services and Recreation Administrators and Certified Employee Services and Recreation Leaders. Also, NESRA's primary communication vehicle to its members, RECREATION MANAGEMENT Magazine, will change its title to EMPLOYEE SERVICES MANAGEMENT Magazine.

A subscription to EMPLOYEE SERVICES MANAGEMENT is only one of many services included in NESRA membership. Others include newsletters, product and service discounts for employee groups, program ideas and consultation, professional certification, international awards and national and regional tournaments.

Many progressive steps are being taken by the national organization including the adoption of a new membership structure, revised bylaws and a progressive new attitude toward this profession. NESRA is ready to be the leader in the field of employee services and recreation and grow as this field has grown into an integral part of sound business management.

To learn about the new and exciting NESRA, please contact: NESRA, 20 North Wacker Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60606, 312/346-7575.

#### COMMENTS

An informed staff is essential to program operations. If a customer or employee encounters a staff member who is unaware of an activity or offer, he loses confidence.