

An illustration of three business professionals standing on a mountain peak. A woman in a pink top and black skirt is on the left, a man in a dark suit is in the center holding a red flag on a pole, and another man in a dark suit is on the right looking out. The mountain is dark blue and green, with light blue clouds at the base and bottom right. The background is a solid teal color.

At the Top of Their Game

*Recipients of this year's
IPMI Professional
Recognition Program
awards rise to the top.*

By Melanie Padgett Powers

PARKING AND MOBILITY PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN OUR SOCIETY, and each year several dedicated professionals aim high and reach the top of the mountain, inspiring colleagues throughout the industry with their innovation and motivation. This year's Professional Recognition Program award winners are inspirational in their commitment and superior work ethic and attitude. We hope you enjoy meeting them.

Staff Member of the Year

Melonie Curry

STAFF ANALYST
ParkHouston
Houston, Texas

Melonie Curry was introduced to parking when she was hired as a ParkHouston administrative assistant in 2006. Now as staff analyst, she oversees customer engagement, marketing, social media, and neighborhood outreach. Community outreach has grown tremendously under



Curry's leadership. She coordinates the Residential Permit Parking (RPP) program, which has grown by more than 200 percent under her tenure. She developed an RPP presentation and proactively visits neighborhood associations to educate residents and ensure applications are complete and on time.

Curry is a customer champion, ensuring residents' voices are heard. She is known for her ability to listen and empathize with customers while also explaining and educating them about parking regulations. In fact, she is the primary contact when a resident contacts the mayor's office directly. She investigates, finds a solution, and responds to more than 200 concerns sent directly to the mayor each year. Overall, she aims to find the best solution for more than 3,000 citizens who contact ParkHouston every year.

As social media manager and marketing coordinator, Curry has developed several educational pieces for customers, including the "Parking Puzzle" brochure quiz. She monitors and manages ParkHouston's

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram platforms, which includes keeping updated on customer complaints or areas of concern. For example, after a new downtown bike lane eliminated some on-street parking, bike advocacy groups were quick to monitor the area and tweet the mayor and police department whenever a car was spotted parked in the new lane. Curry responded to social media complaints and worked with the team to ensure the traffic engineer installed sufficient no-parking and tow-away signage. During the weekend of the Houston Marathon, she invested in Twitter ads, reducing the number of questions the office received about parking limitations. Furthermore, her social media and marketing efforts have increased pay-by-phone adoption from 3 to 16 percent.

As ParkHouston continues to find innovative ways to meet the city's parking needs, Curry aims to be the voice of residents and remains committed to a customer-service-driven focus.

Supervisor of the Year

Chelsea Kidd

SUPERVISOR, CUSTOMER SERVICE, COLLECTIONS,
AND MONTHLY PARKING
EasyPark
Vancouver, British Columbia

Through her customer-first approach, supervisor Chelsea Kidd has changed the culture at EasyPark in Vancouver, British Columbia. She believes that every customer violation is an opportunity for education, and she has trained her staff to be



firm, yet fair, in dealing with customer appeals. This approach has led her team to fill up three walls in the EasyPark office with positive tweets from customers, who frequently cite the staff's professionalism and empathy.

Kidd is also highly regarded among EasyPark's corporate clients, as she works hard to ensure their requests are met and that they are satisfied with their parking program. She is a key stakeholder in EasyPark's daily operations, working with almost every department in the organization. She has become the subject expert on the parking management system and continues to develop new ideas that will streamline processes for both clients and employees. Kidd collects stats on cancelled violations and keeps operations staff members updated so they can continue to educate their frontline patrollers on how to issue good violations.

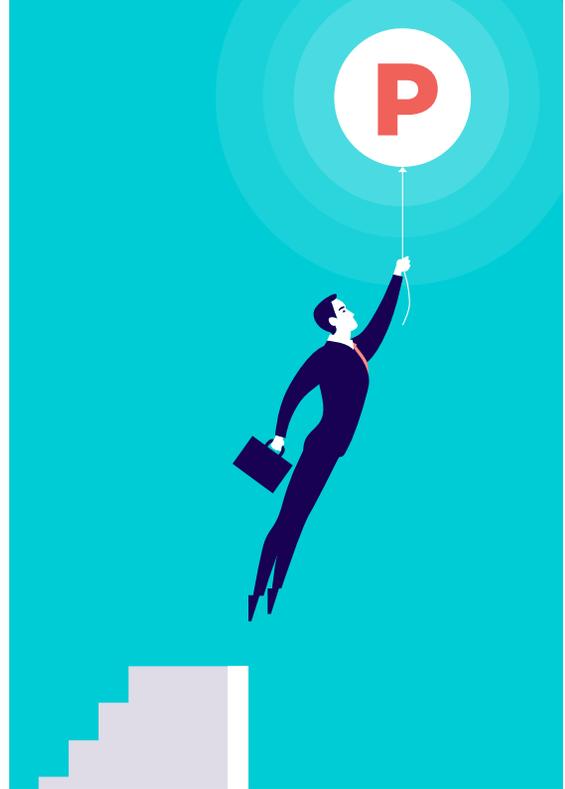
A self-proclaimed "parking nerd," Kidd's commitment to the industry and her customers led to her being awarded the EasyPark Customer Service Award in 2017. Kidd is skilled at resolving customer concerns in a calm, positive, and sensitive manner, aiming to make customers feel appreciated. At the same time, she does not promise things that she or her team cannot deliver. Internally, she promotes customer interests and goals, encouraging staff to always consider customers when making decisions.

Emerging Leader of the Year

Charley DeBow

CEO/CO-FOUNDER, CURBTRAC
Wyncote, PA

Charley DeBow is widely recognized as a municipal technology and innovation leader in the parking industry. In 2018, he co-founded the startup CurbTrac, a mobility-as-a-service (MaaS) platform for cities to better manage their curb space. DeBow is committed to advancing technology in the parking industry and is a member of IPMT's



Technology Committee. As such, he presented on technology at multiple state and regional conferences in the last two years. In addition, he continually writes about technology issues for industry publications and blogs. DeBow is also a vocal advocate for his peers to continue personal and professional development; he plans to pursue his CAPP designation this year.

DeBow worked his way up through parking first as a project manager at Central Parking System in Washington, D.C., then as director of parking at the Borough of State College, Pa., for five years. He then became senior vice president, sales and account management at Parkmobile, where he spent four years. He is now CEO at CurbTrac, a software start-up focused on helping cities better manage their mobile parking programs.

In DeBow's role at Parkmobile, he was intimately involved in launching successful mobile payment programs in major cities across the U.S. He led the sales and account management team with a 97 percent success rate on request for proposals and a 99 percent client retention rate. At the Borough of State College, he managed both the on- and off-street operations and served as the parking liaison to multiple civic organizations. Under his direction, the borough was one of the first in the country to use license plate-enabled parking, which reduced customer service issues while increasing revenue.

DeBow is a board member of the Pennsylvania Parking Association and a member of IPMT's Technology Committee. He graduated from Pennsylvania State University with a bachelor's degree in administration of justice.

Parking Organization of the Year

**Dallas/Fort Worth
International Airport**
Fort Worth, Texas



As the world's third busiest airport, Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) International Airport serves 2.5 million parkers each year. The DFW campus spans five miles and offers five public parking rate options with 40,000 public and 9,200 employee parking spaces. The airport's Parking Business Unit (PBU) provides customers innovative and superior parking and transit operations by following a purpose statement that calls for "delivering a world-class level of service while growing revenue and managing expenses through a collaborative, principled, and positive team environment."

Led by Armin José Cruz—the 2018 IPMI James M. Hunnicutt, CAPP, Parking Professional of the Year—the PBU follows the slogan "Going Above and Beyond for the Ultimate Experience." Guided by a business strategy formalized in 2002, the PBU is the largest source of non-aviation revenue for DFW Airport. It has maintained financial strength, remained cost competitive, and ensured alignment with the DFW Airport strategic plan and its mission. The PBU continually analyzes data, forecasts market conditions, and delivers reporting through mobile platforms, enabling proactive intelligent business decisions and customer experience improvements. The parking team has implemented innovations such as an automatic vehicle identification payment system, mobile license plate inventory, and smart garage/parking guidance systems. The smart garage technology system directs passengers to available spaces, reducing time and emissions. The system integrates counting stations that track vehicles, identify open spaces, and monitor time-restricted spaces. Dynamic message signs display space information, making parking safer and more convenient, while improving traffic flow, reducing emissions, and optimizing utilization.

The airport recently implemented a prepaid

booking system that produced \$3.6 million in sales its first year, serving 63,000 customers. The parking team also worked on a curbside reallocation project, which improved safety and traffic flow and reduced customer wait times and emissions. Installing new high-resolution cameras to improve the license plate recognition (LPR) system improved LPR reads by 18 percent. The parking garages also now accept Apple and Android as payment, and 20 electric vehicle-charging stations were installed in the terminal garages. There were more than 1,700 charging sessions in the first year. All these technology advancements led Fodor's Travel to name DFW Airport as one of the top five most high-tech airports in the U.S.

James M. Hunnicutt, CAPP, Parking Professional of the Year

Mike Estey

MANAGER OF PARKING OPERATIONS
Seattle Department of Transportation-Traffic
Management Division
Seattle, Wash.

Mike Estey's commitment to the world of parking and transportation in Seattle, Wash., got its start in another Washington: Washington, D.C., where he first served as a legislative assistant, then legislative director, for Congressional Rep. Sid Morrison (R-WA).



In 1997, Estey joined the Seattle mayor's office, where he soon began working on transportation issues. He became a special assistant to the mayor, providing policy guidance on complex, high-profile transportation issues. This included developing the mayor's transportation blueprint and leading the mayor's Transportation Kitchen Cabinet of external stakeholders and the monthly Transportation Cluster meetings.

In 2000, Estey joined the Seattle Department of Transportation, where he now serves as manager of parking operations. Under his leadership, Seattle was an early adopter of broader access management strategies that actively supported alternative transportation

and mobility initiatives. Seattle has developed innovative approaches to demand-based parking pricing and has provided other communities tools and road maps on how to implement performance-based parking pricing in their cities.

Estey oversaw the creation of a community awareness campaign called “Play Like A Parking Pro,” which educates Seattle parkers about paid parking rules and promotes the use of parking and mobility tools, such as pay by phone and a parking rate heat map. This innovative marketing and parking education campaign was a *Parking Matters* Award winner in 2015. His staff also created Seattle’s Community Access and Parking Program, which works with community members to identify on-street parking challenges and opportunities, develop parking recommendations, and implement parking management changes. This program has expanded to more than 30 neighborhoods within the Seattle metro area.

Other accomplishments under Estey’s leadership include expanding the on-street paid parking program, implementing a parking guidance system, developing an extensive food truck permitting program, and developing business shuttle programs. He is working on a new project to address loading and curb lane management in Seattle’s congested urban core.

**James M. Hunnicutt, CAPP,
Parking Professional of the Year**

Isaiah Mouw, CAPP, LEED AP

VICE PRESIDENT
Citizens Parking
Chattanooga, Tenn.

Isaiah Mouw, CAPP, LEED AP, exudes passion and curiosity while interacting with his industry peers, always believing there’s a better way to do things. He has been an advocate for implementing municipal parking programs, with hands-on experience rolling out over 35 municipal operations.

In his short time at Citizens Parking, he has had a direct effect on the firm’s bottom line. He



was instrumental in helping nearly double its municipal portfolio with 13 new accounts in his first year. He helped deploy these operations by working with each field team, ensuring Citizens operated as promised, and facilitated strategic partnerships to obtain vendor discounts on behalf of the clients. He also believes in professional development and best practices, creating for Citizens field teams a monthly Municipal Best Practices series. Through weekly study calls and courses, he led the effort to have more than 30 Citizens employees become industry certified. He also led the effort for Citizens to become APO-certified.

Mouw is a strong supporter of the U.S. Green Building Council’s sustainability in transportation efforts. While on IPMI’s Sustainability Committee, he helped write IPMI’s Framework on Sustainability. He also worked with the Green Parking Council (GPC), now Parksmart, serving on the Credentialing Committee, writing for the GPC Blog, and serving as chair of the GPC Certification Committee. He has obtained his Green Assessor certification and has served as an IPMI Green Star Reviewer. Mouw co-authored the chapter “The Garage in the Urban Context” in the book “Parking Sustainability & Management” and the chapter “Transportation Demand Management” in “A Guide to Parking.”

Mouw became the youngest legacy CAPP graduate at the age of 25. He was a member of the first CAPP Job-Analysis Committee, as well as the first CAPP Item Writing Committee. He was the second person to take the new International Organization of Standardization-certified CAPP exam. He was elected to the CAPP Board in 2017, where he contributed to several CAPP milestones: the mentorship program, recertification extension guidelines, an international shift, and the inclusion of mobility. Mouw has written and presented on behalf of the CAPP Board at multiple tradeshows and through numerous video interviews. That outreach and his CAPP mentorship has directly led to numerous employees and colleagues enrolling in the program. ♦



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