

# Member Spotlight

**Name:** Michael Skapura, Executive Director, (Certified Recycling Professional – CRP)

**Organization:** Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling

**Email:** [mkapura@westmorelandcleanways.org](mailto:mkapura@westmorelandcleanways.org)

Tell us about your PROP journey! Why did you join PROP and how long have you been a member?

I joined PROP in 2021 after I became the Executive Director of Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling - succeeding Ellen Keefe in this role. I joined in hopes of gaining the knowledge I would need to be successful as the leader of a recycling center. Prior to this role, I was in plastics manufacturing for 26 years and needed to change my mindset from manufacturing to recycling.

What has PROP membership meant to you both personally and professionally? Include relationships developed through attendance at conferences and/or participation and volunteer activities in your chapter and committees.

I have found that my PROP membership has been a great asset to me. Personally, I met Joanne Shafer while getting educated for my PROP Certification and found we both share a connection to the same family in the Latrobe area. Professionally, I have gathered more knowledge about and enriched my beliefs in the business of recycling through my PROP education and membership. My PROP membership has put me in contact with DEP officials and other Recycling Coordinators across the state that I otherwise would probably never have the opportunity to meet and know. (I like to be able to put a face to a name). Getting to meet these people has made it WAY easier for me to approach them and ask questions or seek advice without feeling inferior or foolish. I also have found that the PROP mentor program is a great way to bounce some questions off of our peers and find answers to questions you didn't have answers to before. Any or all these reasons listed above are why I'd recommend a membership to PROP to anyone in the recycling business.

What's something about you (a fun fact) that not many people know?

Fun fact - I am a musician in a local polka band. The band is called The Joe Porembka Orchestra Tribute Band. We play a variety of music - Rock, Country, Contemporary and yes... POLKA's! I play the trumpet. Our band plays around 20 jobs a year throughout the Westmoreland County area - it is a blast and a great way to unwind for me. And also, a good excuse to drink beer - cause let's face it - what is Polka music without beer??