

SPRING/SUMMER 2022

THANK YOU FOR HELPING CREATE
PLAY FOR ALL!



We Continue to Plan

By Rob Sperl, Play For All Playground & Garden Foundation Vice President
(and Wheaton Park District Director of Parks & Planning)

Being a part of the Play For All Playground & Garden Foundation feels like all the planets aligning and seeing great things happen.

Nearly a dozen years ago, the idea for the Sensory Garden Playground began with former foundation board member Cindy Keck. As a developmental therapist, she was aware that some kids were being excluded at traditional playgrounds. Their design didn't consider barriers that could be simply avoided during planning. The planning department at the Wheaton Park District has been at the forefront of designing playgrounds that are compliant with the ADA guidelines. This project provided the opportunity to take it to a whole new level.

Feedback from numerous stakeholders was developed into a concept plan. This plan was further advanced with the grand prize award through an organization called Shane's Inspiration. \$100,000 of equipment was also awarded through a company called Landscape Structures that is now a part of the 2 to 5-year-old playground area.

Over the last 10 years, we have been able to add Art Along the Way and the Tree House area. This has only been possible through the generosity of many donors who have seen the value and importance of this project.



While the recent pandemic has put a lot of projects on hold, it has also demonstrated the importance of outside play spaces. We have not stopped planning for improvements at the Sensory Garden Playground. Recent donations have allowed us to order a gravity rail to be added to the Tree House area and equipment for a new climbing area. We had hoped to have these installed last fall, but supply chain issues that are affecting all areas of the economy have also slowed down the equipment delivery.

We are hoping to have this equipment installed and ready for use in early 2022. More importantly, we look forward to being able to add more improvements to the park!

Mission

The Play For All Playground & Garden Foundation's mission is to create barrier-free and universally accessible outdoor play spaces and gardens in DuPage County. Through the cognitive, social, and physical values of play, the Foundation will promote a spirit of inclusion and enhance the quality of life, as well as support involvement in recreation and wellness activities for all people and abilities.

Dan Leahy Joins the Play for All Playground and Garden Foundation Board of Directors



Dan Leahy is the newest member of the Play for All Garden and Playground Foundation's board of directors. He was named to the board early this year.

A Naperville resident, Leahy earned a master's degree in Public Administration in 2020.

Since June 1, 2021, he has been the Executive Director of the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association (WDSRA). The organization offers in-person and virtual special recreational programming for children and adults with special needs.

Just prior to taking the helm at WDSRA, Leahy served as Marketing and Communications Director of the Fox Valley Park District from 2015 through 2021, where he also served on the district's special recreation board.

His experience also includes working for the Bolingbrook and Schaumburg park districts, the City of Elmhurst, and for several publishing companies.

He said his broad experience will serve him well in his new role.

"I will bring the board member perspective and I will bring the parent perspective," he said. His son, Tyler, 23, who has Down syndrome, has been involved with WDSRA programs for at least the past 8 or 9 years, he said.

The programs and initiatives pursued at the Play for All Sensory Garden complement WDSRA's offerings.

"The Sensory Garden falls right in line with my agency," Leahy said. "The Sensory Garden is near and dear to WDSRA. It was a no-brainer for me to get involved."

As a board member, Leahy said he would like to focus on increasing the accessibility of programs and recreational opportunities, reduce wait lists, work in partnership with schools to enhance students' individual education plans, and concentrate on public awareness of the amenities available at the Sensory Garden.

Gravity Rail to be Installed Summer 2022



5 to 12-Year-Old Playground

We're expanding the access to barrier-free and accessible play for all



Plans are underway for a new accessible-to-all playground designed for children ages 5 to 12 in the sensory garden.

The new amenities will include play elements such as climbers, slides, a timed horse track and more!

The new playground will complement the park's

already existing features which include a playground designed for children ages 2 to 5 years old, a sound garden, a fragrance garden, a central gathering area, outdoor sculptures, a tree house, and tree top swings.

To help make the 5 to 12-year-old playground a reality, the Sensory Garden Playground and Garden Foundation is hosting a donation match challenge.

All donations made in 2022 up to \$50,000 will be matched by a generous benefactor. Your help will allow this goal to be achieved more quickly. Donate today at playforall.kindful.com.

Giving DuPage Days | May 2-6

#GIVING DuPage DAYS ❤️

Sensory Garden Playground is participating in Giving DuPage Days May 2-6. This county-wide initiative will bring our local nonprofit community together. Individuals, families, businesses, schools, community and faith groups will all come together to celebrate and create awareness for participating charities, like Sensory Garden Playground.



And, the best part is, an anonymous donor has stepped up to match all donations to the Sensory Garden Playground, up to \$10,000, this spring.

Together, let's show the POWER OF GENEROSITY in our community to help us continue to provide accessible, barrier-free play for all! Start at givingdupage.org

Play Days

The Sensory Garden Playground Play for All is open to the public year-round, free of charge. Come check out the new tree house and playground equipment, designed to be all-inclusive. From May through August, on the third Saturday of each month. There will be activity stations, themed giveaways and fun!

This summer's play days are: May 21, June 18, July 16, and August 20 from 10A-Noon. Visit playforalldupage.org for details.

The Sensory Garden Playground is located inside Danada South Park, northeast of Warrenville and Naperville roads, at 2751 Navistar Drive, Lisle.



Thank you runners and sponsors for an amazing Fun Run in Color


More than 500 runners enjoyed four color stations, post race refreshments and a final color throw.

Presented by the Rotary Club of Wheaton AM and the Wheaton Park District. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Play for All Playground and Garden Foundation.



Photos: Kasey Mueller

No boundaries. No limits. Play for all.

Park address: 2751 Navistar Dr. | Lisle, IL 60532
Mailing address: 855 W. Prairie Ave. | Wheaton, IL 60187
playforalldupage.org  /sensorygardenplayground