

EQUITY WINS SERIES: Parks Division Qualifying Discount Program



The Black Men Coalition of Madison's Youth Baseball League plays at Elver Park and benefits from the Qualifying Discount Program.

by Donna Collingwood

The Parks Division's Qualifying Discount Program (QDP) makes reserving a park easy, equitable, and transparent. For non-profits like the Black Men's Coalition of Dane County, the QDP resulted in a 70% discount to use Elver Park for their program. The Black Men Coalition provides free registration, equipment, and uniforms to kids ages 4-12. "The program is grounded in providing access to kids of all backgrounds ..." per their website.

Obtaining a discount used to be a much more complicated process, including in-person meetings and an approval process. "Doing an equity analysis of the process was key in developing the QDP," according

to Terrence Thompson, Parks Department Community Services Manager.

The new process takes less than 10 minutes, Thompson said, reducing barriers significantly.

The QDP consists of several benchmarks and the amount of discount is determined by the number of benchmarks the user qualifies for. Discounts range from 0-70%.

Benchmarks include age of participants (you get a point for serving youth); percentage of participants who qualify for free or

Save the Dates

[Equity in the Loop](#)

Networking: September 19

[NAMI Walks](#)

October 7

[Targeted Business Enterprise Networking](#)

October 26, Dane Cty Airport

[DCR Combined Campaign](#)

Raffle Event: End of October!

Hispanic Heritage Month Speaker Series

Join the Latinx Community Engagement Team (LCET), the Department of Civil Rights, and the Madison Public Library for the RESJI Speaker Series.

Celebrate Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month this fall with special programming for City staff. More details coming soon 🇺🇸

**NATIONAL
HISPANIC
HERITAGE MONTH**

September 15 – October 15

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Warner Park Opens Accessible Playground

Warner Park joins Brittingham and Elver in providing barrier-free playgrounds for Madison residents with disabilities to enjoy integrated play with non-disabled residents. The new playground is near the Warner Park shelter and features a poured-in-place rubber surfacing with a concrete curb surround for greater wheelchair movement. More than 50 unique play features include a wheelchair-accessible swing, allowing visitors to swing without dismounting, touch and play musical panels, and communication boards — selected by Madtown Mommas & Disability Advocates. The boards are useful for non-verbal and lesser verbal visitors and can be used by pointing to items of interest or

needs such as the slide, swings, or restrooms.

The playground is named for the Frautschi family who led the project. Other key donors to the project include the Oscar Rennebohm Foundation, Jenni & Kyle Foundation, Steve Stricker American Family Insurance Foundation, Evjue Foundation, Madison Community Foundation and Festival Foods. 🇺🇸



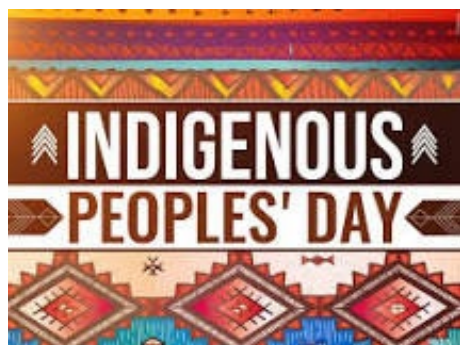
Lower left: the Communication board featuring text and American Sign Language; lower right: Jason Glozier, former City employee and one of many advocates for the park; Upper right: Family using an adaptive swing that enables both wheelchair user and non-wheelchair users to swing together.



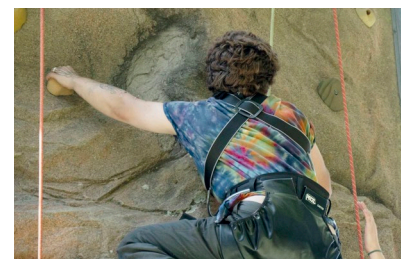
Disability Pride Fest Enjoys Record Attendance

Disability Pride Madison Festival celebrated it's 10th year at Warner Park, July 29. The weather was beautiful and the festival attendance was estimated at 450 people.

The Festival followed Madison's first Disability Summit, held virtually July 27 and 28. Coverage of the Summit will appear in the next newsletter. 🇺🇸



U.S. President Joe Biden formally recognized Indigenous Peoples' Day by signing a presidential proclamation declaring October 11, 2021 a national holiday.



Left: festival attendees enjoy visiting one of the over 90 exhibitor tables. Above: festival attendee climbing the Bolder Adaptive rock climbing wall

NEWS & VIEWS

Thanks for reading! We hope you enjoyed this content and we want to hear your feedback for future issues.

We'd like to hear from you regarding racial equity and social justice in your work or your department.

Contact newsletter editor Donna Collingwood at dcollingwood@cityofmadison.com



Racial Equity
& Social Justice Initiative

RESJI Equity in the Loop Gathering September 19

Equity in the Loop (formerly Core Team) is a space for everyone who has any connection to the initiative to meet and connect.

The next Equity in the Loop Meeting is a networking and joy event September 19, 2023. Contact RESJI@cityofmadison.com for more information. Hope to see you there.

Join us!

September

National Immigrant Heritage Month

October

Domestic Violence Awareness
Month

Disability Employment Awareness
Month

Day of Nonviolence, October 2



Harvard professor Kimberlyn Leary leads group work with contracting equity.

Contracting Equity Team Learns from the Best

A team of City officials was chosen to participate in the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative's program, Leading City Procurement Reform, May 15-19, at the Harvard Kennedy School. The team will have the opportunity to collaborate with government leaders from all over, as well as the Center's experts on procurement. The program includes coaching, networking, and mentorship, along with two months of coaching after the on-site program wraps up.

Equitable contracting has been a priority for the City of Madison's contracting equity team. The team includes Norm Davis (Civil Rights), Saran Ouk (Economic Development), and Mary Richards (Finance), and has a continuous improvement focus. ■■

Qualifying Discounts Program *Continued from page 1*

reduced school lunch; where most participants live; if you'll be using underutilized parks; if you have a relationship with a Neighborhood Resource Team, percentage of members who belong to historically marginalized groups; your organization's legal status; how many years your organization has been using the parks for athletics; whether the program is currently offered in the City of Madison, the cost to participate with the organization; percentage of participants who receive scholarships; and the organization's commitment to

advancing racial equity and social justice within the overall goal of City of Madison.

These particular benchmarks were chosen to make the process equitable and transparent.

The QDP pilot has three phases: athletics, community events, and shelter reservations.

Athletics is being piloted right now, and Black Men's Coalition is one of the pilot groups. "We started with athletics because that's where we have the most requests for discounts," Thompson said. ■■

Neighborhood Resource Teams

Community Suppers Foster Engagement

One of the community-building activities the Neighborhood Resource Teams (NRTs) facilitate are community suppers. Leopold Arbor Hills NRT held a community supper this spring, which was the first one since before the pandemic. “Residents really appreciate having this space where everyone is invited to share a meal and to get to know each other,” according to Linda Horvath, who co-leads the Leopold Arbor Hills NRT with Jerry Schippa, of Traffic Engineering. “The community suppers have also offered a space to directly tune into the needs, issues, and priorities of people living in areas with NRTs. Understanding, elevating, and responding to these concerns and issues, voiced directly by residents, has been core to the mission of NRTs and a source for the many recommendations that start with the NRTs and end as programs and projects with the appropriate city departments,” according to Tariq Saqqaf NRT Coordinator. The first community supper was in 2015 and was held at Aldo Leopold Elementary School. At the time, the school had a program called “Open School House,” so organizers held the community supper during the Open School House program.

“Our NRT meetings often include 15-20 people, but there is a larger group of people who are very connected



Leopold’s Community Suppers bring a diverse group of residents together for food and conversation.

and who show up for events,” Jerry Schippa said. “The Leopold area is a vibrant place with residents from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds. Many people from a wide array of countries also choose to settle here when they first move to the U.S. People enjoy getting to know each other, learning what is unique about their cultures and life experiences and also what they have in common. Many other community building events were held in the neighboring park during the summer prior to Parks Alive such as Lift Leopold, the Leopold Neighborhood Association Block Party, Leopold Community School, and center of worship gatherings. ■■■

racial equity detour “Colorblind”

We all know what a detour is: a long or roundabout route that is taken to avoid something. When trying to talk honestly and openly about race, you are going to encounter detours. A common one is, “I don’t see color,” or “I’m color blind.”

This detour denies the existence of white privilege, uses ableist language, and denies a person’s language, culture, identity and ignores the harm experienced by BIPOC. Even if an individual white person could ignore another’s color, society does not. ■■■



Parks Alive: Second Year Successful Despite Weather



cityofmadison.com/parksalive



Far left: Brentwood Parks Alive attendee interacts with Metro’s display; left: Brentwood residents engage in group activities.