



PARK DISTRICT
of OAK PARK

Recent Community Award Winners

2019

Donald "Don" Nekrosius
OPRF Senior Citizens Center Board

2018

Frank Heitzman
Gary Cuneen
Marget Scully
Maria Kunigk
Renee Davis

2017

Charlie Saville
Laura Thompson
Tom Kindler

2016

McLouis "Mac" Robinet
FOPCON

2015

Good Heart/Work Smart Foundation
Oak Park Youth Basketball/Softball
Oak Park American Youth Soccer Organization
Chicago Edge Soccer Club
Boy Scout Troop #4020



PARK DISTRICT
of OAK PARK

Celebrating our partnerships with citizens that have made a significant impact in our community and the quality of life for our residents.



Congratulations

TO THIS YEAR'S RECIPIENTS OF THE IAPD/IPRA COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

Isabel Romer Calvo

Ann Courter

Kathie Gillies

Donna Makow

Mary Ellen Murphy

Mary O'Kiersey

Martha Yount

The Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association annually present Community Service Awards to individuals and organizations in recognition and appreciation of their outstanding contribution and unselfish devotion for the advancement of parks, recreation and leisure in the community and the state of Illinois.

Mary O'Kiersey · Volunteer since 2010

Mary is currently a FOPCON board member and helps with special events at the Oak Park Conservatory. She also spearheads the Cheney Mansion vegetable volunteer group. Mary is also a founding member of the Mills Tower Garden Club and a member of the OPRF Garden Club. Mary has always had a desire to give back to the community and feels an affinity with our Conservatory. She often says, "I learn new information daily from the Conservatory and the amazing folks who work and volunteer there."

Martha Yount · Volunteer since 2016

In addition to volunteering at Cheney Mansion, Martha helps with growing and caring for the plants at the Oak Park Conservatory. Martha has helped with education programs and special events at the Conservatory in the past.





OUR MISSION

In partnership with the community, we enrich lives by providing meaningful experiences through programs, parks and facilities.

2021 BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Kathleen Porreca, President
 Jake Worley-Hood, Vice-President
 David Wick, Treasurer
 Christopher Wollmuth, Secretary
 Sandy Lentz, Commissioner

Kathie Gillies · *Volunteer since 2018*

Kathie is currently a member of the Education Committee. She has been a past volunteer with both Exploration Station and DGET. She often helps with special events at the Oak Park Conservatory as well.

Donna Makow · *Volunteer since 2010*

Donna is a dedicated weekly volunteer in the Cheney Mansion vegetable garden. She has also been a seasonal grower for the Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory Plant Sale for many years, as well as a dedicated volunteer for Uncorked at the Oak Park Conservatory.

Mary Ellen Murphy · *Volunteer since 2010*

Mary Ellen is the Co-chair of the Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory Plant Sale. She is a University of Illinois Master Gardener and volunteers weekly with the Exploration Station (when in session). Mary Ellen is a native enthusiast who can be found mostly in the native and perennial beds at Cheney Mansion. Mary Ellen says she volunteers with the mindset of work hard and learn something. She is also a volunteer at the Park Ridge Community Garden and Park Ridge Garden Club.



The Park District of Oak Park was the 2015 recipient of the National Gold Medal Award for excellence in park and recreation management. The Gold Medal is the most prestigious award in the parks and recreation industry. This year, the Park District of Oak Park is once again a finalists for this prestigious award. The winner will be announced in September.

In 2020, the Park District also earned re-accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

The Park District is only one of six park and recreation agencies in the State of Illinois to win the Gold Medal and earn both State and National Accreditation.

Dedicated Volunteers Make a Difference

During 2020, as the Covid-19 pandemic turned our world upside down, a very dedicated group of volunteers shared their time, talent, and expertise with the Park District of Oak Park.

Week after week, they spent their time working alongside Conservatory staff caring for the grounds and the vegetable gardens at Cheney Mansion. They cared for the flowers, the plants, and the vegetables from which they harvested and donated 525 pounds of produce to local food shelters.

We are thrilled to take this moment to thank them for their significant impact on parks and recreation in our community and improving the quality of life for all residents.



Isabel Romero Calvo · *Volunteer since 2019*

Isabel can be found either at Cheney Mansion, working in the gardens or at the Conservatory helping with various planting projects. Isabel is a PhD and a scientific illustrator. Nature is one of her main sources of inspiration for drawing and watercolor painting. She grew up surrounded by nature in Granada, Spain. When she moved to the South Loop, she learned about the Oak Park Conservatory, and could not let the opportunity of volunteering here pass her up, especially if it meant spending more time with the Conservatory birds, Sarah, Skipper, and George!

Ann Courter · *Volunteer since 2020*

Ann started out as part of the docent-training program and when tours were sidelined due to COVID, she moved on to become a weekly volunteer at Cheney. She enjoyed working outside in a beautiful place with kind and hardworking people, especially during the pandemic. She also volunteers at the Stone Temple community garden in N Lawndale on Tuesdays, trying to pass along what she learned at Cheney garden. Currently, Ann helps weekly caring for our showrooms at the Oak Park Conservatory.

