



**Minneapolis**  
Park & Recreation Board

# Community Outreach Department Reaches Out



## Serving Minneapolis for More Than a Century

In 1883, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) was created by an act of the Minnesota State Legislature and a vote of Minneapolis residents. It serves as an independently elected, semi-autonomous body responsible for governing, maintaining, and developing the Minneapolis park system. Every four years, nine Commissioners are elected to this Board – one from each of the six park districts within the city and three that serve at-large. The MPRB engages many partners including government agencies, non-profit organizations and local businesses to provide an outstanding park system and critically needed park and recreation services for residents and visitors of Minneapolis.

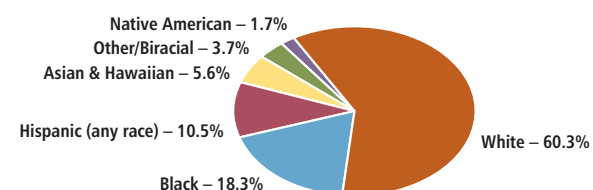


Some of our primary partners are the City of Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Public Schools/Community Education and Hennepin County. We are very appreciative of the opportunity Community Education has given us to share system information in this publication.

## Addressing Change with Ingenuity, Creativity and Innovation

Over the past several months, the MPRB has had ongoing discussions about the importance of service delivery and work efficiencies. The MPRB's Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2007, identifies many goals related to service delivery and it also notes that as the city changes and the lifestyles of its residents change, so will park programs and services. During the Comprehensive Plan process, Minneapolis residents expressed that it was critical for the MPRB to provide health and physical fitness opportunities and safe, high quality recreation activities for children and youth. A key value expressed in the Comprehensive Plan stated that the MPRB must not only react to change, but anticipate and address it with ingenuity, creativity and innovation.

Since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted, there have been many changes within the organization and significant shifts in the demographics of the city. The 2010 Census revealed that people of color now represent 40% of the population in Minneapolis.



As Minneapolis and the lifestyles of its residents and park visitors continue to change, the park system must also evolve, sparking new development when possible and providing parks, programs and services that are relevant to people's lives.

## Working with the Community, Planning for the Future

It has become clear that now is an opportune time to pause and "take stock" of the internal and external changes and challenges facing the Park Board. In 2010, the Commissioners of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board participated in a three month strategic planning process to set the strategic direction for the organization for 2011-2013 and respond to the emerging challenges of providing program service delivery for these years. This strategic direction reflects Board and Superintendent priorities that are aligned with Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives.

One of the steps that has been accomplished is the creation of a new department within the organization, Community Outreach. This new department's primary goal is to increase communication and interaction with community residents and encourage their participation in our programs and services.

As we examine the internal and external changes and challenges facing the MPRB and identify opportunities to make improvements, we promise to be open, transparent and keep all of our customers, stakeholders, program partners and supporters informed regarding what this examination reveals. We will use our MPRB website, e-lists of neighborhood organizations and others who have signed up for e-alerts, and print and electronic media networks to provide information on our progress. It is critical that the new Community Outreach Department help us with that task.



The Community Outreach Department is comprised of the following five major service areas:

- Youth Development
- Strategic Partnerships
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Cultural Competencies
- Citywide Special Events

The MPRB is very pleased to use this great Community Education outreach opportunity to provide information to Minneapolis residents on this exciting new initiative. We sincerely hope you enjoy learning more about these areas through this publication.



## Stay Connected!

### Community Outreach Department

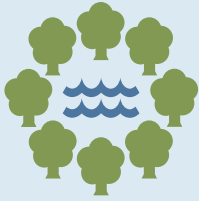
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## Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board

### Our Mission:

*The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board shall permanently preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhance its natural resources, parkland, and recreational opportunities for current and future generations.*

*The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board exists to provide places and recreation opportunities for all people to gather, celebrate, contemplate, and engage in activities that promote health, well-being, community, and the environment.*

### Commissioners

#### President

John Erwin, At Large

#### Vice President

M. Annie Young, At Large

#### Commissioners

Liz Wielinski, District 1

Jon Olson, District 2

Scott Vreeland, District 3

Anita Tabb, District 4

Carol A. Kummer, District 5

Brad Bourn, District 6

Bob Fine, At Large

#### Superintendent

Jayne Miller

#### Administrative Offices

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(front, left-right) Carol Kummer, Annie Young, Liz Wielinski, Anita Tabb; (back, left-right) John Erwin, Jon Olson, Scott Vreeland, Brad Bourn, Bob Fine

### Message from Jayne Miller, Superintendent, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board



Since arriving in Minneapolis, I have been exploring ways to enhance and improve our service to the diverse communities within Minneapolis. I have worked with Human Resources to update our recruitment of employees to get diverse candidate pools and increase the diversity of our employees. I have also been reaching out to various constituencies to develop relationships, and discuss how we can better serve the diverse residents of Minneapolis.

I believe diversity and inclusion contributes to our success as an organization and the achievement of our mission in the community. Our values around diversity and inclusion reflect the services we provide, the communities in which we work, and the lives of our employees, volunteers, supporters and program participants.

By promoting an inclusive environment where everyone respects individuals and values the contributions of people of different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, we can enrich and strengthen the quality of our work and the success of our community.

Recruiting, retaining and promoting diverse employees is critical to the organization's success in this evolving city. And, these efforts must be carefully planned, nurtured, and measured to ensure success. In the long run, organizations that are successful in leveraging the diversity of their people are better able to adapt to changes in the external environment.

For the MPRB, diversity and inclusion is more than a moral obligation or societal goal; it is a business necessity that drives our ability to attract and develop the best employees, create an engaged workforce, and deliver high-quality programs and services for the residents of Minneapolis. Through this initiative, we are able to align diversity and inclusion into all of our business processes and practices.

### Message from Cordell "Corky" Wiseman, Director, Community Outreach Department



Hello Minneapolis Community! I am very pleased to be of service in this new Community Outreach Department. There are five primary and inter-connected areas within the department. I encourage you to read an overview of each in the coming pages.

I very much look forward to being in conversation and working with you regarding park programs and services in the coming years. I commit to being a willing listener and partner in finding solutions to eliminate any challenges or barriers that emerge at our parks and with park programs and services.

As Director of the Community Outreach Department, I will lead our team in working with community residents to provide personal and meaningful interactions. We will also work on establishing strategic and effective partnerships with people through the exchange of solid information that produces greater understanding with our park program participants and increases participation levels.

The MPRB is uniquely positioned to be part of the conversations on how to support community-building and sustain the long term well-being of the community. One of my top priorities is be to involved in the many community-based initiatives presently underway throughout the city to support the goal of engaging community residents, especially those that focus on the healthy development of our youth.

My view of the community is broad and inclusive. I am very committed to increasing participation in our programs and services because I firmly believe that urban recreation positively impacts the lives of community residents and supports the well-being of communities throughout the city.

In the coming months, I will be unveiling many new initiatives. One of the first will be our Program Partnership Initiative (PPI). This initiative will outline how and when we enter into program partnerships with other service providers in the city. Stay tuned for more information on this new program initiative; we will share the information on our website at [www.minneapolisparcs.org](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org) as well as send it with our email updates and to neighborhood associations.

# Community Outreach Department Service Areas

Youth  
Development

Strategic  
Partnerships

Diversity and  
Inclusion

Cultural  
Competencies

Citywide  
Special Events

## Community Outreach Building Blocks

In reaching out to diverse groups of community members to encourage participation in our programs and services, we will put into action our Outreach Building Blocks:

1. Practice person-to-person interaction that provides clarity about our processes and practices
2. Share "what's in it for you" through your participation
3. Recruit trusted key community leaders to be park ambassadors and help us spread our message
4. Communicate through multiple mediums, including e-lists, social networks and social media sites
5. Explain next steps and how community input will be used
6. Monitor who is showing up, who is not showing up and why to participate in programs and services
7. Be open and flexible when adjustments are needed
8. Continually work on strategies to encourage more participation

## Youth Development

The MPRB is pleased to report that we have 15 full-time **Youthline Mentors** at recreation centers working with youth ages 12-17. These workers plan and implement programs



and mentor groups at parks, offering support and guidance for the youth. Youthline staff are specially trained on how to serve and meet the needs of youth who visit our parks.

Presently, some of our program services include: **Teen Teamworks**, summer youth employment project; **"Street Reach"**, targeted outreach in North Minneapolis; **Gang Prevention and Intensive Mentoring** program (a Federal Grant); and **Computer Labs** at 27 recreation centers, a partnership with the MPRB, Hennepin County and Osiris Inc.

## Strategic Partnerships

The MPRB has many partners, public and private, with whom we will continue to increase collaboration. However, the MPRB will seek to foster a new face and process regarding partnerships with the goal of enhanced service delivery. The MPRB's decision to enter or rejuvenate a partnership will be based on how it contributes to the MPRB's mission, vision, goals, and strategies. Traditional and non-traditional partners that provide new and complementary opportunities for community residents and are consistent with MPRB's mission will be strategically identified and encouraged to become part of the partnership network.

A new procedure under development called the **Program Partnership Initiative (PPI)** will be used as the guiding principle to decide when to enter and/or continue a program partnership. This procedure will be unveiled in the first quarter of 2012 and posted on the MPRB's website at [www.minneapolisparcs.org](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org).



## Diversity and Inclusion

In 2012, we will work on our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. The strategy will identify opportunities, internally and externally, for collaboration and communication with our diverse populations. It will ensure a coordinated vision for diversity and inclusion across the organization, including the MPRB workforce, communications, programs and services.



The strategy will strengthen our ability to look at things from the perspective of diversity and inclusion when making decisions around programs, service delivery, processes and practices.

**Therapeutic Recreation (TR)** Services of MPRB are multi-faceted and broad in scope and include services for youth and adults, staff and all of our properties. Our TR services utilize collaborations with many different groups, schools and other service providers to provide recreation and leisure opportunities. TR services most often work with people who have disabilities.



## Cultural Competencies

Cultural competence refers to the process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, abilities, religions, genders, sexual orientation and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms and values the worth of all individuals, families and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

From an organizational perspective, cultural competence is integrated into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of programs and services, and produce better outcomes for the community residents we provide programs and services for.

## Citywide Special Events

The Citywide Special Events section of the Community Outreach Department plans and executes events and programs that support MPRB's mission, engage community partners and bring the community together.

Citywide Special Events co-sponsors events that celebrate parks and the diversity of our community. Our next event will be the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s annual program and award ceremony on Monday, January 16 at Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park, beginning at 6:30 pm. For details about this event or other citywide events, visit [www.minneapolisparcs.org](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org) or contact our event coordinator Arik Rudolph at [arudolph@minneapolisparcs.org](mailto:arudolph@minneapolisparcs.org) or 612-230-6484.



