Parks & Greenspace Conference
Tuesday, March 25, 2019
Atlanta Botanical Garden

Parks are the Heart of Community

presented by

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HEALTHY FUTURE

At Kaiser Permanente, we know that good health extends beyond the doctor’s office. It begins with healthy communities. As the largest nonprofit health plan in Georgia we are committed to investing in the total health of all the communities we serve.

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Parks are the Heart of Community

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Fellow Park Advocate,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 18th Annual Parks and Greenspace Conference. This year, Park Pride’s conference theme, *Parks are the Heart of Community*, explores the vital role parks play in providing residents with places to connect and be together.

Parks are the heart of community because they are at the very center of each neighborhood’s unique character. Parks are welcoming spaces where community identity is strengthened through art and cultural expression, and where health and wellness are improved through exercise or the simple act of being in nature. They are the places where neighbors become more than just the people who live next door to one another. It is within a park that a neighborhood becomes a community.

This year’s conference theme is appropriate and timely as Park Pride celebrates its 30th anniversary: three decades of working together for the greener good of our parks! That’s a cause for celebration, and I’m so glad that you’re here to join us as we kick off our anniversary year at what will surely be our most informative and best conference yet!

I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity you have today to learn, network, and gain inspiration to drive your work forward in your park and community. Connect with others who share your passion for parks, and learn from our compelling keynote and local speakers. Take time to take in the sights, sounds, and smells of the Atlanta Botanical Garden.

I hope you leave inspired to make positive changes in your neighborhood park and motivated to act so that everyone has access to a great local park where they live!

At the end of the day, please join us at the reception in Hardin Visitor Center as we raise a glass to parks and to 30 years of Park Pride.

Michael Halicki
Executive Director, Park Pride

P.S. – Plans are underway for a “Green Tie Gala” this fall to commemorate Park Pride’s 30th anniversary. Details will be announced soon. I hope you’ll join us at the celebration!
keynote speaker bios

Mitchell J. Silver, FAICP, is the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation (NYC Parks) and an award-winning planner with over 30 years of experience. Commissioner Silver is also the immediate past president of the American Planning Association (APA). He is internationally recognized for his leadership in the planning profession and his contributions to contemporary planning issues. As Parks Commissioner, Mitchell oversees management, planning, and operations of nearly 30,000 acres of parkland, which includes parks, playgrounds, beaches, marinas, recreation centers, wilderness areas, and other assets.

Dr. Nooshin Razani, MD, MPH, serves as Director of the Center for Nature and Health at UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital Oakland. Since 2014, Dr. Razani has prescribed time outdoors to her pediatric patients and their families as preventive medicine. She led a team of clinicians to examine how to operationalize a park prescription program in a low-income setting in the first clinical trial of its kind. Dr. Razani hopes the results from this trial, along with ongoing research, will eventually lead to evidence-based nature prescriptions.

Gil (Guillermo) Penalosa, MBA, PhDhc, is the Founder and Chair of 8 80 Cities, a World Urban Parks Ambassador, and passionate about creating cities for all people. He has inspired and advised decision makers around the world on how to create vibrant cities with healthy communities where all people can live happier, regardless of age, gender, ability, socio-economic or ethnic status. His focus is on the design and use of parks, streets, and sidewalks as great public places, as well as sustainable mobility, such as walking, riding bicycles, taking public transit, and new uses of cars.

featured speaker bios

Dorian McDuffie, an award-winning arts administrator with over 15 years of experience, serves as the Public Art Project Manager at the Atlanta City Studio, City of Atlanta.

Isabel González Whitaker is the leader of the Friends of Sara J. González Park, a Park Pride 2018 Inspiration Award Winner, as well as a 2018 Cox Conserves Hero.

William Massey is a freelance artist, sculptor, creative entrepreneur, and a co-leader of art programs within social organizations and health facilities throughout Atlanta.

Samara Minkin's role as Manager of Public Art in the City of Atlanta’s Mayor's Office supports engagement with public art while strengthening community ties and identity.
BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

The Home Depot Foundation is proud to support Park Pride and their mission to engage communities to activate the power of parks.
Parks are the heart of community...
and you are the heart of Park Pride.

Thank you for helping us celebrate
30 years for the greener good!

ATTENTION!

The Parks & Greenspace Conference has
gone green by reducing plastic bottles
and incorporating composting! Please:

• refill your water bottle at water
  stations throughout the garden,

• compost your breakfast and boxed
  lunch leftovers and containers at the
  compost stations near Mershon Hall.
  Check with the stationed volunteer to
  ensure other items are compostable!

• Atlanta Botanical Garden utilizes
  single-stream recycling for items
  placed in garbage bins.
7:30 – 8:30 a.m.  Breakfast + Sponsor Expo Kick-Off  
Location: Mershon Hall

8:30 – 11:00 a.m.  Welcome + Opening Plenary Session  
Location: Day Hall

**Keynote Address**
9:00 a.m.  Parks and Public Space: What’s Next?  
Speaker: Mitchell Silver, FAICP, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation

Parks and public spaces are vital to the livability of cities. They are our living rooms—where people come together and create great memories. As the country urbanizes and demographics of the American population shift, parks and public spaces are gaining even greater importance as places for physical health, mental health, and social interaction. New York City has embarked on a new strategy to address the future of parks by redefining the role of public space in the 21st century through equity, innovation, planning, and placemaking.

**Keynote Address**
10:00 a.m.  Park Prescriptions: Clinic and Park Partnerships for Pediatric Resilience  
Speaker: Nooshin Razani, MD, MPH, Director of the Center for Nature & Health, UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital Oakland

In this talk, Dr. Razani will discuss her program at UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital Oakland, where—in partnership with East Bay Regional Parks District—a collaboration with doctors and naturalists has created a supportive force in children’s lives. She will discuss the importance of parks in fostering pediatric health and well-being, and the potential for partnerships to encourage children to flourish.

11:00 – 11:15 a.m.  Transition to Breakout Sessions

Sessions take place in locations throughout the Atlanta Botanical Garden and will begin promptly. See the map on page 3. Sponsors will also be available for consultations at the Sponsor Expo in Mershon Hall.
11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Morning Breakout Sessions

• **Public Schools as Public Land: Maximizing a Community Asset**

  Location: Day Hall
  Moderator: Michael Halicki, Executive Director, Park Pride
  Panel: John Dargle, Jr., Commissioner, City of Atlanta Dept. of Parks & Recreation
  George Dusenbury, State Director, Georgia and Alabama, The Trust for Public Land
  Rachel Sprecher, Executive Director, Office of Partnerships and Development, Atlanta Public Schools

  Currently, only 65% of City of Atlanta residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park. Could school grounds, including playlots and playgrounds, serve double duty to meet neighboring residents’ greenspace needs? This session will explore an emerging partnership that could open some Atlanta Public Schools’ schoolyards to communities outside of school hours on evenings, weekends, and during the summer.

• **Park Visioning: Keys to the Heart of Community**

  Location: Gardenhouse Orchid Room
  Speakers: Teri Nye, MLA, Visioning Coordinator, Park Pride
  Andrew White, RLA, Director of Park Visioning, Park Pride

  Park Pride’s design team provides professional planning assistance to community groups for their neighborhood parks. Looking through the lens of history is a critical first step in shaping these plans. Learn how history has influenced three recent park vision plans, reinforcing the unique cultural identities of Atlanta’s neighborhoods in their parks.

• **Equally Empowered: Local Voices for Parks and Health Equity**

  Location: Gardenhouse Magnolia Room
  Speakers: Na’Taki Osborne Jelks, Ph.D., MPH, Co-Founder, West Atlanta Watershed Alliance
  Viniece Jennings, Ph.D., Research Scientist, U.S. Forest Service
  Mother Mamie Moore, Member, The Beloved Community, Inc.

  Health equity is a state in which all people have access to conditions where they can achieve optimal health. Low-income and communities of color, however, often have unequal access to parks and greenspace, which have proven health benefits for those who live nearby. This interactive session will explore the positive impact of quality parks on advancing health equity and how purpose-driven leadership can provide alternatives to pitfalls inherent in urban greening approaches.
• **The Lasting Impact of Site-Responsive Art in Urban Parks**
  Location: Gardenhouse Board Room
  Speakers: In Kyoung Chun, Artist, In Kyoung Choi Chun
  Anne Archer Dennington, Executive Director, Flux Projects
  Richard Harker, Dir. of Programming & Volunteers, Historic Oakland Foundation
  Beth Malone, Executive Director, Dashboard US

  This session will explore how site-specific, temporary art installations can influence social discourse and change a park’s meaning for visitors. Speakers from Dashboard, Flux, and Historic Oakland Foundation will explore how this art responds to pressing contemporary community issues and invites audiences to engage with public spaces in new ways.

• **Just Walk! How to Create a ‘Walk with a Doc’ Program (walking tour)**
  Location: Turner Theater
  Guide: Carolyn Hartfield, Healthy Lifestyle Coach & Outdoor Adventure Leader, Happy Healthy Lifestyle, Inc.

  Stretch your legs and experience the power of parks! Certified health coach, Carolyn Hartfield, will demonstrate the free resource for physical and emotional well-being inherent in our parks. This walk-and-talk session will illustrate how “walk with a doc” programming can benefit your life and all who visit your park!

• **Access and Activation: New Opportunities along the Chattahoochee and South Rivers**
  Location: Magnolia Hall (Piedmont Park)
  Speakers: Ryan Gravel, AICP, LEED AP, Founding Principal, Sixpitch
  Walt Ray, RLA, Director, Chattahoochee River Program, The Trust for Public Land

  The Atlanta City Design elevates the notion of public greenspace along the City’s two hidden rivers: the Chattahoochee and the South rivers. This session will showcase The Trust for Public Land’s current efforts to activate and preserve the Chattahoochee River and The Nature Conservancy’s efforts along the South River. Both will increase access to greenspace and encourage communities to interact with their local waters in new ways.

**12:15 – 1:15 p.m.**
**Picnic Lunch + Sponsor Expo Continues**
Location: Mershon Hall

**12:15 p.m.**
**Art Van Open House**
Visit the Fulton County Art Van behind Mershon Hall during lunch for a demonstration of their programming! Refer to the map on page 3 for location.

**12:45 p.m.**
**Coffee Served by Batdorf & Bronson**
thank you conference sponsors!

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Georgia Chapter of American Planning Association
Georgia Forestry Commission
KAIZEN Collaborative
Metro Atlanta Urban Watershed Institute

NewFields
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REI
Smith Dalia Architects
The Turner Foundation
1:15 - 3:40 p.m.          Mid-Day Plenary Session

Location: Day Hall

Keynote Address
1:15 p.m.              Parks: Creating Healthy and Vibrant Cities for All
Speaker: Gil Penalosa, MBA, PhDhc, Founder and Chair, 8 80 Cities

Today, there are more older Americans than there ever have been before, and they are also living longer; the population over 65 will double and the population over 80 will quadruple over the next 20 years. This simple fact requires that we begin to think about designing our cities differently. Gil Penalosa is the founder of 8 80 Cities, a nonprofit grounded by a simple but powerful question: What if everything we planned in our cities had to be great for an 8-year-old and an 80-year-old? This concept extends to our park spaces, our access to them, uses and activities, infrastructure, programs, and management. Penalosa will leave you thinking about the role of parks in creating a vibrant city where all people can live happier, more fulfilled lives.

Featured Panel
2:15 p.m.              A Matter of Scale: Public Art in Public Parks
Moderator: Dorian McDuffie, Public Art Project Manager, Atlanta City Studio, City of Atlanta
Panel: Isabel González Whitaker, Leader, Friends of Sara J. González Park
        William Massey, Freelance artist and sculptor, William Massey Art
        Samara Minkin, Manager of Public Art, City of Atlanta

Two key components of the world’s most beloved cities are great public spaces and ample experiences of arts and culture. Great public spaces and works of public art, however, aren’t just for major cities. This session demonstrates how public art can be integrated within a municipality at any scale: from acquisitions that put a city on the map, to works that celebrate cultural identities within communities, to works from local residents of all ages and abilities.

Recognition Ceremonies
3:05 p.m.              Remembering Greenspace Heroes
Speaker: Allison Barnett, Associate Director, Park Pride

Park Pride remembers the greenspace heroes we lost in 2018: Amy Erwin, Reggie Jones, Ray Mock, Spence Rosenfeld, and City of Atlanta Council Member Ivory Lee Young, Jr.

3:15 p.m.              Inspiration Awards Ceremony
Presenters: John Dargle, Jr., Commissioner, City of Atlanta’s Department of Parks & Recreation
           Chuck Ellis, Director, DeKalb County’s Recreation, Parks & Cultural Affairs
3:40 – 4:00 p.m. **Transition to Breakout Sessions**
Sessions take place in locations throughout the Atlanta Botanical Garden and will begin promptly. See the map on page 3.

4:00 – 5:00 p.m. **Afternoon Breakout Sessions**

- **Workforce Development: Creating Jobs through Environmental Stewardship**
  - **Location:** Day Hall
  - **Moderator:** Ayanna Williams, Healthy Cities Director, The Nature Conservancy in Georgia
  - **Panel:**
    - Charles Greenlea, Programs Director, HABESHA, Inc.
    - Ashley Hicks, Green Jobs program alum and current Assistant Ranger at Urban Food Forest at Browns Mill
    - Lauren Muller, Invasive Plant Management Coordinator, Athens Land Trust
    - Eboni Preston, Director of Programs, Greening Youth Foundation

*Parks are more than places to simply relax and have fun; they are places to build skills and explore career possibilities. Three local organizations will discuss their workforce development programs that foster the next generation of environmental professionals. Panelists will discuss their organization’s equity-driven programs that strengthen the connection between communities and parks.*
• **Social Inclusion Issues for Parks**
  - **Location:** Gardenhouse Orchid Room
  - **Moderator:** Ansley Whipple, Woodruff Park Project Manager, Atlanta Downtown Improvement District
  - **Panel:** Cathryn Marchman, Executive Director, Partners for HOME  
    Janika Robinson, Case Manager, HOPE Atlanta  
    Twywna Able, HOPE Atlanta Client

A city’s homeless population can present challenges that are often ignored by stewards of public space. This session will look at Woodruff Park as a case study to unpack issues of social inclusion in parks. In the past, Woodruff Park has had a reputation of being a space where homeless people gather, which has had an impact on the kinds of activities that can happen there. In recent years, park revitalization efforts have aimed to be socially inclusive, ethical, and responsive. The latest development is the hiring of a full-time social worker, Janika Robinson, to proactively address the needs of the park’s most underserved visitors.

• **Activating Parks through Art**
  - **Location:** Gardenhouse Magnolia Room
  - **Moderator:** Josh Phillipson, Principal, Arts, Culture, and Creative Placemaking, Atlanta Regional Commission
  - **Panel:** Denise Brinson, Assistant City Manager, City of Suwanee  
    Laura Hennighausen, Executive Director, Freedom Park Conservancy  
    Mallory Izbicki, Events Coordinator, City of Brookhaven

Parks and greenspace can be great vehicles for cultural expression and public art! Join a panel of park leaders who are finding surprising and creative ways to activate their parks with cultural expressions and art, and learn how this work has an impact beyond the park’s boundaries.

• **Opening the Gates: Creating Private Greenspaces for the Public Good**
  - **Location:** Gardenhouse Board Room
  - **Moderator:** Bob Hughes, President, HGOR
  - **Panel:** Chris Chelette, Vice President of Planning, Design and Construction, Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta  
    Latonda Henderson, Director of Community Activation, Mercedes-Benz Stadium

Recognizing the benefits of greenspace, private companies are incorporating park-like spaces into their facility designs to provide broader community benefit. The Home Depot Backyard at Mercedes-Benz Stadium and the North Druid Hills Campus of Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta are two examples of private greenspaces that present new ways to think about the use of public vs. private land. Learn about these projects and how they make a difference in the communities they serve.
Restoring Health and Wellness to Our Communities

Location: Turner Theater (book sale to follow in Hardin Visitor Center)
Speakers: Breanna Lathrop, Chief Operations Officer, The Good Samaritan Health Center of Atlanta
          Veronica Squires, Chief Administrative Officer, The Good Samaritan Health Center of Atlanta

Our neighborhoods are literally making us sick, but there is hope. Veronica Squires and Breanna Lathrop, co-authors of How Neighborhoods Make Us Sick: Restoring Health and Wellness to Our Communities, will shine a light on the chronic challenges that keep neighborhoods down and the role parks can play in catalyzing individual health and promoting community strength and healing.

Chattahoochee RiverLands: Hands-on Workshop

Location: Magnolia Hall (Piedmont Park)
Facilitators: Chris Barnes, Senior Associate, SCAPE
             Vanessa Lira, Urban Designer, Atlanta City Studio, City of Atlanta
             Eric Meyer, Planning Division Manager, Cobb County Department of Transportation
             Walt Ray, Director, Chattahoochee River Program, The Trust for Public Land
             Byron Rushing, Bicycling & Walking Program Manager, Atlanta Regional Commission
             Nans Voron, Urban Designer and Associate, SCAPE

Meet and work with the design team for the Chattahoochee RiverLands Greenway Study. This charrette-style session offers participants a chance to share their thoughts and ideas for this 100-mile regional park from Buford Dam to Chattahoochee Bend State Park. What amenities and uses would you like to see? What concerns do you have? How would you like to live, work, and play at the Chattahoochee?

Topophilia Workshop: Discovering Place through Art

Location: Art Van outside lower Mershon Hall
Introduction: Connie Cross, Public Art Community Relations Coordinator, Fulton County Arts & Culture
Guide: Hope Hilton, Artist

How do you get to know a place? How do you understand where you are? What do you notice? In this workshop supported by the Fulton County Arts and Culture Arts Van, you’ll tap into your senses for learning and discovery. This is a roving workshop for all ages and all levels that is about exploring our surroundings and how observation can inspire creativity. Participants will create a personal field guide as well as artwork from the exploration.

5:00 – 6:00 p.m. Closing Remarks + Reception
Location: Hardin Visitor Center
Great parks exist through the efforts of leaders who nurture and strengthen the bond between parks and communities. Park Pride's Inspiration Awards honor these leaders:

**Jy’ Quan Almond**  
**Urban Food Forest at Browns Mill**  
Jy’ Quan is a confident and charismatic leader at the Urban Food Forest at Browns Mill. He’s a role model for the young and old... though he’s just 12 years old himself! Since day one when the Food Forest was a blighted, vacant property in Southeast Atlanta, Jy’ Quan jumped into the community visioning process to help guide the final design. Since then, he has continued to show up, helping to build trails and plant food producing trees and crops. He participates in “grow-and-learns,” planning sessions and festivals, and serves as an ambassador and Food Forest tour guide.

**Bill Lide**  
**Kittredge Park**  
As a board member and volunteer coordinator of the Friends group, Bill has been central to the success of Kittredge Park. Leading by example, he created a culture of giving within his community that has helped to fund park improvements and complete volunteer projects. Bill has recruited over 5,000 volunteers to remove invasive plant species and plant natives, create and mulch trails, and install benches, picnic tables, and a playground. Cumulatively, his efforts have made the park a safe place for members of the community to relax and enjoy nature.

**Nancy Boyd**  
**Freedom Park**  
Nancy understands the importance of art in reflecting culture and inspiring discussion. She also knows that as a gathering space, parks invite visitors of all backgrounds. Bringing parks and arts together is a powerful mechanism for a shared experience of storytelling that unites a community. Thanks to Nancy's dedication to the Freedom Park Conservancy and partnership with the City of Atlanta, Freedom Park will receive three new works of art in late 2019. These pieces will elevate the level of art expected in public space and the experience of Freedom Park for all.

**Billie Walker**  
**Mattie Freeland Park**  
Billie Walker believes that a park’s purpose is to serve as an inclusive community space with the power to anchor and revitalize neighborhoods. For years, she has shared her passion for community engagement and making English Avenue parks welcoming spaces for all ages and abilities. Billie is an enthusiastic cheerleader for all the greenspaces and people in her community, encouraging neighbors to attend park events and volunteer. Her compassion is contagious, as she inspires neighbors to make connections and to love and care for each other.

**Jessie Hayden**  
**Briarlake Forest Park**  
In 2014, Jessie Hayden played a key role to protect a forest in DeKalb County from development. Today, that property is known as Briarlake Forest Park, an ecologically rich and cherished natural area. Jessie helped craft the park plan, which incorporated elements for both human and wildlife visitors to enjoy: a free play space for kids, an outdoor classroom, artistic tables and benches that blend with the environment, an ADA path around the meadow, gardens that provide native plant habitat for birds and bees, and more.

**Lewis Woodson**  
**NPU-P Parks**  
As the Committee Chairman of NPU-P’s Parks and Recreation Committee, Lewis has been on the forefront of efforts to improve parks, recreation amenities, and community health for years! His efforts span multiple greenspaces, including Melvin Drive Park, Deerwood Park, Tuscan Park, and Princeton Lake Walking Trail. Fueled by his vision for parks that address the needs of residents of all ages, he is a neighborhood champion that has engaged both community and civic leaders to strengthen the connection between people and greenspace.
thank you

18th annual parks and greenspace conference committee

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19th Annual Parks & Greenspace Conference
March 23, 2020
At Cox, our goal is to be a force for good in the world. Driving positive environmental change - inside our company and within the communities we serve - is one of the most important things we do. It’s the little steps we take together that can make a big difference.

Learn more about Cox’s commitment to sustainability at CoxConserves.com