

Neighborhood children romp on the playground at the English Avenue community's newest park, Kathryn Johnston Memorial Park!  
Photo: The Conservation Fund



# park views

PARKPRIDE.ORG | SPRING 2020

*great parks for all*

## English Avenue Community Celebrates a New Park!

On November 21, 2019, Park Pride, alongside the English Avenue community, the City of Atlanta, The Conservation Fund, the Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, and nearly 40 additional partners and funders, celebrated the long-awaited opening of Kathryn Johnston Memorial Park!

This new park represents an exciting milestone for a community that, just a few years ago, did not have a single park within the neighborhood. Kids didn't have a safe place to play. No greenspace existed for community gatherings or picnics. On top of that, the neighborhood experienced devastating floods regularly.

That *used* to be the story in the English Avenue community. But today, that story has changed.

The third in a series of parks proposed in the Proctor Creek North Avenue Green Infrastructure Vision (Park Pride, 2010), Kathryn Johnston Memorial Park will manage up to 3.5 million gallons of rainwater per year through several green infrastructure amenities, mitigating the impact of flooding from stormwater runoff in the neighborhood.

More importantly, however, this park will provide English Avenue children and adults with a *safe* place close to their

homes to relax, exercise, play with their families, and meet their neighbors.

The park includes a playground, fitness station, and an open field for soccer games, flying kites or holding community events. Specifically identified by the community through Park Pride's 2016 Park Visioning process, these amenities will be enjoyed for years to come!



Nonprofit, government, and community partners officially opened Kathryn Johnston Memorial Park to the public with a celebratory ribbon cutting, November 2019.

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ENGAGING COMMUNITIES TO ACTIVATE THE POWER OF PARKS



"The kids now look forward to coming out and playing," explained community member, Mr. Sims, "and being comfortable in their *own* environment instead of having to go somewhere else."

"Kathryn Johnston Memorial Park is a special place," reflected John Dargle, Jr., Commissioner of Atlanta's Department of Parks and Recreation. "It is an example of the values of our parks and recreation system in social equity, environmental stewardship, and health and wellness."

District 3 Council Member Antonio Brown honored the park's namesake. Kathryn Johnston was tragically killed

by members of the Atlanta Police Department, a sacrifice that resulted in the repeal of a law that allowed for the arrest of citizens without "probable cause." Her loss will be memorialized within the park and ensure that Atlantans continue to work towards the prevention of future tragedies.

Speakers also remembered the late District 3 Council Member, Ivory Lee Young, Jr., who played a significant role in this park's creation.

Kathryn Johnston Memorial Park's celebration was memorable for all who attended. Park Pride is proud to have played our role alongside so many to make this park a reality!

 Want to see more? Visit [bit.ly/kjmp2019](https://bit.ly/kjmp2019) for a great video highlighting the park's transformation and ribbon-cutting celebration.


## Decade in DeKalb!

This year, Park Pride, Friends of the Park groups, and DeKalb County are proud to celebrate a *Decade in DeKalb* and the accomplishments of the communities supported through capital improvements, volunteer engagement, and community building in DeKalb County parks!

"Through the years, Park Pride has helped us tremendously by bridging the gap with the citizens of DeKalb County to unlock the benefits of our parks," said Chuck Ellis, Director of the DeKalb County Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs.

Through the years, Park Pride has worked with 70 Friends of the Park groups in DeKalb County. As Bill Lide with Friends of Kittredge Park shared, the support of Park Pride's Volunteer Program and Grant Program helped make his park a "go to" retreat for neighbors. "We could not have done it without the immeasurable help of the great people of Park Pride."

Thank you, DeKalb County and Friends of the Park groups, for giving your time and passion to develop parks that meet the needs of local communities!

 Ready to join or start a Friends of the Park group? Visit [parkpride.org/friends](https://parkpride.org/friends) to learn how.

## message from michael: a big year for parks




**Michael Halicki**  
Park Pride's  
Executive Director

2020 is a big year for Park Pride, City of Atlanta and DeKalb County residents, and for parks.

These pages highlight the important role Park Pride plays in communities throughout our service area. Community engagement is the foundation of our approach. Through our Grant Program, for example, we work with community leaders to improve parks by listening to the voices of residents and supporting their efforts with matching resources from philanthropic funders.

In 2020, Park Pride's community-driven approach to park improvements is more important than ever. This is a pivotal year for determining the quality of our parks in the next decade and beyond, and for that reason I encourage you to re-double your engagement with Park Pride:

- Join us at the Parks and Greenspace Conference (page 5),
- Celebrate Park Pride's 10-year anniversary of a *Decade in DeKalb*,
- Get involved with your local Friends of the Park group,
- Enjoy time in a park and talk to your neighbors about the important role Park Pride plays in the place you live,
- Support Park Pride's work with a gift: [parkpride.org/donate](https://parkpride.org/donate).

 Follow us on social media for more ways to engage: [@parkpride](https://twitter.com/parkpride).



DeKalb County Friends of the Park groups and supporters can't contain their excitement over Park Pride's Decade in DeKalb!

## breaking barriers: Nature for All - Atlanta



**Adriana Garcia**  
Nature Accessibility  
Advocate

In an urban environment, parks often provide our only connection to nature. In 2020, Park Pride will rally behind a vision of *nature for all*, helping people access and use parks and greenspaces.

With support from the Turner Foundation and in partnership with Trees Atlanta and the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance, I was hired to champion an initiative called *Nature for All – Atlanta*.

While one of the goals of this initiative is to advance the City of Atlanta's Urban Ecology Framework and Tree Protection Ordinance, the broader focus is to build support, awareness, and appetite for equitable access to nature. **Everyone**—regardless of race, age, gender, socio-economic status, or ability—**deserves access to nature**.

There are, however, barriers that complicate support for this vision, especially for individuals in communities that have been historically marginalized.

Throughout 2020, I will organize a series of fun, *free* outings and events (nature walks, beginner birding, tree talks, etc.) to begin to break those barriers and empower a new cohort of local nature advocates. To make events inclusive, some will even be offered in Spanish.

Invite your friends and family to join you at an event. Help us make nature a part of everyone's daily life!

**Sign up for Nature for All – Atlanta events:**  
[parkpride.org/events](https://parkpride.org/events).



*Avid birders in the making! In January, the first Nature for All - Atlanta event brought new birders of all ages to Cascade Springs Nature Preserve. Photo credit: Jenny Burdette, Georgia Nature Photographers Association.*

## Articulating a Shared Vision



**Andrew White** is Park Pride's Director of Park Visioning and a professional landscape architect.

Parks are inherently political, each with its own minefield of competing constituencies and interests. To encourage unity within Friends of the Park groups or newly formed park steering committees, establishing a set of guiding principles helps to focus community members on a shared vision for their park.

The idea is simple. Take time to articulate the hopes of community members: their hopes for the visioning process, for the park, and for the community itself. Through this practice, people learn that many of their hopes are shared by others, and common ground is found. **Listening** is one of the most powerful tools we have to bridge divides and negotiate a path forward.

Guiding principles can calm fears that park improvements or projects will result in changes contrary to the desires of the community. Once established, communities agree that every decision made regarding the park must support one or more principles. They become a touchstone should conflict arise.

### Common Guiding Principles for Parks

Atlantans love trees and the many benefits they provide, including habitat, shade, erosion control, and beauty! Therefore, nearly all guiding principles include the protection of mature trees.

Communities also place a high value on safe pedestrian and bicycle routes to and through their parks, prioritizing welcoming and well-marked entrances, sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike racks over other infrastructure.

Adequate park maintenance is another common theme. Without it, parks can fall into disrepair, creating a backlog that never goes away.

By transforming community hopes into guiding principles, local leaders ensure the dreams that neighbors have for their park remain a top priority.

**View the full version of this article on Saporta Report:**  
[bit.ly/parkprinciples](https://bit.ly/parkprinciples).



# Park Pride Celebrates Its Largest Grant Cycle Ever!

In its 30<sup>th</sup> year, Park Pride awarded a **record \$1,385,000** in capital funding for park improvements to 30 Friends of the Park groups in the City of Atlanta (COA), unincorporated DeKalb County (DC), City of Brookhaven, and City of Tucker. To date, Park Pride has awarded \$7.7 million to community-led park improvement projects, dollars that are matched by public and private funding. These transformative park projects will connect communities, improve residents' quality of life, and support the health of our environment. Congratulations to all communities that received awards!

## Small Change Grants

(funded by The Home Depot Foundation)

City of Atlanta *Friends* groups: **Atlanta Waterworks Greenspace**, **Chosewood Park**, **Grove Park**, **Little Nancy Creek Park**, **Lindsay Street Park**, **Loridans Park**, **Pittman Park**, **Spink-Collins Park**, and **Vermont Park**

Unincorporated DeKalb County *Friends* groups: **Sugar Creek Golf & Tennis Center** and **Rehoboth Park**

City of Brookhaven *Friends* groups: **LaVista Park** and **Murphey Candler Park**

City of Tucker *Friends* groups: **Henderson Park**, **Kelley Cofer Park**, and **McKinley Peters Park**

## Community Building Grants

(funded by The Home Depot Foundation)

**The Friends of Coan Park** (COA) will install an ADA-accessible “Musical Forest” with instruments and a train playscape to activate an unused area of the park.

**The Friends of DeKalb Memorial Park** (DC) will build a new deck around Parkview Community Center, a step towards implementing their 2019 Park Pride Vision Plan.

**Historic Oakland Cemetery** (COA) will install a new entrance on the east side of the park, opening access to the Cabbagetown neighborhood and to the Eastside Trail Extension of the Atlanta BeltLine.

**The Friends of Pendergrast Park** (DC) will renovate the park, adding new infrastructure, additional trails, and a new playground.

**The Friends of South Bend Park** (COA) will install a new gate and fencing, and enhance the dog park.

**The Friends of Sunken Garden Park** (COA) will install drainage and a retaining seat wall to remediate standing water and increase neighborhood usage.

## Legacy Grants

(funded by the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation)

**The Friends of Anderson Park** will install a new playground, fitness equipment, and welcoming park amenities like grills and benches.

**The Candler Park Conservancy** received a challenge grant to renovate its recreation field with a multi-use track, drainage improvements, and erosion control.

**The Friends of Lang-Carson Park** will renovate the Manigault Playlot with a new ADA-accessible path, embankment slide, and sensory garden.

**The Friends of Lillian Cooper Shepherd Park** will install lighting and a shade structure over the basketball court to increase use for play and community gatherings.

**The Friends of Mattie Freeland Park** will partner with Park Pride and The Conservation Fund to build a new park in the English Avenue neighborhood.

**The Friends of Pittman Park** will install new swing sets, play equipment, and park amenities to serve park users and the recreation center's after school programs.

**The Friends of South Atlanta Park** will install new playground equipment and transform a tennis court into a lawn that can be used for soccer, picnics, and play.

**The South Fork Conservancy** will construct a pedestrian bridge across the north fork of Peachtree Creek, connecting over 25 acres of greenspace, PATH400, the Atlanta BeltLine, and the Peachtree Creek Greenway.

*The Blue Heron Nature Preserve's newly completed Blueway Trail, funded with support from two Legacy Grants, is enjoyed by all ages!*





# THE Nature OF OUR City

Monday, March 23, 2020  
Atlanta Botanical Garden  
[parkpride.org/conference](http://parkpride.org/conference)

For many, urban parks are one of the few places to escape the bustle of city life and to experience the regular and replenishing joys of nature.

Join us on Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Atlanta Botanical Garden as we explore the nature of our city and its importance as a key component to leading a happy, healthy life. Everyone needs and deserves access to nature!

## Keynote Speakers



**Diane Jones Allen**

Program Director  
for Landscape  
Architecture,  
University of Texas at  
Arlington; Principal,  
DesignJones, LLC



**David Haskell**

Writer, scientist, and  
sound recordist;  
Author of *The Forest  
Unseen*



**Drew Lanham**

Birder, writer, and  
naturalist; Certified  
wildlife biologist;  
Professor at Clemson  
University



**Kristine Stratton**

President and CEO  
of the National  
Recreation and Park  
Association (NRPA)

## Register Today!

- Regular: \$170
- Late: \$190 (March 16 - March 19)
- Walk-Up: \$200 (March 23)

Get your seat next to over 450 park advocates, enthusiasts, and professionals from across the country at the largest parks and greenspace conference in the Southeast!

sell-out  
event!  
register  
**TODAY**  
Atlanta, Georgia 2020  
19th Annual Parks & Greenspace Conference

## Conference Sponsors

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To join this list,  
contact [chad@parkpride.org](mailto:chad@parkpride.org).

# Corporate Champions

Thank you to the following organizations for their extraordinary generosity in support of Park Pride's mission!

## visionary



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## sustainer



## activator



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## organizational updates

### board of directors news



**Mark Balloun** was elected to serve as the Board Chair.



Former Board Chair **Melody Darch**, will continue to serve on the executive committee as Treasurer and Past Board Chair.

Park Pride welcomes three new board members:



**Luis A. Avila** of Cox Enterprises.



**Atiba Mbiwan** of The Zeist Foundation.



**Susan Stainback**, Founding Principal of Sylvatica Studio.

Park Pride extends our deepest appreciation to the board members who've completed their terms: **Courtney Fletcher, Carlos Perez, Gwendolyn Smith, Tamara Stewart, Esther Stokes, and Caroline Vroon.**

### staff news



**Sabina Kasumova** joined staff as the Public Engagement Specialist.



**Emma Nortje** is supporting Park Pride's marketing and communication efforts.



**Dakota Mitchell** will support the Community Building team as our Spring Intern.

Visit [parkpride.org/team](https://parkpride.org/team) for staff contact information.

## Become a Champion for Parks!

Please reach out to Chad Nash, Corporate Relations Manager, to learn more. [chad@parkpride.org](mailto:chad@parkpride.org) or 404-546-7984.



park pride's  
2019 Highlights

A 2018 Legacy Grant to the Chastain Park Conservancy supported an expansion to the playground, September 2019.

All smiles on the playground of the English Avenue community's new Kathryn Johnston Memorial Park, October 2019.

**a record  
\$1,385,000**

awarded to  
30 Friends of the Park  
groups through the  
Grant Program.

The Friends of  
Lang-Carson Park pose while  
planning great park activations,  
June 2018.

**146**

Friends of  
the Park groups  
engaged in  
activating their  
parks!

**1**

BRAND NEW  
park, Kathryn  
Johnston Memorial  
Park, on Atlanta's  
westside.

**mission**

to engage  
communities to  
activate the power  
of parks

**189**

park projects  
completed with  
support from  
4,376 passionate  
volunteers!

**50**

national and local  
presenters at the  
18<sup>th</sup> Annual Parks  
& Greenspace  
Conference.

**27**

communities  
received park design  
support through  
the Park Visioning  
Program.

Tireless volunteers remove invasive plants  
at Kittredge Park (DeKalb County),  
February 2019.  
Photo: Luke Beard

Mitchell Silver, Commissioner of New  
York City's Dept. of Parks & Recreation,  
delivers a powerful keynote presentation  
on equity and parks,  
March 2019.

i  
love  
parks  
parkpride

Community members give input into  
the conceptual plan for Mozley Park,  
August 2019.



The complete 2019 Impact  
Report will be available  
online soon!



## Park Pride's Board of Directors

**Mark Balloun** | Chair  
*MultiCam Southeast*

**Peggy Allumbaugh** | Vice Chair  
*Retired Partner, Deloitte LLP*

**Lee Harrop** | Secretary  
*Westside Future Fund*

**Melody Darch** | Treasurer and  
Past Board Chair  
*Retired, Cox Media Group*

**Jeff Ellman** | At-Large  
*Jones Day*

**Robin Aiken**  
*Homrich Berg*

**Luis Avila-Estrada**  
*Cox Enterprises*

**Kirk Billings**  
*Pope & Land Real Estate*

**C.J. Cash**

**Liz Gillespie**  
*The Architect of Experience*

**Tanya Hairston-Whitner**  
*The Home Depot*

**Matthew Hicks**  
*Grady Health System*

**May B. Hollis**  
*Peachtree Garden Club*

**Barbara Levy**  
*Education Connection Advisors*

**Atiba Mbiwan**  
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**David Moss**  
*PwC*

**Kristy Rachal**  
*Georgia Power*

**Barbara Reid**  
*Retired CPA*

**Susan Stainback**  
*Sylvatica Studio*

**Joni Winston**  
*Center of Joy*

## Honorary Directors

**Tally Sweat**  
*Founding Board Chair*

**John Dargle, Jr.**  
*Commissioner, City of Atlanta  
Department of Parks and Recreation*



Happiness is contagious when you're getting a good dose of "Vitamin N"! Birders enjoy a silly moment together during Birding + Storytelling with Jason Ward, the first Nature for All - Atlanta event at Cascade Springs Nature Preserve. Photo credit: Jenny Burdette, Georgia Nature Photographers Association.

Make your gift today: [parkpride.org/donate](https://parkpride.org/donate)



*for the greener good*

**Mission** | To engage communities to  
activate the power of parks.

**Park Views Online** | [bit.ly/parkpridenews](https://bit.ly/parkpridenews)

    | @parkpride  
#forthegreenergood

