Howard County
RECREATION & PARKS

ANNUAL REPORT
July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

January 7, 2020

A. Raul Delerme, Director
Department of Recreation and Parks

From The Director

As your new Director, it is my honor to recognize the progress made by our staff and volunteers and to reaffirm our commitment to making Howard County a one-of-a-kind, inclusive community. Director John Byrd retired in June and I am honored to lead the department down a similar path of providing for the needs for today's community, including more cricket pitches and pickleball courts for these growing sports to more inclusive programming opportunities and facilities to offering more services to those retiring and staying in Howard County through our new Encore program.

The 2019 annual report highlights a few of our many accomplishments achieved through hard work and diligence over the past year. This document includes updates on some long-term initiatives, including our five-year tick survey in conjunction with the USDA and University of Maryland. I am particularly proud of the progress our department has made toward the completion of Blandair Park (including the groundbreaking ceremony for Phase III, which will feature a fenced-in, one-acre inclusive playground).

This yearly review of our department documents new initiatives that have a direct and positive impact on Howard County residents and visitors. For example, Robinson Nature Center's newest educational outreach success and the nearly 45,000 volunteer hours logged by our Parks Volunteer Management Team.

More than just a vital accounting of statistics and budgetary dollars, this yearly report illustrates the diverse offerings Howard County Recreation & Parks provides to the people that we serve.

Sincerely,

Raul Delerme

Director, Howard County Recreation & Parks

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Howard County Recreation & Parks
7120 Oakland Mills Road
Columbia, Maryland 21046

County Executive: Calvin Ball

Director: Raul Delerme

Bureau Chief of Recreation: Laura T. Wetherald

Bureau Chief of Parks: John S. Marshall

Acting Bureau Chief of Capital Projects: Bob Linz

Bureau Chief of Administrative Services:
Michael H. Milani

FY2019 Advisory Board
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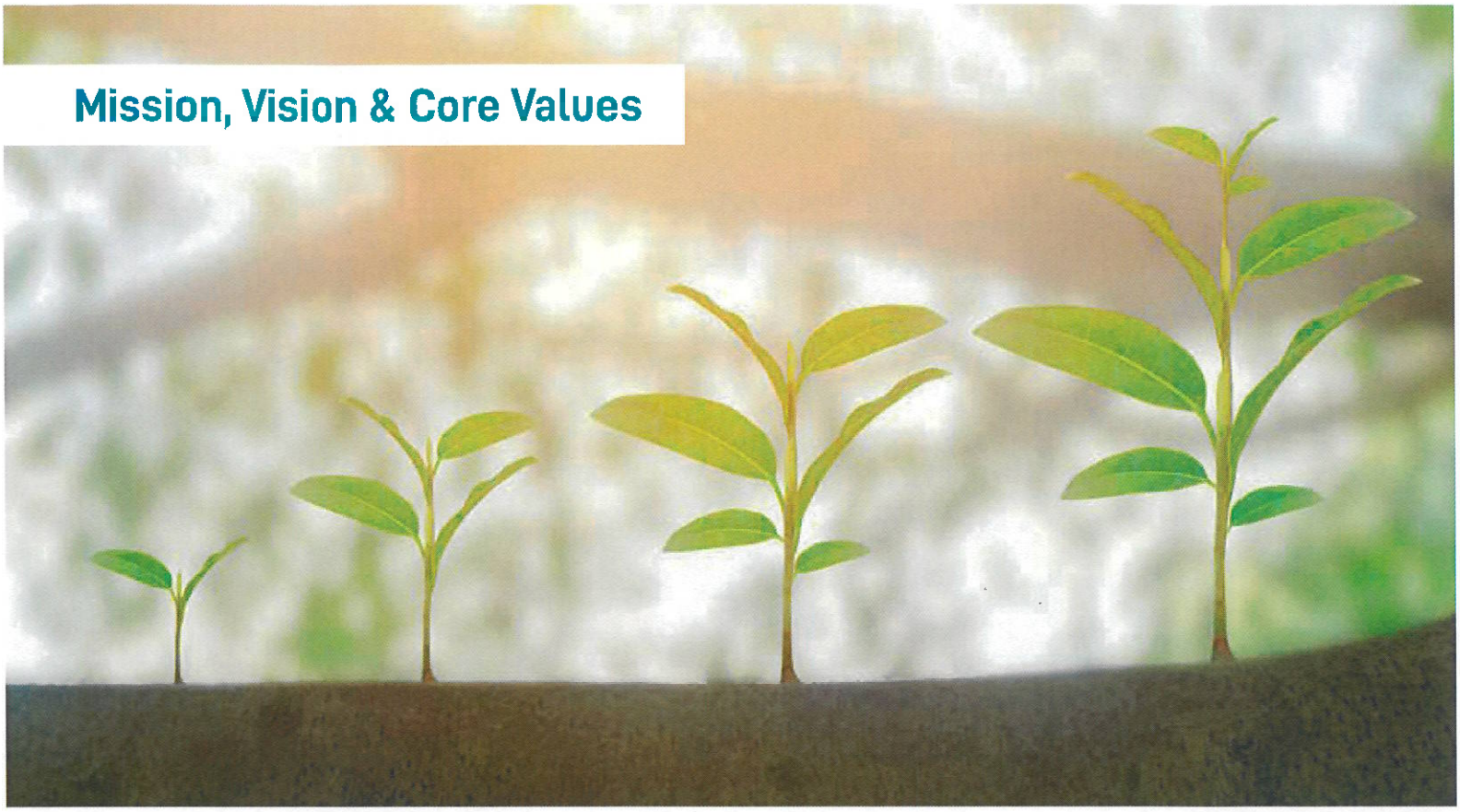
Daniel Tracy, Jr. (Vice Chair)
John R. Byrd (Recording Secretary)
Edward Coleman (Planning Board)
Thomas Franklin
David Brown
Dr. Joel Goodman
Ananta Hejeebu
Joanne Kiebler
Anna Boyd (Student Member)

Mission, Vision & Core Values



MISSION

To responsibly manage natural resources; provide excellent parks, facilities, and recreation opportunities for the community; and ensure the highest quality of life for current and future generations.

VISION

The Department of Recreation & Parks strives to deliver recreation and leisure opportunities that will improve the health and well-being of the community and to serve as model stewards of the environment by managing, protecting, and conserving our resources for a sustainable future.

CORE VALUES

- Exceptional Customer Service
- Professionalism
- Accountability
- Knowledgeable, Well-trained Staff
- Teamwork
- Integrity
- Trend-Setting

CAPRA Agency Accreditation

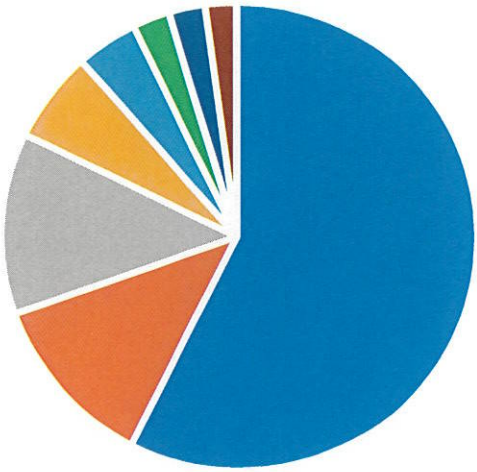
The Howard County Recreation & Parks Department is accredited through the Commission for Accreditation of Park & Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). To achieve accreditation, the Department was required to meet 151 standards encompassing all operations contained in leisure services. These professional standards serve as an aid for improving performance and maintaining quality. They provide park and recreation agencies with an ability to evaluate their operation, while achieving and maintaining a level of efficiency and effectiveness.

The department achieved accreditation in 2001 and re-accreditation in 2006, 2012 and 2017. It is one of only 174 accredited agencies in the United States.

CAPRA recognizes park and recreation agencies for excellence in operation and service. Charged with providing high quality services and experiences, park and recreation agencies across the United States turn to CAPRA Accreditation as a credible and efficient means of achieving these goals, while providing assurance to the public that the agency meets national standards for best practice.

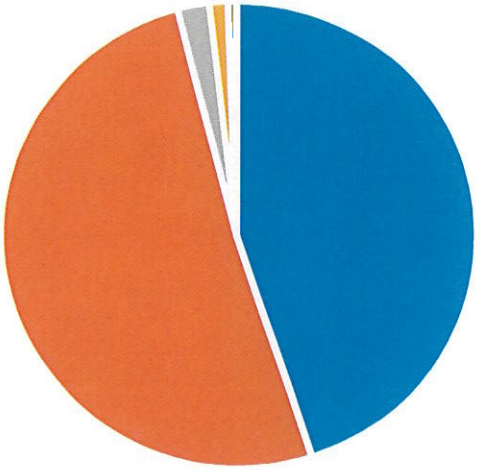
County's General Fund Budget: 1,160,675,821

1. Education 57.51%
2. Public Safety 12.11%
3. Non-Department 12.5%
4. Public Facilities 6.3%
5. Community 4.27%
6. General Government 2.59%
7. Legislative / Judicial 2.53%
8. Recreation & Parks 2.19%

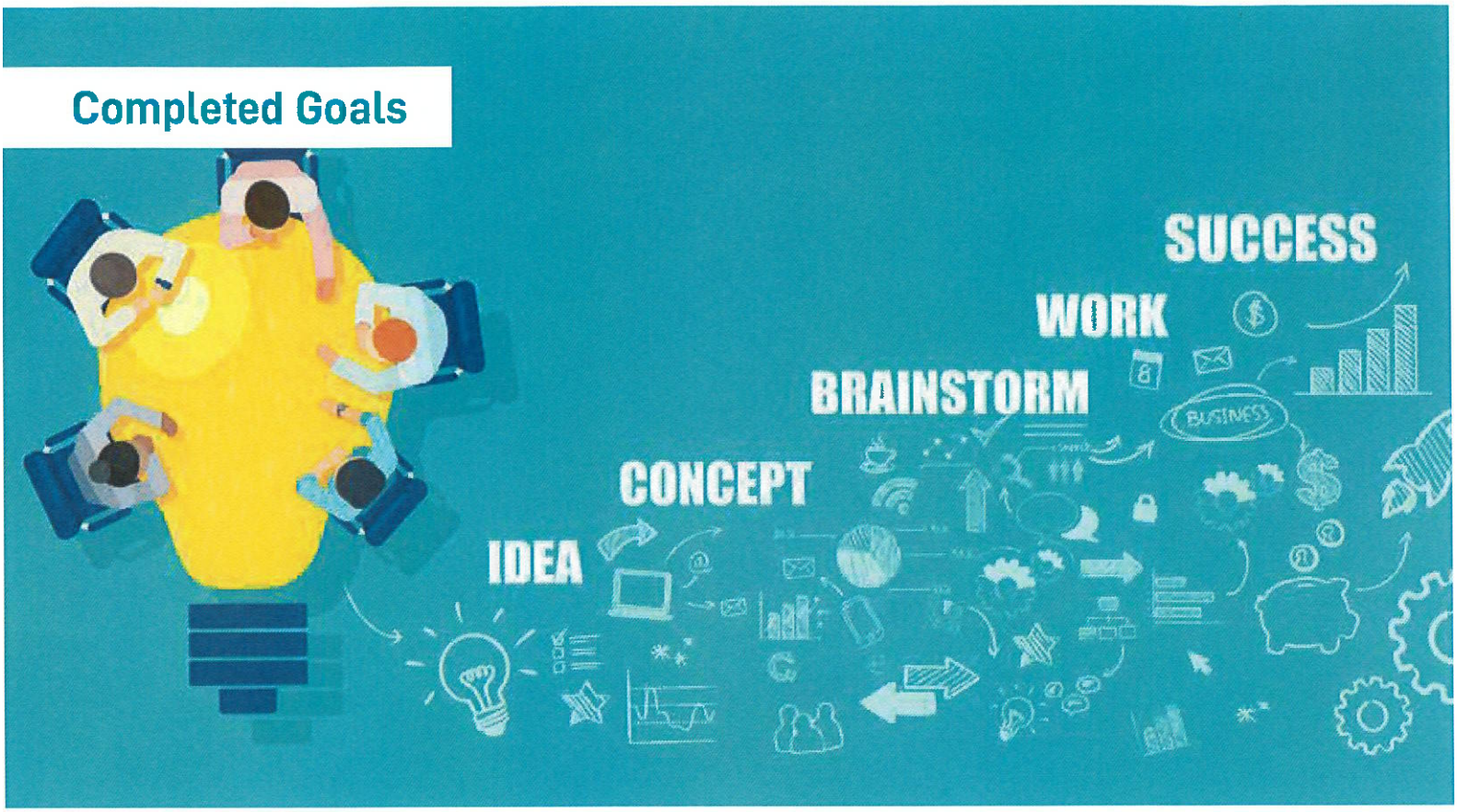


Recreation & Parks Budget: $48,457,693

1. Recreation & Parks Fund 44.9%
2. General Fund 51%
3. Golf 2.2%
4. Forest Conservation 1.3%
5. Middle Patuxent Environmental Area (MPEA) & Grant 0.6%



Completed Goals



1. Creation of FY 2020-2024 Strategic Plan.
2. Began construction of the new Middle Patuxent Environmental Area facility with an anticipated completion date of fall 2019.
3. Started construction of Phase 3 of Blandair Park which include the playground and maintenance building.
4. Installed sustainable bottle filler water fountains in parks to reduce the number of plastic water bottles and encourage patrons to fill up with reusable bottles.
5. Replaced Cedar Lane Park field # 5 and Rockburn Field # 6 synthetic turf.
6. Expanded adult programs for residents who are retiring.
7. Reviewed program and facility fees.
8. Created the Park Watch program.

2020 Department Goals

1. The Trend Committee will analyze results from the Department's Evaluation Team and will provide a summary of the analysis to divisions.

2. Identify the top three underserved demographic markets.

3. Support and assist with the Harriett Tubman school development process.

4. Research, develop and implement the Park Rx program with local pediatricians.

5. Update inventory of existing partnerships.

6. To prepare application and apply for the National Gold Medal in 2020.

Registration & Scholarships

Programs Offered
Fall 2018 - Summer 2019
8,553

2019 Summer Camp
1,803

Registrants in Classes, Programs & Camps
Fall 2018 - Summer 2019
106,343

2019 Summer Camp & Program Registrants
28,105

Scholarships Provided
Fall 2018 - Summer 2019
$515,697

Numbers at a Glance

Parks

(8) Regional Parks (in acres)

2,609

(10) Community Parks (in acres)

788

(12) Neighborhood Parks (in acres)

326

Other (in acres)

27

(4) Natural Resources Areas (in acres)

1,890

(26) Historic Places (in acres)

114

Open Space (in acres)

3,835.59

Total Recreation & Parks Land Holdings (in acres)

9,592.59

Facilities

Belmont Manor & Historic Park Visitors

+ 15%

Robinson Nature Center Annual Visitors

+ 13%

Baltimore & Ohio Ellicott City Station Museum Annual Visitors

24,075

Pavilion Permits

+ 4.5%

Facilities

Facility	Rentals	Visitors
Gary J. Arthur Community Center	381	222,285
Kiwanis-Wallas Hall	61	12,954
Meadowbrook Athletic Complex	30	250,000
North Laurel Community Center	487	224,784
Roger Carter Community Center	307	359,975

Number of rentals from July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019

Number of annual visitors from July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019

Social Media

Howard County Recreation & Parks Facebook Main Page Likes

+ 11.78%

(14,779 likes)

Belmont Manor & Historic Park Facebook Followers

+ 26.54%

(1,454 followers)

@HoCoRec Instagram Followers

+ 27.5%

(2,194 followers)

@HoCoRec Twitter Followers

+ 14.08%

(4,424 followers)

Robinson Nature Center Facebook Followers

+ 16.31%

(9,232 followers)

Capital Projects

Blandair Park

A groundbreaking ceremony for Phase Three of the Blandair Regional Park was held on August 22, 2018 near 5700 Oakland Mills Road in Columbia.

Located off MD 175, Blandair Regional Park is becoming one of the county's premier destinations for sports events. Once the final phase is complete, the park will be 298 acres. The park is being completed over seven phases. Phase one opened in March 2012 and phase two opened in March 2018. Phase three will include a large playground, bocce ball and croquet courts, and horseshoe pits.

The contractor for the third phase of construction is Bob Porter Construction Company. The playground will be constructed by Commercial Recreation, a subsidiary of Little Tykes.

Phase three will cost $10.9 million ($2,565,000 in the Program Open Space Fund, $250,000 in a State Bond Bill, and $8,085,000 in County Funds).

- Starting in July 2017, this park became part of the new bike share program and has a station in the phase one area near the current playground and pavilion.
- There are Seven Phases. If the project goes according to schedule, the last phase will start in 2026.

Phase 1 (completed)

- 3 lighted, synthetic turf multi-purpose fields
- 1 playground with shade structure above part of play area
- 1 shelter
- 1 restroom
- 1 parking lot

Phase 2 (completed)

- A challenge course specifically designed for teens and adults.
- Five tennis courts.
- A pavilion/shade structure.
- Two synthetic turf baseball fields with shaded bleacher seating.
- Restroom facilities.
- An open green space.
- New parking lot.

Phase 3A – Backyard Games

Construction of the playground area has begun and the anticipated completion date is summer 2020.

Amenities include:

- A playground for all with six activity pods, benches, paths, and a fence.
- Two croquet courts with synthetic turf and benches.
- Three bocce-ball courts and benches.
- Three horseshoe pitches and benches.
- A pavilion with electricity and water.
- Two concrete ping-pong tables and game tables for chess and checkers.
- A comfort station, including a family restroom and a storage room.
- Parking for 200 cars with 12 H/C spaces.
- Pathways connecting with the county bike-path system.
- Bio-retention areas for storm water management.
- Landscaping with shade-trees and other plants.

Blandair Phase 3B – Maintenance Facility

Construction is scheduled for completion in summer 2020.

Amenities include:

- Maintenance building with offices.
- Storage for equipment and materials.
- Parking and fenced yard.

Volunteers

Volunteer Management Training

As our department grows and paid staff are hired, we continue to rely on volunteers to perform important, necessary work.

Managing volunteers is every bit as challenging as managing paid staff, perhaps even more so. Effective volunteer management involves recruiting, screening, training, and supervising. Another essential and sometimes overlooked key component is the volunteer records management process.

During the FY19 fiscal year, the Department of Recreation and Parks Volunteer Management Team implemented trainings specifically focused on volunteer management and oversight. The training held in March was a how-to-series designed to walk staff through the volunteer onboarding process while providing information and resources needed to comply with the Department's Volunteer Program policies and procedures. In April, the Volunteer Management Team hosted and facilitated a Volunteer Management Roundtable through MRPA's Professional Learning Community. Volunteer professionals from around the state had the opportunity to meet and discuss best practices and common issues facing volunteerism.

Volunteers donated over

$1.08 million

in labor costs to Howard County Recreation & Parks.

213 volunteers self-logged over 4,567 hours through HoCoVolunteer.org.

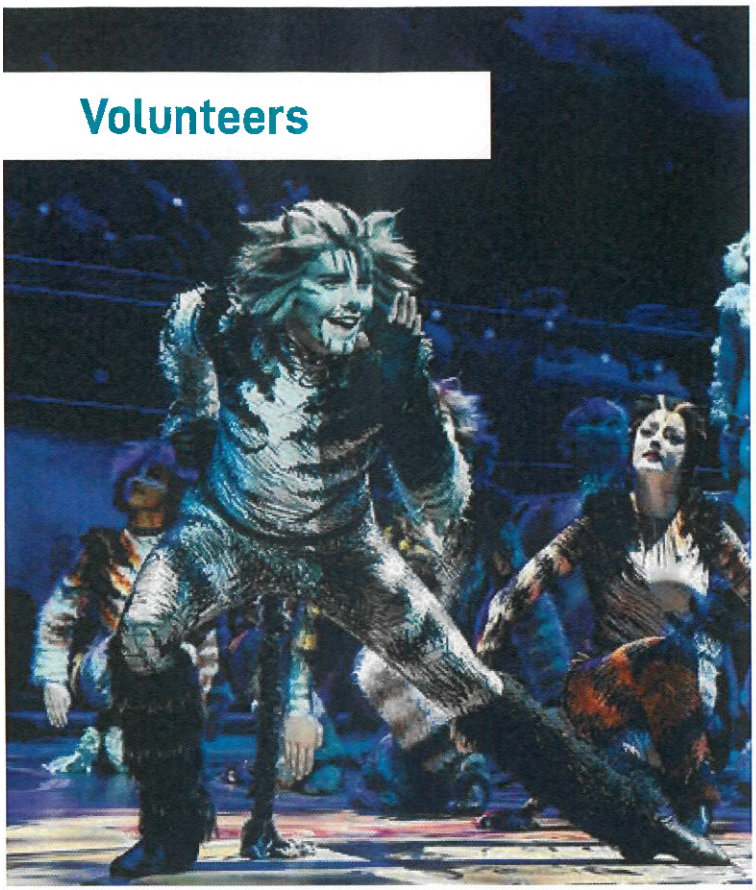
Volunteer hours submitted by supervisors/coordinators accounted for another 57,367 hours.

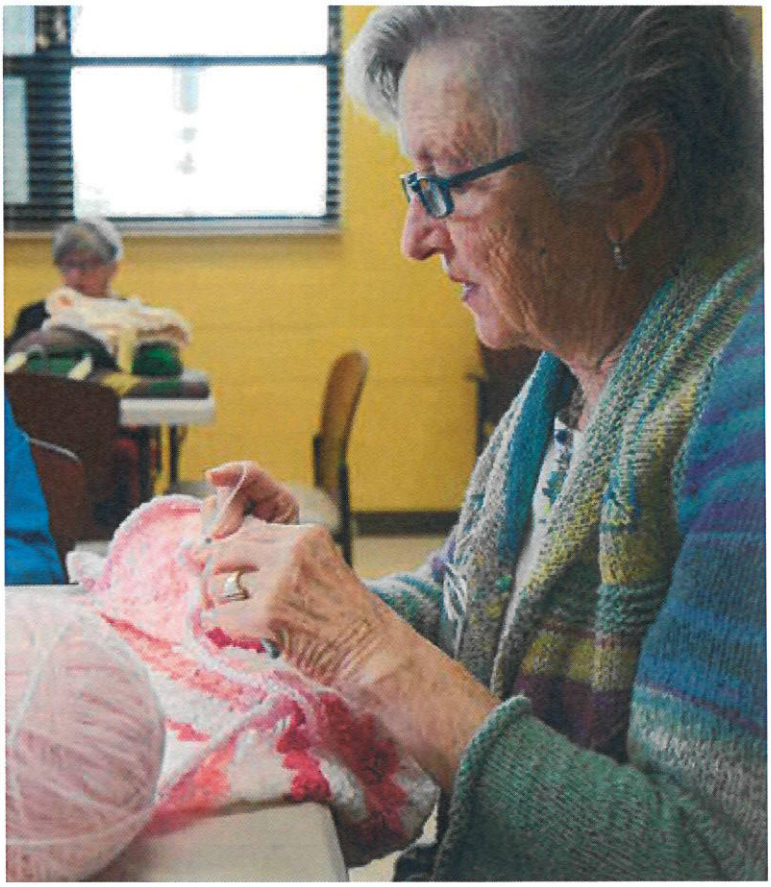
Volunteers

Vipers Wrestling

Program	Nov-Dec 2018	Jan-Mar 2019	Total Number of Volunteers Hour
Vipers Wrestling Clinic	576	672	1,248
Vipers Wrestling Recreation	10,080	13,440	23,520
Vipers Wrestling Travel	2,880	3,600	6,480

Volunteers





Special Projects

Trips and Tours & Drop-In Programs

The Trip Leader Program continues to grow and our volunteers' dedicated service to the program allows the Trips & Tours group to offer a variety of travel opportunities to the public.

Howard County Recreation & Parks' Free Drop-In Programs has also been assisted by a small team of regular volunteers. These programs include Wii Bowling at the Bain 50+ Center, trivia, and toss across. The programs are valuable as many of the participants in these programs are on a fixed income and have limited expendable income. These drop-in programs allow them to be active, social, and enjoy leisure.

20 Trips & Tours Trip Leaders

3 Drop-In Program Volunteers

100 Trips & Tours Volunteer Hours

127 Drop-In Program Volunteer Hours

Community Knitting & Crocheting Group

The Community Knitting & Crocheting Group was formed over twenty years ago with only three members. Over the years, the group has donated thousands of handmade items for organizations in and around Howard County, MD.

In addition to local requests, in 2019, the group began making donations to nation-wide calls for handmade items. This group provides volunteers with a creative outlet, an opportunity for socialization, and a sense of contributing to their community. They are an extremely talented group that enjoys sharing new patterns, needlework advice, and giving back.

50+ Volunteers Contribute Annually

57 Average hours per month at bi-weekly meetings

1,308 donated items to 16 Maryland organizations and 1 faith-based mission in Kentucky

Volunteers

Photo courtesy of Kevin Heffernan.

HERP Atlas 2019

The Howard County Amphibian & Reptile Atlas (Herp Atlas) continues to map the distribution of reptiles and amphibians across the County.

In 2018, the Herp volunteers documented two uncommon turtle species in the Woodbine area, the Spotted Turtle and the Eastern Musk Turtle. These represent two of the three least common native turtle species in Howard County.

Overall, eleven turtle species have been found in the county, including four non-native species, the Red-eared Slider, Diamondback Terrapin, Alligator Snapping Turtle and False Map Turtle.

In 2019, the Herp volunteers were able to document the Cope's Gray Treefrog in the last map block giving full distribution of this species every 10-square-miles across the county.

In 2019, the Eastern Kingsnake (uncommon species) was documented in a new map block. This is only the third map block across the County that this species has been documented.

4 New Species Found in the County

Photo courtesy of Clayton Koonce.

Stream Clean-ups

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires an annual National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System report on what has been done/activities the county has sponsored to reduce water pollution.

Volunteers: 25	**Recycled: 840 lbs.**
Volunteer Hours: 69	**Trash Collected: 993 lbs.**

Maryland Biodiversity Project

The Maryland Biodiversity Project is a non-profit organization focused on cataloging living things in Maryland. Their goal is "to promote education and conservation by helping to build a vibrant nature study community." Volunteers, naturalists and photographers help find, catalog and photograph species around Maryland.

In 2018, Howard County had the distinction of documenting the first Black Damsel Bug in the state of Maryland at Schooley Mill Park.

In 2019, Howard County had the distinction of documenting the first "Clavariadelphus unicolor," a new fungi species for the state of Maryland. This species was documented in the Gorman Stream Valley by Bob & Jo Solem.

In 2019, a plant survey was conducted at a county park to document the plant called Purple Fringeless Orchis, which is listed on the Maryland Rare, Threatened & Endangered List. Forty-eight plants were found during the survey.

Robinson Nature Center

Robinson Events & Programs

In FY2019, Robinson Nature Center's education staff led 565 different events and programs. This is close to a 15% increase in the number of programs the same staff led in FY18. Their dedication to increasing offerings while maintaining the high quality of programming our visitors expect is a testament to their talent, dedication and professionalism.

Due to these increases, over 20,000 people were served this year through programming at Robinson (13% increase from FY2018).

Educational Outreach

Robinson Nature Center staff launched new outreach programming that will increase the number of students they can reach with our mission by bringing environmental education into schools.

42 pilot programs were provided to eight different schools through which valuable teacher feedback and student engagement were assessed. Thanks to these pilots, staff reached 1,046 school children that would not have reached through traditional field trips. The Nature Center began offering these programs for booking in the summer 2019.

Community Partnerships

Robinson has collaborated with over 150 Community Partners through 2019. With assistance from the business sector, government agencies, national associations, environmental organizations and non-profits, the center received in-kind services, sponsorships and donations, professional expertise, free marketing and advertising, and material donations.

These partnerships have afforded Robinson opportunities to expand programming, engage in community/networking events and have provided professional development opportunities for Robinson's staff. In line with our mission, our partners support and augment RNC's efforts to provide quality environmental education to an ever increasing and diverse audience.

Natural Resources

Tick Study

More steps in evaluating tick-control strategies

Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks (HCRP), in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and University of Maryland (UMD), launched a study in January 2017 to evaluate integrated tick control strategies on single-family home sites located adjacent to large public lands in Howard County. A first in Maryland, the study as a whole is part of a larger, five-year, Area-wide Integrated Tick Management Project of the ARS.

The five-year, area-wide integrated tick management project is aimed at developing an effective package of minimal pesticide methods to reduce the number of black-legged ticks or at least the percent carrying Lyme disease-causing bacteria.

According to entomologist Andrew Li with the ARS's Invasive Insect Biocontrol & Behavior Laboratory, data from the study will help develop a science-based minimal pesticide control strategy for Lyme disease carrying ticks.

"This project is exciting to me because it is a chance to look at the behavior of a species that is not heavily studied," stated Hummell.

"The results I find will hopefully give a better understanding of how we can better manage white-footed mice to reduce ticks and tick-borne diseases."

Seven Components to the Area-Wide Study

The below listed activities will continue for the life of the study ending in 2021.

1. Deer Collaring: Tracking movements of adult deer. This phase began in February 2017–April 2017 and then again in January 2018-April 2018. The goal was to collar 50 deer. The deer with collars will continue to be tracked for 24 months (the life span of the battery on the GPS collar). The plan is to track the deer collared in 2017 until February 2019. Deer collared in 2018 will be tracked until January 2020.
2. Tick Sampling: This activity will occur on all 7 sites for the duration of the 5-year project. Sampling with drag nets occurs monthly March–November. Ticks collected are sampled to determine the number infected with the bacteria that causes Lyme Disease.
3. Mouse GPS Collars/Tracking of Mouse Movements: This part of the process began in April 2018. In addition, mice captured are ear tagged, tissue samples collected, blood samples and ticks are collected. UMD graduate student Grace Hummell (under the direction of Assistant Professor Dr. Jennifer Murrow) and a team from the University and ARS deployed collars in the spring and tracked the mice. They then recaptured the mice to retrieve the collars and redeployed the collars again to track movements in the fall.
4. Bait Boxes: 309 of these were deployed in May 2018, then collected and replaced with fresh bait boxes in July 2018. The boxes will remain in the field until November 2018. They are then collected and weighed to determine how much bait has been consumed.
5. Met52 Applications: Tickicide spray applications to vegetation occurred in June and July 2018 at residences agreeing to participate in the study. Subsequent tick sampling will determine if there is a change in the amount of ticks and the percentage infected with the bacteria.
6. 4-Poster Deer Feeders: 20 were deployed in October–December 2017. The feeders have been set up in four park sites and will continue to be deployed throughout the study period. They will be monitored with camera to determine usage and will be tracking the amount of corn consumed and permethrin applied to rollers.
7. Home Owner Solicitation: The USDA crew is actively soliciting participation in the area-wide study in the neighborhoods surrounding the study site locations. Participation allows the researchers to sample for ticks at the edge of their properties 2x per month, allow mouse trapping monthly, and allow bait boxes and/or Met52 spray applications to occur on their property.

Recreational Licensed Child Care

Recreational Licensed Child Care (RLC) registrants were offered throughout the school year. Extra events are offered throughout each year. For competitive events, teams were formed at each center to then compete against other RLC/school sites.

During the 2018-19 school year, events included football, basketball, stop ball, spelling bee, track & field meet and a Night of the Arts. Nine schools also received training in The First Tee, a golf program that teaches children life skills through the game of golf. Fun Fit Fridays were part of the weekly schedule. The Spelling Bee competition started six years ago.

RLC also added Hanover Hills as a new location in 2019.

The Annual Track and Field Meet started eight years ago. The event was held in June. 175 children participated in six track and field events. First and second place finishers moved on to the Mid-Atlantic Recreation and Parks Sports Alliance Track and Field event later that month.

A Night at the Arts was held in June. Formerly Jam Fest, this event incorporated different forms of art (including painting, drawing, Lego construction, singing, musical instruments and dance). Parents and children enjoyed a competition-style event that recognized and awarded many different talents.

November 2018 celebrated the 14th year of the Turkey Bowl, including both an elementary and a middle school tournament. 12 RLC school programs participated.

2018 March Madness Basketball Tournament's 8th annual event included 11 RLC teams and four Can-TEEN (middle school) teams.

The RLC Chorus, consisting of over 130 children were the opening act at the annual Christmas in the Park event at Centennial Park. This was one chorus that combined interested participants from each center.

Recreational Licensed Child Care

Summer Blast Camps

RLC Summer Blast Camp enrollment for the past fiscal year was 4,648 campers. Four Blast camps offered a variety of sports, drama, arts & crafts, STEAM, field trips, water play, and learning.

Four additional camps included the core Blast components, with additional concentrations in Sports and Fitness, STEAM, Cooking & Crafts and Music Drama & Theater.

In addition, a Mini-Scholars camp was provided for children entering Kindergarten; Teen Blast was offered for children ages 0-14 years old; and FunZone, in partnership with the Howard County Public School System, was given in conjunction with the Summer Institute and the Gifted & Talented Summer Program.

On average, 170 contingent, part-time staff supervised the RLC programs during the 2018-19 school year.

The Recreation & Parks Department offered training classes to help staff maintain their continuing education unit credits, (this equated to 3,267 hours).

Therapeutic Recreation & Inclusion Services

Sensory-friendly Initiative

This year, the Robinson Nature Center began work on exciting new changes and programming introduced to address challenges faced by visiting families with members on the autism spectrum or with sensory-sensitivities. New initiatives, including the Sensory-Friendly Sunday program hour or the Center's complimentary sensory backpacks (with items such as noise-reducing headphones, fidget toys, a Robinson "Nature Explorer" badge and a sensory friendly building map), are part of a larger accommodational effort to address sensory-sensitivities. These new accommodations were developed in partnership with a team of Leadership Howard graduates as part of their Community Impact Project.

New & Expanded Programs Being Offered included "Drama Excels"

2,424 participants signed up for Inclusion programs at a cost of $533,153 ($220 per participant)

485 participants in Inclusion Accommodation Services at a cost of $263,799 ($544 per participant).

Active Aging

Encore Programs

Meeting the Needs of Active Adults Through New Programs

Howard County's population is aging, and the department is creating new programs and services to accommodate the changing demographics.

The new Encore Programs began with the 2017 fall programming season and are designed with a renewed focus on the active aging adults in the community. These programs provide opportunities for this population to try things that they have always wanted to do but may not have had the time.

The department conducted surveys and attended focus groups to help guide programming for these active adults.

The Encore Program expanded its offerings in Dance, Fine Art, and Lifelong Learning. The expansion of programs also included more fitness programs for active aging adults including yoga, BOSU Mobility & Stability, and a grant-sponsored walking & wellness program. Based on information collected, the pilot program was implemented this year, called Encore Explorations. It allowed customers to try a one-time class before committing to a full class session.

Additionally, the Encore Recreation Volunteer program was launched with an open house on April 17, 2018. It is designed to allow active aging adults the chance to give back to their community, receive industry-level trainings and socialize with peers.

Art

- All Things Glass
- Basic Zentangle Workshop
- Digital Photography 101
- Stroll & Paint
- Shooting with a Smartphone
- Stained Glass Workshops

Dance

- Beginner Ballet for Active Adults
- Dance on Broadway
- Social Square Dancing
- Learn to Swing Dance
- Drop-in Square & Round Dances

Encore Adventures

- Archery
- Intro to Fishing
- Paddling

Lifelong Learning

- Bridge Seminar
- Bridge Handplay

Fitness

- Beginner Mat Pilates
- Fundamentals of Modern Table Tennis

Adult Programming Trends

Top Ten Adult Class Sections

1. Watercolor & Oil painting
   with Brenda Kidera
2. Couples & Line Dance
   with Mo and Barb Dutterer
3. Beginners Ballroom & Couples Dance
   with Jim Watts and Lucy Moran
4. International Cooking
   with Ravi Lahori
5. Bollywood Dance
6. Art Lecture Series with Ann Wiker
7. Musical Theater Programs
   with Drama Learning Center
8. Musical Muses Choir
9. Dance Class with Kinetics Dance Theater
10. Networking & Social Programs
    with International School of Protocol

New Trends and Successful Programs

1. Beginning Bridge
2. Wine and Paint
3. Gluten-Free Cooking & Baking
4. Improv
5. Introduction to Ayurveda

Special Events

Truck or Treat

October 27, 2018 | Gary J. Arthur Community Center

Children and parents celebrated Halloween and the 12th anniversary of the Gary J. Arthur Community Center at Glenwood! Attendees were invited to dress in costume to trick-or-treat at the trucks, tractors, emergency vehicles and more, while meeting some of your hometown heroes. Each vehicle was represented by various County agencies, nonprofit groups, and local businesses. Live music, hayrides, face painting, children's activities, giveaways, and story time.

46th Annual Holiday Mart

December 1, 2018 | Gary J. Arthur Community Center

Annually, the community is invited to shop for seasonal gifts and merchandise created by 140 juried artisans. The past few years, the event included mule-drawn carriage rides from a local farm, door prizes and a children's craft corner. Shoppers know this is the place to find unique handcrafted items and home décor.

Kids Fest

April 20, 2019 | Meadowbrook Park

Families had a blast at the 5th annual Kids Fest. This event is offered the day before Easter each year, providing a fun activity to do with the entire family. It is a great way to showcase and promote our summer camps and spring/summer classes to a large, targeted group of residents. The day includes an egg hunt, sports instruction, games, activities, arts & crafts, food, an information table, inflatables, and much more.

Special Events

27th Annual Wine in the Woods May 18-19, 2019 | Symphony Woods

This two-day event is now the largest wine festival in Maryland and was voted Best Festival in Howard County. Festival goers sampled a variety of Maryland's wines from a souvenir glass; purchased food from an abundance of high quality, distinctive restaurants and caterers; attended free wine education seminars; purchased works of art and specialty crafts; and listened to continuous live music from two stages. The target audience for this event is 21 years and over. The event had its own website (www.wineinthewoods.com) and Facebook page (/wineinthewoods). This event attracted approximately 25,000 visitors.

Howard County's July 4th Fireworks

July 4, 2019 | Columbia Lakefront

Howard Countians and neighbors enjoyed the annual celebration. The event featured live entertainment and fireworks. Visitors were welcome to bring or purchase food from on-site vendors. Parking was free. Fireworks started after dusk. A free app was created for the event on both Android and Apple to show the event layout map. The app can post updates and played the music for the fireworks (in case you cannot hear it from the stage). This event attracted approximately 35,000 spectators.

Solar Fest July 13, 2019 | Alpha Ridge Park

Howard County Recreation & Parks (HCRP) partnered with the Howard Astronomical League (HAL) for a fun evening of science, engineering, arts, crafts, games, astronomy, and much more. Vendors provided interactive and dynamic STEAM activities, HCRP provided crafts and games, and HAL had telescopes for participants to use.

Pickleball

Pickleball for All

Started in Fall 2014, this program offers a time and space for participants to play Pickleball. In Winter 2018, we added the additional option of a monthly membership package to this program. In Spring of 2019, we had a total of 1023 enrollments with 135 unique individual participants who register for the program for one or multiple dates throughout the season.

Adult Leagues

The first season of our Adult Pickleball League was offered at the North Laurel Community Center on Thursday evenings. There was a total of 26 participants (13 doubles teams) registered for the league that season. The format of the league consisted of doubles pool play games for the regular season games and then an end of the season tournament on the last day. Spring 2019 was the most recent season of the adult leagues, with 30 individuals (15 doubles teams) enrolled for the leagues.

Tournament

In 2018, a total of 228 participants registered for our annual Pickleball tournament. Brackets were first divided by age and then skill level. All brackets were double elimination format. In 2019, 186 participants registered for the tournament. There were only doubles matches for the tournament this year.

Courts Around The County

Meadowbrook Athletic Complex
16 indoor courts – blended lines on multi-sport surface (gym)

North Laurel Community Center
6 indoor courts – blended lines on multi-sport surface (gym)

Thunder Hill Elementary School
4 outdoor courts – blended lines on tennis courts

Atholton Park
2 outdoor courts – pickleball specific courts

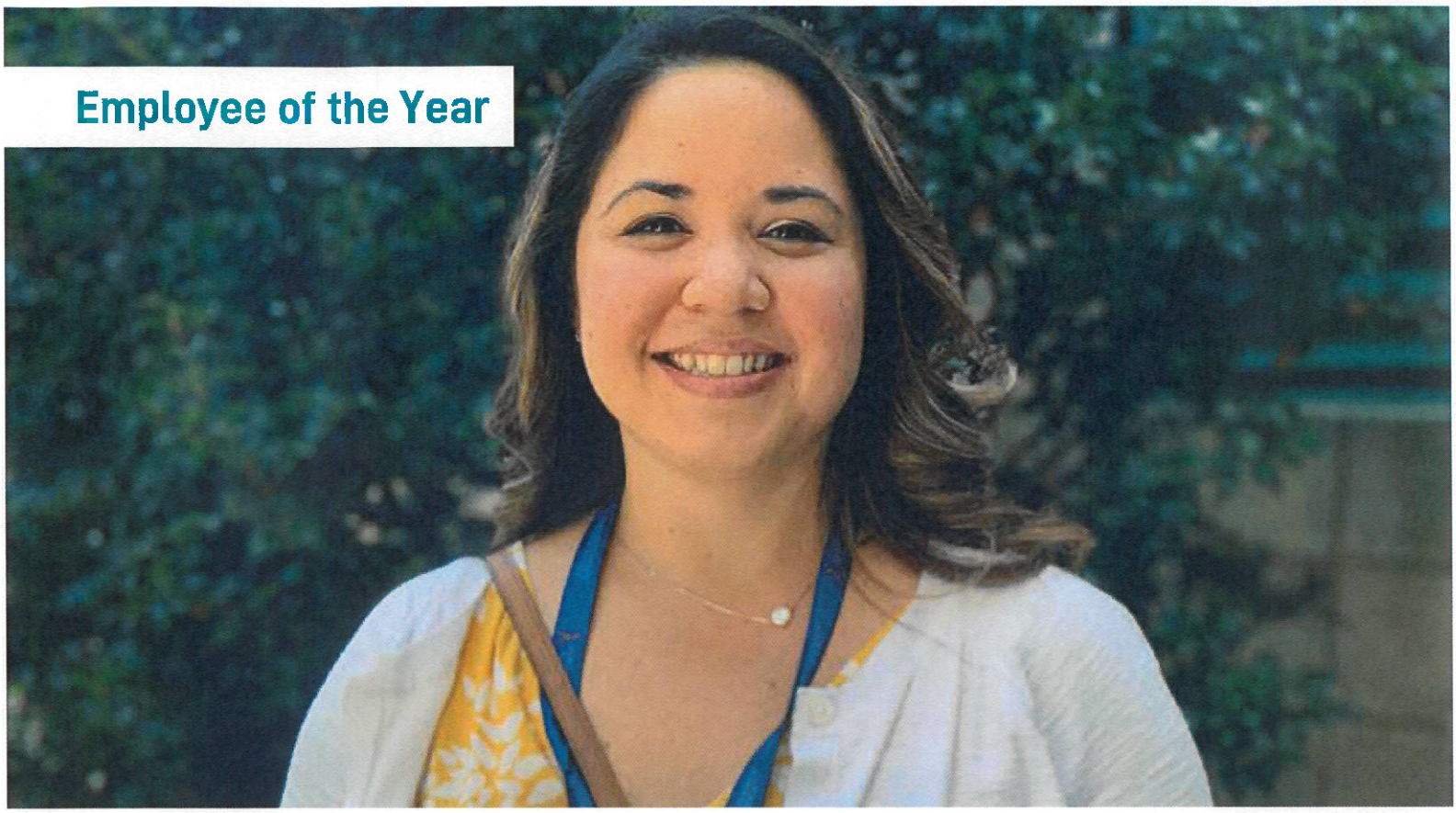
Hammond Park
4 outdoor courts – blended lines on tennis courts

Cricket

Adult Cricket
Maximum Enrollment
34 Teams

Youth Cricket
Started Official Club Team
Howard County
Huskies

In 2020, Howard County Recreation & Parks will add two new cricket pitches.



Employee of the Year

Ruth Coleman

Ruth Coleman was recognized as the 2019 Employee of the Year. She has excelled in her first full year as Active Aging Manager, leading the Active Aging team to add 20 new recreation programs. Under her leadership, Active Aging has started the Professional Speaker Series, developed a Magnificent Maryland trip series and expanded the fitness and sports program offerings. Ruth encouraged her staff to become CPRP certified and led a study group for them, so they could work on it together.

When it comes to hard work and determination, Ruth has led by example and become an integral part of the Howard County Encore Network. She takes on any challenge that comes her way, never complains and never says no.

Financially, Ruth has more than doubled the revenue in this programming area and has increased her operating margin substantially. She has researched and secured new locations within the county free of charge so that she can continue to expand programs for this population. Ruth has also expanded into evening programming to cater to the working adult and has also developed a volunteer program which utilizes the expertise of Active Adults in various programming and leadership capacities. All of these accomplishments are in addition to working as part of the Wine in the Woods entertainment team and volunteering all year for the No Boundaries theater program that provides those with mild to moderate disabilities an opportunity to perform a theatrical performance from famous Broadway musical that includes singing, dancing and acting.

Volunteer of the Year

Adam Eldridge

This year, Adam Eldridge was recognized as the 2019 Volunteer of the Year. A dedicated coach and leader for the Howard County Vipers Wrestling program over the past seven seasons, Adam oversees over 490 kids and 15 teams as Rec League Commissioner. In addition, he coaches a Rec wrestling team at Howard High School and has previously coached at the Clinic level. Through his leadership, he has built a team over the years with many returning wrestlers and has attracted parents not just from throughout Howard County. Adam's exemplifies sportsmanship and civility, always serving as a great role model and inspiring great respect from the kids he coaches. Although Adam emphasizes technical proficiency and hard work at his practices, he also makes a point of creating a fun environment that his wrestlers love. Thanks to Adam's volunteer work, our Howard County wrestlers are instilled with the values they need to become competitive athletes and excellent young adults.

2019 Community Sports Hall of Fame Inductees

The Howard County Community Sports Hall of Fame, established in 2005, honors outstanding persons, living or deceased, who have gained prominence or made substantial contributions to community recreational sports programs in Howard County. This Hall of Fame serves to educate the public about the cultural, historical and personal contributions and achievements of the community of Howard County. The Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks, along with a committee of individuals from the local sporting community, inducted the first members of the Hall of Fame in the fall of 2005.

Tim Arnett

Tim Arnett has served Howard County youth sports programs for 23 years. In addition to coaching baseball with the Elkridge Youth Organization (EYO) and coaching basketball and baseball for the Howard County Youth Program (HCYP), Tim also acted as a commissioner and board member for both organizations. Additionally, Tim is responsible for the creation of EYO's tennis program, working tirelessly to secure access to local courts and ensure the program's success. Tim's trademark dry sense of humor and remarkable dedication to youth sports in Howard County will be remembered for years to come.

Doug Hamilton

Doug Hamilton has supported young athletes in Howard County with enthusiastic support and guidance in a variety of different games since 1994. Beginning as a SAC/HC Soccer and Western Howard County Soccer coach, Doug went on to coach teams for Warhawks Football, Howard County Rugby (Ellicott City Express) and the Howard Stampede Field Hockey Program. Today, he is the co-founder and head coach of the Alpha Hockey Club and continues to volunteer coach for Howard Stampede. Parents are quick to describe him as "generous in his time," both in his coaching on the field and in his willingness to provide advice or a letter of recommendation to college-bound players. Through these efforts, Doug has helped make Howard County a supportive and healthy environment for young athletes.

Joe Dougherty

Joe Dougherty was a tremendous asset to the Howard County Lacrosse Program (HCLP), Cobra Lacrosse and Centennial High School's fall and indoor lacrosse leagues from 1995 to 2006. Over the years, Joe served as a volunteer coach, equipment manager, board member and HCLP president. As a role model, Joe emphasized that principles, such as good sportsmanship and fair play, were more important than winning a game. He was responsible for the creation of a financial aid fund, which allowed more children to participate in lacrosse programs. Joe is a testament to how Howard County sports programs challenge participants to not only become better players but become good citizens as well.

Alex Pagnotta

Alex Pagnotta has worn many hats as participated in and created a several youth sports programs. Alex is a founding board member of the Western Howard County Warhawks Football/Cheerleading program, Warhawks Wrestling, Warhawks Field Hockey and Mid-Maryland Youth Football & Cheer. He also volunteered countless hours as a coach for Howard County Wrestling, Vipers Wrestling, the Howard County Lacrosse Program, the Hero's Tournament Lacrosse Club and Glenelg High School's women's lacrosse program/team. Although his involvement in coaching initially grew as his children became old enough to participate in sports, Alex remained an active volunteer coach and board member even as his youngest son aged out of youth programs. For hundreds of young athletes, Alex is a respected mentor and role model.