

DONOR NEWSLETTER

November & December 2023



We're Grateful for the Gift of You: A Heartfelt Holiday Thank You

As we approach the season of thanks, we reflect on the tremendous impact your support has had on Pittsburgh's parks and all who visit these wonderful spaces.

The steadfast commitment from your support has allowed us to achieve remarkable milestones throughout our 27-year history, such as completing 23 capital projects in 11 city parks, connecting with more than 7,000 children annually through our camps and educational programs, and creating a more sustainable urban ecosystem through restoration work in several parks, including Pittsburgh's newest park – Hays Woods.

This year was full of triumphs, and our future is bright as we look ahead to 2024. In the coming months, we will break ground on creating a first-of-its-kind outdoor sensory classroom in Frick Park,

grow our tree planting and care program for parks in need, expand our green jobs preparedness educational programs to middle school students, and so much more.

And as we enter this time of gratitude, I want you to know that your support extends far and wide. It signifies a shared vision and a shared commitment to making Pittsburgh's parks a better place *for all*.

Like most years, I've spent countless hours in the parks with my son, Max, and daughter, Keira. Our neighborhood park in the Southside is our place to reflect and reconnect from the chaos of our daily lives as they navigate their high school years. Each moment we spend together outdoors as a family leaves me feeling inspired and grateful that we have access to these cherished spaces that so many of us depend on.



Catherine, Max, and Keira Qureshi

As we gather with our loved ones to give thanks this holiday season, your generosity will be at the forefront of our thoughts. We hope you, too, take pride in the role you play in the positive change we bring to our city's green spaces.

From my family to yours, we wish you warm season's greetings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Qureshi'.

Catherine Qureshi, *President & CEO*



A Year in Review Made Possible by You.

As another year ends, we would be remiss not to reflect on the impact of your generosity. We hope you enjoy these several endearing and rewarding moments from our dedicated donors and passionate Parks Conservancy team members. Continue reading to learn more about the incredible difference your donations make on all who visit Pittsburgh's parks.

By the Numbers:

Trees Planted: 406

Perennials Planted: 4,681

Schenley Plaza Visitors: 609,000

Recreational Program Participants: 44,000

Volunteers and Total Volunteer Hours: 755 / 2,290 volunteer hours

Individual Donors: 1,910

Students Served through Environmental Education Programs: 1,100

Reflections of Gratitude



There's No Place Like Home

"Having grown up in Pittsburgh, many of my favorite places in the world are in Pittsburgh: the Goodbye Heart at Kennywood, first row orchestra center at the Benedum, and at the Mount Washington Overlook. My other favorite places are the amazing parks we have in Pittsburgh! So many great memories of mine are at Blue Slide Park as a kid, running through Schenley Park as a grad student, and escaping into nature throughout my life. I love the meaningful work that the Pittsburgh Park Conservancy does and am so happy to contribute even just a small amount to support such a noble cause."

Daniel Ryave, Annual Donor



New Beginnings in Allegheny Commons Park

"The work of the Parks Conservancy is so impactful and exciting for our community! The feeling of walking on the new sidewalk along Arch Street in Allegheny Commons Park and crossing over the street safely is so important to us. The energy and life were palpable as the sun set during our evening walk recently, and I said to my husband that I was so glad that we chose to live here."

Sarah Oleksak, Sustaining Supporter



Supporting Accessible Green Spaces

"I believe that parks that are accessible to all are integral to ensuring that our city is a vibrant place to live. When my family and I moved to Pittsburgh 17 years ago, the existence of a robust parks system was a major draw for us. For these reasons and much more, I'm proud to support Pittsburgh's parks!"

Grace Tan, Roots Society Member

Stronger Ecosystems Lead to Thriving Parks

“Your donation restores the parks by allowing our Horticulture and Forestry team to provide habitat for wildlife. For example, this season we have discovered the yellow gardening spider in the Highland Park Entry Garden, which eats mosquitoes, gnats, flies, and aphids, thus protecting our plantings. At the Frick Environmental Center we have found two box turtle eggs, which are omnivores who consume insects, crickets, grasshoppers, worms, spiders, and more. We have taken these eggs to the Humane Animal Rescue, where they will be monitored. After they hatch, they will be released back into nature. These efforts to maintain the delicate balance of wildlife habitat are made possible by donors like you and contribute to a thriving ecosystem that is necessary to maintain life in various forms.”

Jaci Bruschi, Horticultural Project Manager

You Support Future Park Stewards

“Giving to the parks helps children connect with nature, be scientists and learn to care for the environment. This fall over 300 first graders from eight different elementary schools will visit Frick Park to explore the meadow habitat where they will learn about the plants and animals that call it home. Many of these little scientists will hold a magnifying glass for the first time, observing the various grasses and fall blooms. All in all, 23 schools will visit Frick Park this fall through our school partnership program. And while we love hosting little learners at the park, we also value the opportunities to serve in the community. This year our afterschool and outreach team will be providing nature-based education to eight afterschool sites in several neighborhoods around Pittsburgh. Educators build relationships with kids teaching them about pollinators, tree canopies, bird migration and garden habitats.”

James Brown, Director of Education & the Frick Environmental Center

The Heart of Our Mission

“Community engagement is sort of like the heart of Pittsburgh’s parks. Relationships and building trust with our neighbors are vital to the Parks Conservancy’s mission. We can’t accomplish all that we do on our own. It takes a network of community members, stakeholders, park stewards, volunteers, and organizations to keep the parks thriving. The passion we see for the parks is just incredible and it’s the courage and dedication of these invaluable individuals and groups that we have to thank. Your donation allows us to work with them to give back to the parks and the greater Pittsburgh community. Thank you for your support!”

Erin Tobin, Assistant Director of Community Engagement

Ensuring Equitable Parks for All

“Throughout the past years, contributions for supporters like you have allowed us to unequivocally expand our mission of ensuring park equity across the city. The generosity of our donors is crucial because it allows us to progress our mission and ensures that everyone, regardless of their background or where they live, has equal access to green spaces and recreational opportunities. Together, we’re creating a more just and healthier society, where all individuals can enjoy the benefits of nature and outdoor activities, contributing to a more vibrant and equitable quality of life for all.”

Ross Chapman, Chief of Operations and Park Equity





The Tremaine Family often enjoys attending new events and programs in Frick Park where they create lasting memories.

children,” Julie explained. “Pittsburgh’s parks hold a special place in our hearts. In 2010, Matthew proposed to me while we enjoyed a picnic at Mellon Park. We still remember (and visit) the tree we were picnicking under when we decided to start our lives together.”

The collective power of donors and their employers supporting causes such as our city’s green spaces are making twice the difference and are helping individuals and families from across the region create incredible experiences that they’ll cherish for a lifetime.

“Fridays at The Frick and Bach, Beethoven, and Brunch are where we’ve created some of our fondest memories when living in the city,” Julie said. “We have taken many, MANY hikes through Frick Park and made an abundance of life decisions during those hikes. Fresh air, movement, greenspace – it’s meditative and can’t be understated.”

If you want to make twice the impact on your parks,

ask your employer about their workplace giving options or visit pittsburghparks.org/matching-gifts or scan the QR code to see if your employer participates in the “Double the Donation” program.



Set it and forget it: Doubling Your Park Donations

Workplace giving programs embody a holistic approach to making a difference — from uniting employees, organizations, and nonprofits in a shared mission for a better, more compassionate world to quite literally doubling the impact of philanthropic contributions; there are a multitude of reasons why Pittsburghers and beyond are choosing to give back through their employers.

For Matthew and Julie Tremaine, busy parents and avid parkgoers, their reasoning for giving back to Pittsburgh’s green spaces through their workplace giving program is simple: they can set it and forget it.

“Just like we encourage our clients to automate their savings, charitable contributions through payroll deduction are out-of-sight, out-of-mind, and overcome the inertia of making a manual payment,” Julie explained.

And although giving back to the parks in this newfound and simple way is one reason why the Tremaine’s choose to support their parks, the impact and meaning behind their recurring monthly donation runs deeper.

“Research shows that people are happier when they have access to a green space. As (former) city dwellers, we took full advantage of our getaways to Pittsburgh Parks—a tradition we continue with our



Pittsburgh’s parks hold a special place in Matthew and Julie’s hearts. In 2010, Matthew proposed to Julie while enjoying a picnic at Mellon Park.



Support Your Parks this Holiday Season

Make a gift to support your parks, so they can continue to thrive and serve as welcoming spaces for all to enjoy year-round.

\$25

\$75

\$150

Other \$

Contact me to see if my employer will match my gift.

See enclosed envelope or visit pittsburghparks.org for more information.

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy does not solicit contributions from persons or entities in states other than Pennsylvania, New York, or Florida.

ENGAGE

Contact Alana Wenk at awenk@pittsburghparks.org or 412.682.7275 ext. 237