



FOREST PRESERVE FOUNDATION
ANNUAL REPORT
2017

FOREST PRESERVE FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Tom Livingston, Chair

Regional Vice President
CSX Transportation

Howard Learner

Executive Director
Environmental Law & Policy Center

John Atkinson

Managing Partner
Willis Towers Watson

Mark Lester

Executive Director
Commercial Banking, J.P. Morgan Chase

Stuart A. Cohn

Attorney
Law Offices of Stuart A. Cohn

Albert Pritchett, Chair Emeritus

Retired Chief Administrative Officer
for the Cook County Board

Leslie G. Fenton

Managing Director
PricewaterhouseCoopers

Arnold Randall

General Superintendent
Forest Preserves of Cook County

Dr. Thomas Fisher

President
NextLevel Health

Dr. Stuart Strahl

President/CEO
Chicago Zoological Society

Eleanor Grumman

President
Grumman Development, LLC

Ewa Weir

Senior Vice President
Jones Lang LaSalle

Jim Law

President
Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance

Claire Williams

President and COO
Environmental Design International, Inc.

FOREST PRESERVE FOUNDATION STAFF & INTERNS

Shelley A. Davis, **President and Executive Director**

Clarmarie I. Keenan, **Development Manager**

Ebony Ellis, **Intern**

Emily Teerink, **Intern**

.....

OUR MISSION

To engage in protecting and restoring the treasured natural habitats of the Forest Preserves of Cook County and to enhance the outdoor experiences of all communities.

We will do this by encouraging and administering private gifts to further the Forest Preserves' mission and goals.



Dear Friends,

As we look back over the year, we see clearly the impact of our mission.

We see it in the young people who are doing meaningful work in the Forest Preserves of Cook County through the Conservation Corps program, in which we make our largest investment; memorial gifts we help facilitate, and public art installations in the preserves:

- Riko from Chicago's West Garfield Park neighborhood learned about Conservation Corps internships in the Preserves while in a GED program. Today, he's a roving crew manager doing restoration work in the Preserves. He spoke at the Foundation's Friendraiser about his experience working in the Preserves, which he says has been a big confidence booster for him.
- When Dave Simmons of Elk Grove Village wanted a way to honor his parents who both loved spending time in the forest preserves, he reached out to the Foundation. With the Foundation's help, Dave and his Simmons siblings adopted a memorial bench along the North Branch Trail. The family now plans to hold annual bike rides to the Botanic Garden, starting at "The bench."
- Twelve Oak Park River Forest High School arts students under the guidance of three professional artists designed nature-inspired sculptures that were installed at the Forest Preserves headquarters in River Forest. The art pieces are meant to celebrate the role the Forest Preserves plays in the local community.

These are examples of how the Foundation has served the community and the Preserves in the last year. We serve families by helping them celebrate special their memories. We support programs to enhance how people interact with the Preserves via our public art and nature play installations. And we support conservation internships to increase the pipeline of environmental leaders for the future.

Our fundraising efforts have strong momentum. We exceeded this year's Conservation Cup fundraising goal, and we engaged more individual donors at our Friendraiser breakfasts hosted by our leadership. We upgraded our website and launched a blog to tell our stories.

Our leadership also increased. This year, the Foundation welcomed four new board members: John Atkinson, Leslie Fenton, Mark Lester and Claire Williams. Their commitment to our mission will make us stronger and even more effective.

We remain energized by this year's accomplishments and look forward to continuing our efforts to support the priorities of the Forest Preserves of Cook County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Livingston".

Tom Livingston
Chair, Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shelley A. Davis".

Shelley A. Davis
President and Executive Director



Thatcher Woods in the fall

History

Founded in 2006, the Forest Preserve Foundation had its genesis in the belief that a year-round fundraising partner help could supplement tax dollars in order to fully realize the visionary goals of the Forest Preserves of Cook County.

Six years later, the Foundation began raising private funds, hosting its first Conservation Cup annual golf benefit. We granted \$3,500 to the Forest Preserves that year.

The Foundation's mission—to protect and restore the treasured natural habitats within the Forest Preserves and enhance the outdoor experiences of all communities—resonates with local business and community leaders. With their financial support, the Foundation continues to increase its grant investments.

The Foundation had another strong year of grantmaking in 2017, achieving a lifetime total in grants approaching \$1 million. Funds go to support opportunities for families and children from a diversity of backgrounds to enjoy the Forest Preserves. Foundation grants also underwrite youth conservation leadership programs, nature art and nature play installations, and capital improvements that welcome and engage visitors to the Preserves.

In this second year of its first strategic plan, the Forest Preserve Foundation moves forward in a strong position to meet its primary goal: increasing access for all to the Cook County Forest Preserves.



John Green, co-leader of the Conservation Corps crew assigned to Dan Ryan Woods for the summer of 2017.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS

Joi Funches speaks with the confidence that comes from experience, easily rattling off the names of invasive species—buckthorn, catalpa, burdock—that cause problems in the preserves.

The 17 year old spent six weeks during the summer working with the Student Conservation Association (SCA) crew assigned to Dan Ryan Woods. It was her second year as a crew member. “I liked the program and came back.” The “hands-on” work—“cutting down trees and using tools to build things that help the forest preserves” remain a vital part of the Cook County ecosystem—appeals to her.

Chicago-area high school students ages 14 to 18 were on the Dan Ryan crew, working under the auspices of the SCA, the Forest Preserves of Cook County and the Friends of the Forest Preserves.

A grant from the Forest Preserve Foundation with funds provided by Allstate



Alice Brandon of the Forest Preserves and crew member Elijah Pearson.

Corp., CSX and private donors supported the crew members and leaders.

In addition to getting stipends, they gained valuable experience doing restoration work and contributed significantly to the health of the preserves.

Since SCA fielded its first conservation program in Chicago in 2010, more than 500 youth in the region have participated in its programs.

John Green was an SCA crew member for three years, starting in his junior year



Members of the 2017 Conservation Corps crew supported by the Foundation.

in high school. Last year, he was a Forest Preserves project management intern. This year, he rose to become one of the Dan Ryan Woods crew co-leaders.

Crew leaders must have certain credentials and skills—a valid driver’s license for at least three years, an herbicide license, CPR and first-aid training. “And previous experience helps,” John said. They also undergo extensive training to prepare them for all kinds of circumstances that might occur during work days.

John said he was bit nervous at first about being a crew co-leader. “This is my first time being a real leader outside of school,” he explained. At first it was tough getting everybody situated and caught up.” Part of his job is instructing and coaching.

As the crew entered its third week, John was feeling confident in his role and the work everyone was doing.

“We have a lot of teamwork going on, and people are taking initiative and stepping up,” he said.

NATURE ART IN THE PRESERVES



Oak Park River Forest High School art students with their teachers and professional artist advisers display models of the nature-based sculpture they designed.

Twelve art students from Oak Park-River Forest High School worked over several months to design nature-based sculptures for installation outside the Forest Preserves headquarters in River Forest.

Meeting for Saturday workshops, they collaborated with three professional artists from Transit Studio — Joshua Lantzy, Laura Miracle and Jamie Topper — who advised and guided them on how to consider the characteristics of the sites and materials, and the effects of time and weather.

As ideas took shape, students developed “a dictionary of forms,” sketched out their individual concepts then merged them into group designs, which became three-dimensional clay forms. Finally, they built scaled cardboard models.

The art pieces are meant to celebrate the role the Forest Preserves plays in the local community. Specifications outlined by the Preserves’ Conservation and Experiential Programming Department called for the art pieces to be semi-permanent and constructed of nature-based materials that will naturally decay



over time and become part of the landscape.

A \$70,000 grant from the Foundation and CSX funded the entire project, called “Nature Art at Gateway Sites.”

The finished sculptures stand about five feet high. They’re made of something all too plentiful in the preserves, buckthorn, an invasive species constantly being cut down to make way for native plants. Each design features “walls” constructed from sturdy buckthorn logs and mortar, the tops capped with cement or stone. Together, the materials create a noise-cancelling effect.

Gateway sites for the installation will be the Forest Preserve General Headquarters, Thatcher Woods Pavilion and Trailside Museum, all in River Forest.

MEMORIAL BENCHES



The Simmons siblings gathered with family and friends at the memorial bench dedicated to their parents, who were big fans of the forest preserves.

When Dave Simmons and his three siblings, sister Cheryl DuBois and brothers Scott and Brian, think about their parents, one memory stands out: how much they loved living so near one of the forest preserves.

“That was their life, the forest preserve,” Dave recalls. “They would still go biking and walking [through the preserves]” even after their kids were grown. Dad was so excited when they passed the funding to extend the North Branch Trail. But he never got to see it happen.”

Ron and Mary Ellyn Simmons both died within a few months of each other in 2016.

As the younger Simmons grieved, they wanted a way to memorialize their parents. That’s when they reached out to the Forest Preserve Foundation to help them adopt a memorial bench in the Thaddeus S. “Ted” Lechowicz Woods.



Mary Ellyn Simmons’ sister and brother-in-law, Judy and Dan, enjoying time on “The Bench.”

The Foundation works with the Forest Preserves of Cook County to place memorial benches throughout the Preserves’ 70,000 acres to beautify the trails and create a special place to celebrate a loved one or an important event. Bench adopters get to add a personal dedication plaque

to an existing Forest Preserve of Cook County bench.

The bench the Simmons adopted is located across Indian Road from the family’s home along the trail extension.

In late summer, family and friends met at the bench before taking off on a group bike ride to the Chicago Botanic Garden, a favorite family destination that the Simmons siblings fondly recall.

“I thought the ride was the perfect idea for a memorial, Cheryl said after the ride. “It brought back lots of memories from when we were kids. Hopefully, we do it annually.”

EVENTS

Foundation events bring together dedicated supporters and community leaders for a great cause and fun time.



Foundation board members and Conservation Cup co-chair with Forest Preserves General Superintendent Arnold Randall.

CONSERVATION CUP



Board member Ewa Weir (center) and friends at the 6th annual Conservation Cup.

The Forest Preserve Foundation hosted its 6th annual Conservation Cup golf outing on Sept. 14 at the George W. Dunne National Golf Course in Oak Forest. Nearly 200 golfers and guests participated, helping the Foundation raise \$184,000 to support the programs that further its mission.

BMO Harris Bank was the Executive Sponsor. CSX, J.P. Morgan and Chase and Billy Casper Golf were Title Sponsors.

FRIENDRAISERS

Board member John Atkinson hosted a Friendraiser breakfast at Willis Tower on April 27 to introduce business and civic leaders to the Foundation. Also invited were two young men who spoke about their work as Conservation Corps crew members and impact it has had on their lives and their plans for the future.

Board members, Forest Preserve Board President Toni Preckwinkle, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Commissioner Debra Shore and Tom Livingston, board chair were among those who attended.

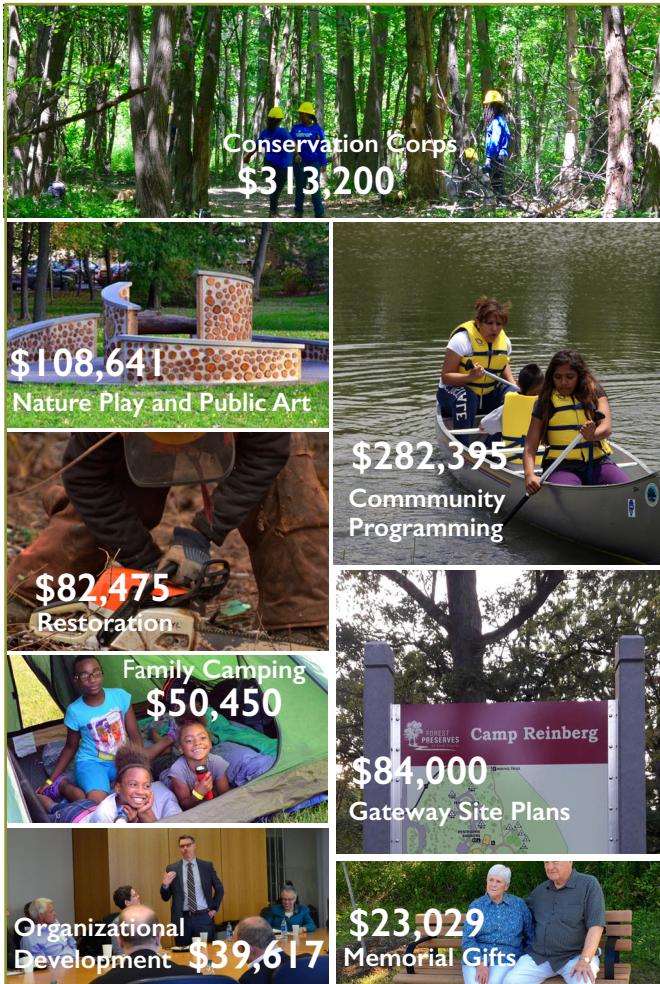
The Foundation hosted a second Friendraiser in early November.



GRANTS

The Forest Preserve Foundation granted, \$203,260 in 2017. Since 2012, the Foundation has granted \$983,807 in eight core program areas: Organizational Development, Conservation Corps, Memorial Gifts, Community Programming (Citizen Science, Nature Express, Workshops), Nature Play and Public Art, Family Camping, Restoration and Gateway Site Plans. The Foundation's financial audit information is accessible on the website: forestpreservefoundation.org.

FOREST PRESERVE FOUNDATION GRANT AWARD HISTORY 2012-2017



TOTAL \$983,807

DONORS

The Foundation relies on support from businesses and individuals who are committed to maintaining the health of the preserves and keeping them accessible to all.

Claire Williams, Board member, Conservation Cup co-chair

Board member Claire Williams first learned about the Forest Preserve Foundation when a friend asked her to participate in the first Conservation Cup golf outing. “I’ve been there since the beginning,” recalls Williams, who co-chaired the 2017 Cup committee. She joined the board of directors in 2016.

She supports the Foundation because she’s drawn to “the whole educational aspect, the focus on youth development, the nature piece, the sciences, which hopefully can lead to STEM education for some of the kids,” she says.

As president and COO of Environmental Design International, Inc., Williams says her firm is heavily involved in helping kids from all backgrounds take advantage of STEM opportunities. She sees the Conservation Corps as a real-world connection to STEM. “The stories I’ve heard from the young men and women who have benefited from the Corps are pretty inspiring,” she says. “Who knows, these kids might end up becoming landscape architects or engineers.”

That makes the Foundation’s investments in programs like the Youth Conservation Corps especially meaningful to Williams. “The sky’s the limit for what the Foundation can do, and we’re up for the challenge.”



John Atkinson, Board member



After learning about the Foundation from Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, John Atkinson thought it had a compelling mission and decided to offer his time and support. He was already a fan of the preserves.

“I use the forest preserves quite often for mountain biking and hiking with my kids, and we find them to be a great place to have family time and explore the outdoors close to home, which is great,” says Atkinson, who grew up in the suburbs near Bemis Woods.

He joined the board in 2016 with a focus on development. Toward that end, he hosted the spring Friendraiser at his office in Willis Towers, where he’s a managing partner for Willis Towers Watson, a global

advisory, broking and solutions company.

Atkinson believes the Foundation plays a crucial role in reaching those who might otherwise miss out on what the preserves have to offer.

“The Foundation’s work in helping kids in underserved communities to have access to those resources is important, so is the Foundation’s help with the Conservation Corps and the supporting grants that we provide,” he says. “Those are real positives.”



Youth Conservation Corps crew with Shelley A. Davis (far left) and Tom Livingston, chairman, and Stu Cohn, board secretary, (far right) in Dan Ryan Woods.

THANK YOU

Thank you to our generous donors. This list reflects gifts given or pledged from Nov. 1, 2016 to Oct. 30, 2017.

\$50,000 +

CSX Transportation, Inc.
Forest Preserve District of Cook County

\$10,000 - \$49,999

Allstate Insurance Company
CSX Transportation, Inc.
JP Morgan Chase
Oberweiler Foundation
REI
Dr. Stuart and Mrs. Melissa Strahl
The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, Inc.

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Bank of America
Chicago Community Foundation
CVS Caremark
Dillon Kane Group LLC
Environmental Design International, Inc.
F. H. Paschen, S. N. Nielsen
Jones Lang LaSalle Americas
Nixon Peabody, LLC
South Water Signs
Sterling Lumber Company
The Private Bank

\$2,500- \$4,999

Barnes and Thornburg, LLP
Cardno
Civiltech Engineering, Inc.
DLZ
Epstein & Sons

Mr. Thomas Fahey
FGM Architects
Great Lakes Advisors, LLC
Ms. Lisa Hinds
Levin Schreder & Carey, Ltd.
Loop Capital Markets
The Honorable Toni Preckwinkle
Mr. Albert Pritchett
Robe, Inc.
RTM Engineering Consultants, LLC
The Honorable Timothy Schneider
Ms. Carleen L. Schreder
Semper Fi Yard Service, INC.
Ms. Magdalena Trevino
Weible & Cahill
William Blair & Company

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Ms. Marjorie Benton
Ms. Deborah Bizzotto
Christy Webber Landscapes
Mr. Stuart and Mrs. Vivienne Cohn
The Honorable John P. Daley
DeVore Radunsky LLC
Ms. Sarah J. Duncan
Dr. Thomas Fisher
Generation Growth Capital, Inc.
Ms. Nickol R. Hackett
Integrated Project Management Company, Inc.
Mr. Mark Ishaug
Mr. Ben Julian
Mr. Howard Learner
Leopardo Companies, Inc.

Miller Cooper & Co. Ltd.
PNC Bank
R.M. Chin & Associates
Reed Smith LLP
S.B. Friedman Development Advisors
The Illinois Audubon Society Lake-Cook Chapter
The Leopardo Charitable Foundation
The Honorable Jeffrey R. Tobolski
Ms. Ewa Weir
COMCAST Foundation

\$100 - \$999

Mr. Ron Adams
Ms. Theodora Anastaplo
Mr. Thomas Anderson
Ms. Carolyn Ascher
Mr. John M. Atkinson
Mr. Frank H. Beal
Mr. Ralph Binetti
BMO Harris Bank
Mr. Richard Bradshaw
Chapman and Cutler; LLP
Chicago Beverage Systems, LLC
Ms. Phyllis Cohn
Ms. Mary Pat Cross
Dr. Omar McRoberts and Ms. Shelley A. Davis
Mr. Justin R. Erkfritz-Gay
Ms. Margaret Fahrenbach
The Honorable Stuart A. Feldman
Ms. Leslie G. Fenton
Mr. Charles Fitzpatrick

THANK YOU continued

Mr. Gary Flentge
Ms. Charlotte S. Flinn
Fort Dearborn Partners, Inc.
Mr. Christopher Gaddis
Ms. Michelle Gage
Ms. Cathy Geraghty
Mr. Keith Gray
Ms. Eleanor Grumman
Ms. Theresa Guen-Murray
Mr. Lucas Henkel
IMEG Corp.
Jones Lang LaSalle Americas
Ms. Barbara Kalish
Kathleen Walsh Husman
Foundation
Ms. Clarmarie I. Keenan
Mr. Larry Larson
Mr. Jim Law
Ms. Susan Leitao
Mr. Mark Lester
Mr. David Levinson
Mr. Thomas Livingston
Ms. Gail Lobin
Ms. Michele Loudermilk
Ms. Gail Ludewig
Maine Township High School
District 207
Mr. Tariq Malhance
Mr. Thomas McDonald
Mr. James Medd
North Riverside Garden Club
Ms. Madeline M. Rabb
Mr. Justin Rakestraw
Ms. Fitime Ramadani
Mr. Joel Ross
Mr. Jeff Roth
Roth Fioretti, LLC
Ms. Audrey Rubin
Mr. Gordon and Mrs. Carole Segal
Mr. Sergei Shevlyagin
Mr. Scott Simmons
Skender Foundation
Ms. Christine Slattery
Mr. Cooper Sterling

Mr. John Sterling
Mr. Phillip Styles
Syska Hennessy Group, Inc.
Mr. Christopher Trimbach
Mr. Robert Velazquez
Mr. Dennis White
Mr. Jered Wieland

\$1 - \$99

Marla Baker
Ms. Alice Brandon
Ms. Lydia A. Bueschel
Ms. Joan Crist
Mr. Christopher Dietz
Mr. John Dorgan
Exelon Foundation
Mr. Richard Freebourn
Ms. Charlotte Geib
Ms. Dianne M. Ghaster
Mr. Thomas Giller
Mr. Beau Greiman
Ms. Sylvia Harvey
Mr. David Hilty
Ms. Laura Hruska
Illinois Tools Works Foundation
Mr. Oscar D. Johnson
Ms. Joy Joyce
Ms. Alison P. Larson
Ms. Jody McDevitt
Mr. James Melledy
Mr. Anthony Miceli
Mr. Matthew Miller
Mr. Thomas Molloy
Ms. Monica Naples
Native Capital MGMT LLC
Mr. Paul Newman
Ms. Margaret O'Brien
Ms. Sarah L. Olson
Ms. Elizabeth A. Patterson
Mr. S. Neil Peck
Mr. Joseph Pizzo
Ms. Micheline Porwit
Ms. Irena Powers
Mr. Christopher Preston
Mr. Bill Rehanek
Ms. Megan Reppen
Mr. Eric Rockhold
SCR Medical Transportation Inc.
Ms. Leslie M. Stern
Mr. Keith Sykora

Mr. Jonathan Thomas
Mr. Credell Walls
Mr. Matthew Whisler
Mr. Donald Wilbon
Ms. Julia Wisniewski
Mr. Albert Yoshimura
Mr. Jonathan Yu

In-Kind

Bandon Dunes
Billy Casper Golf
Bin 36
Brookfield Zoo
Chicago Botanic Gardens
Chicago Fire
Chicago White Sox
Chicago Zoological Society
Mr. Bill Curtis and Ms. Donna
LaPietra
East Bank Club
Erie Café
Forest Preserve District of Cook
County
Grillroom Chophouse & Wine Bar
Hyatt Regency McCormick Place
Mr. Michael Keiser
The Honorable Toni Preckwinkle
PRP Wine International
REI
The Ritz-Carlton
The Honorable Timothy Schneider
Townhouse Restaurant & Wine Bar
Wines for Humanity
Memorial
Ms. Katharine Bizzotto
Mr. John Richard Bojan
Mr. Roland Eisenbeis
Mr. Beau Greiman
The Ladehoff Family
Mr. Ron and Mrs. Mary Ellyn
Simmons
Ms. Janet Stessl
Mr. Max Strauss
Ms. Magdalena Trevino

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Forest Preserve Foundation leadership would like to acknowledge the following individuals and organizations for their time, talent and thoughtfulness.

Conservation Cup Committee

Oscar Johnson, Co-chair
Claire Williams, Co-chair
Charles Bernardini
Julie Conenna
Kyle Davis
Jessie Hodge
Mark Lester
Tom Livingston
Bill Rehanek
Angie Richter
Carleen Schreder
Jean Sheerin
Chris Trimbach
Ewa Weir
Jered Wieland

Office of the Cook County Board President

Toni Preckwinkle, President
Pamela Cummings
Scott Kastrup
Frank Shuftan

Forest Preserves of Cook County

General Superintendent Arnold Randall
Deputy Superintendent Eileen Figel
Office of the General Superintendent
Office of the Deputy Superintendent
Department of Resource Management
Department of Conservation
and Experiential Programming
Department of Permits,
Concessions and Volunteer Resources

Editorial, Design, Video and Photo credits

Eric Bitoy, Cook County Department
of Public Affairs and Communication
Sylvia Ewing, Sylvia Ewing Communications
Brad Allen Johnson, Cook County Department
of Public Affairs and Communication
Fab Photo
Student Conservation Association

Communications/Graphic Design

Cassandra West,
New Media Access

Event Management, Talent and Product Donors

Billy Casper Golf
BMO Harris Bank
Bon Events
Digital Technologies, Inc.
Fab Photo
Jared Tabor, Youth Outdoor Ambassador
Joe Rizza Ford
Kelly T. Frank, Auction Services Group, Inc.
Luis Cabrales, Conservation Corps
Wilson



NATURE DOES THE INVITING.
WE JUST BRING THE GUESTS.



At the Forest Preserve Foundation, we support the programs and activities that give everyone access to the natural treasures of Cook County. With your support, these efforts will make life better for us all.

69 W. Washington, Suite 2040 ■ Chicago, IL 60602
forestpreservefoundation.org ■ 312.603.8349