

THE
**Access to
Recreation**
INITIATIVE



Access • Inclusion • Community





Mission: To be a catalyst for change, enabling communities to create greater access and inclusiveness in recreation facilities, programs, and services for people of all ages and all abilities.

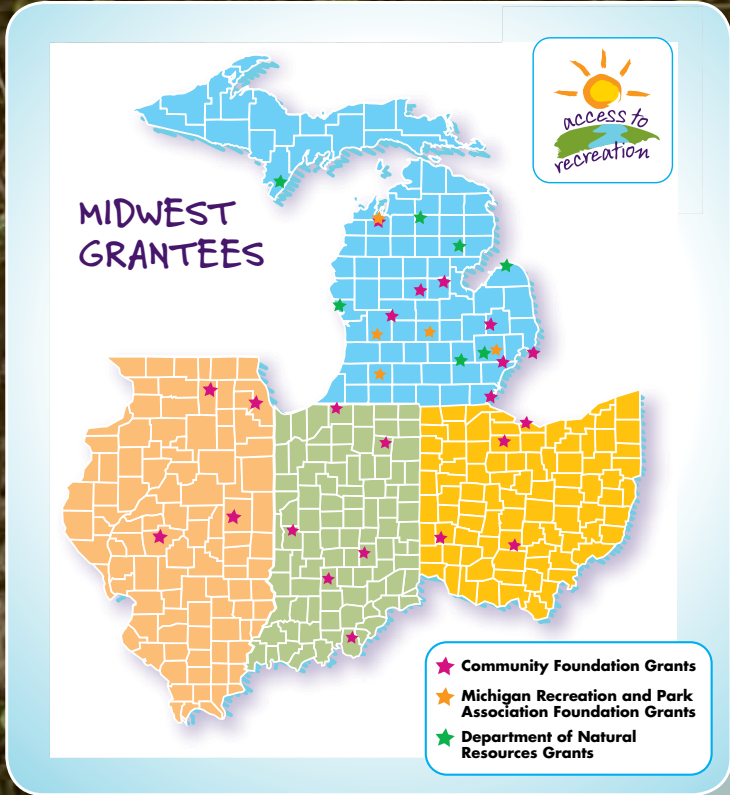


Launched in 2006, Access to Recreation is a three-year initiative that will support community foundations, parks and recreation providers, advocacy groups, and individuals as they work to provide greater access to a wide variety of recreation opportunities.

Access to Recreation is made possible through a W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant of \$15 million to Midwest Community Foundations' Ventures. The grant includes \$5.85 million regranted to the Michigan Recreation and Park Association Foundation and the Michigan Department of Natural

Resources. \$8.15 million has been regranted to community foundations in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois to use for recreation projects that incorporate the Principles of Universal Design, which result in greater accessibility.

In total, there are now more than 36 major recreation projects being built in this four-state region. These projects extend from the Indiana-Kentucky border to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and from Pickaway, Ohio to Springfield, Illinois. Projects are being built in Chicago and Detroit as well as in the small towns of Shelbyville, Indiana, and Sandusky, Ohio.



Creating Spaces

FOR EVERYONE

A young father takes his 12-year-old daughter to the beach. He'd like to swim with her, splash in the waves, share the experience. But the soft sand beach is a barrier not easily overcome by a wheelchair. And so the father watches from a ramp that ends in an observation deck overlooking the beach.

An eight-year-old boy goes to the local water park. The boy is visually impaired but fiercely independent. Still, because the park was designed without accessibility in mind, a parent or friend must help the boy navigate the park, limiting his ability to explore on his own.

Frustrations – about participation, about being together, about access – are experienced daily by millions of American families. According to the 2000 census, 8 percent of non-institutionalized children between the ages of 5 and 20 have a disability. These percentages increase dramatically with age. Nineteen percent of adults between 21 and 64 have a disability. For those 65 and older, the number rises to 42 percent. Figures for the states of Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio mirror the national numbers. Aging baby boomers and returning veterans from combat overseas add to the totals every day.

A recent study by the State of California documented the health and social benefits of recreation in our society. It concluded that recreation strengthens communities, promotes social bonds, and improves physical and mental health. Not surprisingly, it also found that individuals with disabilities receive all of the very same benefits from participating in recreational activities. In fact, their need for these benefits is even greater. However, lack of opportunities often prevents them from being active.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has helped make recreation more accessible to people with disabilities, but not always in the most inclusive way. ADA establishes minimum standards that must be met to make places accessible to those with disabilities. These standards are often met by tacking accommodations onto existing structures or facilities. A bathroom stall wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair is added to a restroom. A ramp is placed next to a set of stairs. A hard-surface pathway is installed parallel to an existing trail. The unintended consequence of this approach is that it separates people who have disabilities from those who don't.



What Is a Disability?

A disability is a condition or function judged to be significantly impaired relative to the usual standard of an individual or group. The term is used to refer to individual functioning, including physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, intellectual impairment, mental illness, and various types of chronic disease. Generally, disabilities fall into the following four types:



Mobility Impairment

Mobility impairment refers to the inability of a person to use one or more of his/her extremities, or a lack of strength to walk, grasp, or lift objects. A wheelchair, crutches, or a walker may be utilized to aid in mobility.

Cognitive Impairment

A cognitive impairment affects a person's ability to reason, understand, and learn. Cognitive disabilities are separated into two categories: learning disabilities and mental retardation.

Hearing Impairment

Hearing impairments range from a mild hearing loss to total deafness. Those who are hard of hearing often use their residual hearing and lip-read when communicating face-to-face. People who are deaf may use American Sign Language or lip-read, and may speak for themselves or use a sign-language interpreter.

Visual Impairment

A visual impairment affects a person's ability to see, and includes 1) inability to see images clearly and distinctly; 2) loss of visual field; 3) inability to detect small changes in brightness; 4) color blindness; and 5) sensitivity to light. A cane or sight dog may be used to assist with mobility, and/or Braille may be used to read.



HOW THEY'VE **Done It**

Empowered Advisory Committees

Communities participating in the Access to Recreation Initiative confirm that the best way to develop successful projects is to build strong community support through a variety of outreach efforts. Tactics include the creation of empowered advisory committees that include people with disabilities and their families; presentations to service organizations, city councils, and planning commissions; direct outreach to targeted groups such as disability service organizations, group-home residents, and senior citizens; and development of a strong community outreach strategy.

Active and empowered advisory committees are essential. They provide valuable input on the types of recreational opportunities that are needed by the community; barriers that currently prevent facilities from being fully utilized by people of all abilities; and design features that would overcome those barriers.

Principles of Universal Design

In 1997 a working group of architects, product designers, engineers, and environmental design researchers collaborated to establish the Seven Principles of Universal Design. The Principles of Universal Design were authored by the Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University, through a grant by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research.

Universal Design rejects the practice of designing a space and then adding on features that will accommodate the needs of people with disabilities. Instead, Universal Design develops spaces that are usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

While all recreation projects must meet minimum ADA requirements, Access to Recreation projects incorporate the Principles of Universal Design as part of the planning and design process.

The Principles of Universal Design are intended to evaluate existing designs, guide the design process, and educate both designers and consumers about characteristics of usable products and environments. The following chart explains the Seven Principles of Universal Design.

	Principle	Explanation	Guidelines
1	Equitable Use	The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the same means of use for all users: identical whenever possible, equivalent when not. • Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any users. • Make provisions for privacy, security, and safety equally available to all users. • Make the design appealing to all users.
2	Flexibility in Use	The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide choice in methods of use. • Accommodate right-or-left-handed access and use. • Facilitate the user's accuracy and precision. • Provide adaptability to the user's pace.
3	Simple and Intuitive Use	Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unnecessary complexity. • Be consistent with user expectations and intuition. • Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills. • Arrange information consistent with its importance. • Provide effective prompting and feedback during and after task completion.
4	Perceptible Information	The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant presentation of essential information. • Maximize legibility of essential information. • Differentiate elements in ways that can be described (i.e., make it easy to give instructions or directions).
5	Tolerance for Error	The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange elements to minimize hazards and errors: most-used elements, most accessible; hazardous elements eliminated, isolated, or shielded. • Provide warnings of hazards and errors. • Provide fail-safe features. • Discourage unconscious action in tasks that require vigilance.
6	Low Physical Effort	The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow user to maintain a neutral body position. • Use reasonable operating forces. • Minimize repetitive actions. • Minimize sustained physical effort.
7	Size and Space for Approach and Use	Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user. • Make reach to all components comfortable for any seated or standing user. • Accommodate variations in hand and grip size. • Provide adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistance.

Inclusive Planning Processes

In 2007 Michigan's Department of Natural Resources, also an initiative grantee, described an ideal planning process for communities competing for Access to Recreation funding. It provides a structure for communities that are planning accessible recreation projects.

1. Make a commitment to create recreation experiences that all people, of all abilities, can enjoy together, with the same experiences and benefits.
2. Learn about minimum ADA requirements, understanding that, while required, they do not represent best practices and do not create universal accessibility.
3. Evaluate current recreation facilities or opportunities for minimal ADA compliance and develop a transition plan to convert those that are out of compliance, utilizing a higher standard.
4. Consult with individuals with a variety of disabilities to learn what barriers impact their enjoyment of recreation activities.
5. Analyze all elements of the recreation environment to determine if the design makes it easier to be used by someone with a disability.
6. Think about what might make the recreation environment more easily used together by people with and without disabilities. This includes firm, stable surfacing, gentle slopes, and wider pathways. Also think about grills, benches, picnic tables, and other recreation amenities. Can people with and without disabilities sit side-by-side or use the grill together?

Aiming

TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES

Brighton, Michigan *It's Accessibility Hands-On Day at the Island Lake Shooting Range near Brighton, Michigan, sponsored by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR).*



A crowd gathers behind archer Rod Oglesby as he draws a modified compound bow, aims, and releases the bowstring. Appreciative murmurs pass through the crowd as the arrow finds its target, more than 70 yards away.

It was a great shot, by any standard. It was all the more remarkable given the fact that Oglesby has the use of only his left arm. He aimed the bow with this arm, and released the string by sipping a straw-like device he designed himself because, as he told the crowd, the modified bows on the commercial market didn't work for him. "You don't know what I need until you've experienced what it is," he tells the crowd.

Experiencing accessibility is what the Hands-On Day is all about. The department invited dozens of innovators, suppliers, and DNR decision makers to the first-ever event to demonstrate some of the obstacles that must and can be overcome by people with disabilities in order to enjoy many of the outdoor experiences most of us take for granted.

The list of attendees included makers and vendors of adaptive chairs, modified crossbows, compound bows, and adaptive shooting equipment, as well as DNR division chiefs, commissioners, and state legislators. Those in the latter group decide the policy issues that can make it easier or harder for people with disabilities to hunt and fish.

The Hands-On Day held in Brighton was the first of what the department hopes will be many such events. DNR Human Resources Chief Jerry Harris says it was held to familiarize decision makers with some of the issues involved in making recreation accessible to people with disabilities. Harris says future



events at dedications or park openings will take the message to a broader audience and will involve a whole host of outdoor activities.

The DNR is gaining a reputation as one of state government's most enlightened departments in its handling of issues involving people with disabilities, and a leader among state natural resources agencies across the nation.

The DNR appears determined to make accessibility a permanent operational philosophy, not a fad that will be forgotten a few years down the road. And the concept extends beyond those with disabilities. "In five years, I hope that accessibility is thought of in everything we do," says Harris. "Accessibility goes beyond individuals with disabilities. It might be finding a center in an urban area like a Boys and Girls Club and arranging transportation to a recreation area. The goal in the bigger picture is to make our facilities accessible to everyone."

Listening TO THE CHILDREN

Wayne, Michigan *If you want to know what to include in a new playground, get a bunch of kids together, plop them down in a playground, and take good notes. That's what Wayne Parks and Recreation Director Kim Alexander did.*



Want to know how the public will take to a new product? Put together a focus group. It's a fundamental concept of good marketing.

Alexander was in the planning stages for a new accessible playground in the Detroit metropolitan area community. The playground was to be strategically located just an eighth of a mile from Roosevelt-McGrath Elementary School, which serves special needs children from over 20 communities in the Wayne-Westland school district. To discover which elements children would use and find the most attractive, Alexander and teachers at the school packed up the children and bused them to an accessible playground in nearby Ypsilanti.

This "kiddie focus group" was instrumental in determining the final design of the new playground – and it was typical of the community's involvement in making it happen. Tom Woiwode is director of the Greenway Initiative for the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan. To him, the real story of the Wayne playground is how the community got behind the project, raising money

with almost every fund-raising activity imaginable. The list included golf outings, ladies' teas, gifts from the Rotary Club and other service clubs, and can collections from local schools, including Roosevelt-McGrath. "We did shirts, we did wrist bands, we did softball tournaments. You name it and we were raising money," says Alexander. Altogether, small community-based fund-raising events produced more than \$85,000 for Wayne's new Play 4 All Playground.

Enter the charitable arm of CVS Pharmacy, which is partnering nationally with Boundless Playgrounds to help build accessible playgrounds around the country. CVS threw a corporate contribution of \$40,000 into the playground pot. But its commitment didn't stop there. Hundreds of CVS employees also pitched in, reaching into their own pockets, helping with the community-based fund-raising efforts and the three-day community build to put the new playground together.

These two things – involving the kids who would use the playground, and community wide participation – set the Play 4 All project above others seeking funding, in the eyes of the community foundation. "They used the students at the school that the park served and they turned the project into a community build," says Woiwode.

The new accessible playground has opened eyes about the importance of accessibility in the life of our communities. "This is the new standard for me. I don't ever want to build another park that doesn't allow a child to play in their wheelchair," Alexander says. "It has really opened our eyes not only in our playground but in every little area we touch." Alexander adds that a new community center is currently being built in Wayne with accessibility in mind.

In the end, initiatives like Access to Recreation are less about building playgrounds and more about changing communities. In a recent message to Access to Recreation administrators, Woiwode marveled at "the incredible impact this grant has had on this whole community. I encourage other communities involved in Access to Recreation to make sure they look beyond the grant to see what's happening in their communities."



No Boundaries

IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Woods and water can nourish the body and the soul.

Two remarkable projects featuring innovative adaptive equipment are demonstrating exciting possibilities for individuals with a wide range of disabilities. The result? Newfound freedom.

Nautical Innovation Solves Tricky Problem

Most people who've canoed or kayaked agree that the trickiest part is getting into and out of the craft without getting all wet.

As part of their Access to Recreation grants, St. Clair and Midland counties in Michigan are collaborating on designing a launch system for public access sites that will solve the problem. Their innovation could be a key to enabling people with physical disabilities to relish the same freedom on the water as people without disabilities.

The breakthrough came through landscape architect Pam Blough, who contracted with the two counties to develop the launch system. She discovered that an existing system for personal watercraft could be adapted for getting canoes and kayaks more easily in and out of the water. The system is made by EZ Dock, a manufacturer of floating dock systems.

The kayak launch works like this: A gangway extends from the shore into the water, ending at a perpendicular ramp running parallel to the shore. The ramp consists of a series of rollers that incline gently into the water. On either side of the ramp are railings that extend over the water, allowing the boater to pull into or out of the water.



In the fall of 2008 a prototype was installed at a township park in St. Clair County. Initial tests convinced Midland and St. Clair counties that they've found a workable solution. Further adaptations, such as devising a simple transfer system that will allow people with physical disabilities to transfer from a chair or the ramp into their canoe or kayak, will make the launch much easier to use.

Word of the innovation is getting around. Shortly after a newspaper published a story about the prototype launch, Mark Brochu, St. Clair County Parks Director, got a call from an official at the Niagara River Greenways Authority who came across the article by doing a Google Internet search. He told Brochu, "We've been looking all over for a solution for a canoe and kayak launch and I think yours is the answer."

High-Tech Solutions for Trail Access

Students and faculty at Michigan Technological University are demonstrating that there's more than one approach to making recreation accessible to people with disabilities.

Nestled in the Keweenaw Peninsula on the extreme western end of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, the area around MTU gets an average of 213 inches of snow a season and is a haven for hikers and cross-country skiers.

MTU owns some 550 acres of forestland immediately adjacent to the campus and has developed 15 kilometers of demanding ski trails that host national and international competitions. MTU wanted to make its facilities accessible to athletes with disabilities. It wasn't interested in modifying the trail to meet ADA guidelines. Nor were disabled athletes interested in that solution. They wanted ways to independently enjoy the area's challenging trail system.



The solution? Innovate, using the brains and resources of one of the nation's outstanding technological universities. With support from a W.K. Kellogg Foundation Access to Recreation grant, two interdisciplinary teams of undergraduate students are working with faculty advisers on two projects to make the trails accessible to those with visual, cognitive, and mobility disabilities.

A team of students is developing a guidance system that will help visually or cognitively impaired skiers or hikers independently navigate a 1.3-kilometer section of trail. Called the Wireless, Independent Navigation and Guidance System, or WINGS, it consists of a series of electronic sensors placed on either side of the trail. The sensors communicate with a mobile node in a headband worn by the skier or hiker, triangulating the headband's exact location, and providing precise instructions through voice commands. In practice it works like an extremely accurate automotive GPS system.

A second team of students is researching and producing a prototype all-terrain vehicle that will allow people with mobility issues to independently access MTU's demanding trail system. Students from mechanical, electrical, and biomedical engineering are designing an Enterprise Trail-Assist Vehicle, or ETAV, that can traverse the trail system in summer or winter. Track-driven, the electric vehicle will have GPS guidance and fully adaptive options.

Big Splash IN A SMALL TOWN

Columbia City, Indiana, population 8,000, has a new accessible splashpad because a park director dared to dream big.



Mark Green was invited to join a class led by Leadership Whitley County, a nonprofit organization that develops community leaders. One of the assignments was to provide something related to recreation that everyone in the community could use free of charge. “I always thought it would be neat to have a splashpad, but in our small community, projects of that size just don’t typically happen,” says Green.

Green quickly learned that the \$240,000 needed for a splashpad is a huge sum of money to raise. He approached the Whitley County Community Foundation, but left disappointed. “At the time it was just way more than we knew we would be able to do as an organization,” says Foundation Executive Director September McConnell.

Then came word of the Access to Recreation initiative and its matching grants for communities to provide recreation opportunities for people of all abilities. Green and McConnell began talking again. They convened a meeting of the county’s parks departments, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, the YMCA, and members of advocacy groups for people with disabilities. They discussed accessible recreation opportunities in the county and agreed they were lacking.

After mulling over several possible projects and distributing surveys through agencies that provide services to families with disabilities, the group agreed to

seek grant funding for a splashpad. The group also agreed it needed to review the accessibility of all existing recreation venues in the county and offered to help develop a long-range strategic plan for improving accessibility.

McConnell and Green applied for and received an Access to Recreation grant but still needed a big infusion of matching funds. High on the list of prospects was the Dekko Foundation, a private foundation that concentrates on helping young people. Dekko granted \$100,000 to the project. Columbia City's municipal government added another \$50,000. The Whitley County Community Foundation gave \$5,500 to the splashpad project and \$16,000 to the endowment fund.

Small donations from lots of supporters added up to another \$5,000. Pink flamingos started showing up in people's front yards, placed there by volunteers working for Leadership Whitley County. Each property owner was asked to make a voluntary contribution to have the flamingos removed. The pink flamingo campaign raised another \$2,800 for the splashpad.

Just when fund-raising efforts began to slow down, Steel Dynamics, Inc., stepped forward and, together with its vendors, contributed the last \$35,000 needed to make the project a reality.

As popular as it is, the best part of Columbia City's new splashpad is how it has led to other changes. The advisory council convened to provide input for the project has stayed together and is making recommendations for future accessibility improvements. They range from installing accessible surfacing around playground equipment to creating a new buddy league baseball team where students without disabilities play side-by-side with students who have disabilities. One advisory committee member recommended installing raised garden boxes for those who can't get up and down easily to garden. Another member recommended a policy change to require consideration of accessibility for all new city projects.

McConnell calls the splashpad an "aha" moment for Columbia City. "I think this community is going to go on to do some really great things and that this was a catalyst." She gives Green the credit for getting the ball rolling. "If you look at a community like ours, our biggest weakness is we don't have enough people who dream big," she says. "And Mark had the audacity to dream and say, 'wouldn't this be cool?'"



A Trail

TO THE HEART

Kettering, Ohio *When a suburb of Dayton decided to build an environmental learning center accessible to people of all ages and all abilities, it started from the ground up. The Dayton Community Foundation began by convening a diverse advisory committee to imagine and design a trail for all users.*



T rails can connect places and communities. They can also connect hearts and minds. In Kettering, Ohio, project leaders wanted an environmental learning center that would be accessible to people with hearing and visual impairments, those who use wheelchairs, the elderly, and those with cognitive issues. “So we identified these groups and said, okay, that’s who we want to make sure the park can accommodate,” says Joe Baldasare, vice president of development for the Dayton Foundation. “And then we asked each of the organizations to send a representative but also to send a representative who had a disability.” In all, representatives from eight organizations that represented or served people with disabilities participated on the committee. What resulted was a design for an all-abilities accessible trail system consisting of six learning pods, scenic overlooks, and observation points. Where applicable, surfaces will be laid on trails to allow fauna and flora to grow, while providing a comfortable and safe surface for individuals using wheelchairs, walkers, canes, and strollers. Interpretive panels, experiential stations, tactile displays, universal signage, and auditory devices will be included, as will accessible parking, water fountains, and restroom facilities.

Wide community involvement during the planning stage helped ensure that when the project is done it will meet the needs of all the people who will use it. The Kettering project leaders discovered something else: By bringing diverse segments of the community into a discussion, opponents can be converted to allies. Kettering held two public hearings on the proposed project, and Baldasare says the change in atmosphere from the first hearing to the second was remarkable. He says the first public hearing was marked



by expressions of hesitation from neighbors and the community. “We gathered their input and responded to their concerns, and at the second meeting, boy, was it nice to see a whole different environment,” he adds. Baldasare attributes the initial reaction to a lack of understanding of what a person with a disability really was like: “When you say ‘disability,’ people conjure up various kinds of scenarios without knowing that we’re all only temporarily able-bodied. We’re all going to be disabled at some point sometime in our lives, and we needed to express that to them. We talked to them about their elderly parents who were now using a cane or a walker and while they could maybe walk a mile trail, having resting points along the way would be real critical to their being able to enjoy that trail. It started to click with people.”

One initially vocal opponent of the project became an enthusiastic advocate and was added to the advisory committee. “At the first meeting I thought the guy wanted to take somebody outside, but now he’s one of the project’s strongest supporters,” Baldasare says.

Angling

FOR ACCESS

Champaign, Illinois *When the park district and a community foundation discovered barriers to an important community asset, they decided to cast a wider net.*

Accessibility isn't a new issue to people living in Champaign County, Illinois. The University of Illinois is considered a pioneer in providing disability services on college campuses. East Central Illinois Community Foundation Executive Director Joan Dickson grew up in the city of Champaign and remembers elevators having lower punch buttons and Braille lettering long before passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Many of the streets in neighboring Urbana have talking crosswalks.

Still, although the area's parks have boardwalks and other accessible features, there were no places where people with disabilities could easily go to fish. That's about to change. An Access to Recreation grant will allow the Urbana Park District, the Champaign Park District, and the Champaign County Forest Preserve to construct accessible fishing piers that can be enjoyed by everyone, including people with disabilities.

When the community foundation became aware of the Access to Recreation grant opportunity, Dickson got together with leaders of the area's park districts to discuss potential projects. "We realized that we all three have lakes and that fishing is something that's very much of high interest with all three program areas," says Tim Bartlett, superintendent of operations and planning for the Urbana Park District. Although each district had fishing docks, they were not easily accessible to people with disabilities, nor located in areas that were easy to reach.



The group found willing audiences when they discussed their idea with organizations that represent people with disabilities. Swann Special Care Center houses children and adults with major developmental disabilities. Staff were excited at the prospect of taking their clients fishing. Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation (CUSR) is an arm of the two city park districts that provides recreation programs and leisure services for residents with disabilities. Surveys conducted by it and the nonprofit Developmental Services Center showed strong support for accessible fishing piers among persons with disabilities.

There's no single prescription for building a universally accessible fishing pier, so the design phase was a challenge. Bartlett says the team consulted with local experts who have experience working with disability and access issues, as well as with CUSR, to come up with design features that would be of high value to all people using the piers. "We adopted a universal design standard and tried to tailor each pier to the exact site," says Bartlett. Dickson recalls an experiment using two volunteers in wheelchairs to decide how wide to make the piers. "We said, 'okay, go down the hallway with us and let's see how wide we really have to make this so two wheelchairs can go side-by-side.'"

The Champaign area's history of accessibility and locally based expertise were helpful to the project's planning group. "The University of Illinois has



several departments that look into different aspects of accessibility, from recreation to learning to housing," says Bartlett. "So we were able to tap in and use that resource locally." The planning group also consulted early and often with the National Center on Accessibility (NCA) at Indiana University.

Bartlett and Dickson caution others planning accessible projects to leave plenty of time for the planning and design phase. It's crucial to get input from potential users, and people with disabilities are experts in design features that either discourage or invite usage. Time spent upfront reaps huge rewards in the long run. "We identified enough things that when people use the piers they'll find them easily accessible," adds Bartlett.

Bartlett says working with the community foundation also was a big plus. "It was terrific to have an outside group willing to help, to write the grant, convene the planning advisory committees and to find the resources to get the project done. It was just terrific and I would encourage others to try to do it that way."



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