



## Mundelein Park & Recreation District

<http://www.mundeleinparks.org>

---

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE USE

October 28, 2020

### MEDIA CONTACT:

Christa Lawrence, Marketing Manager, 847.566.5455, [clawrence@mundeleinparks.org](mailto:clawrence@mundeleinparks.org)

Deb Engdahl, Marketing Coordinator, 847.388.5473, [dengdahl@mundeleinparks.org](mailto:dengdahl@mundeleinparks.org)

### INGENUITY EARNS STATEWIDE AWARD FOR MUNDELEIN'S PARK DISTRICT

MUNDELEIN, IL – The Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) (<https://ilparks.org/>) recently announced Mundelein Park & Recreation District (<https://mundeleinparks.org/>) as a winner of the Power of Parks Award. IAPD will recognize the District at a virtual presentation of the Best of the Best Awards on November 12.

The award recognizes an IAPD member park district, forest preserve, conservation, recreation, or special recreation agency that has displayed **innovative and insightful ways to pivot their programs, events, and services to best meet their residents' needs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Within weeks of the shutdown, Mundelein Park & Recreation District **connected our community to health.** Fitness instructors developed free, daily online fitness classes, available to anyone interested.

The Regent Center fitness instructors offered free fitness programs geared toward active adult (50+) demographic.

-more-

IAPD Award  
Page two  
October 28, 2020

The District's walking program, GO Mundelein, introduced themed walks for outdoor fitness opportunities. Themes included pick up trash (plogging) while you walk, walk on a park path, take a family walk, walk in the snow, and sidewalk chalk walk. Walkers were encouraged to share pictures on social media.

The District transformed the 41st annual Freedom Classic 5K run into a virtual event. Runners could use the traditional Freedom Classic course or choose a path of their own. Participants received a commemorative t-shirt and medal and were encouraged to post pictures of their race on social media.

A Mindful Minute Video Series addressed social/emotional health. These one-minute video vignettes featured nature in the District's parks encouraged viewers to take a moment of calm reflection.

The District's Marketing Manager, wrote and illustrated, *My New Mask*, a story to explain to young children why they need to wear face coverings. Staff created a video of the story in English and Spanish. It was later made into a paperback and published on Amazon.com as a fundraiser for Mundelein Parks Foundation. The video has been viewed online nearly 4,000 times and has sold close to 700 copies.

**Keeping our community engaged through online fun** helped pass the time during Shelter at Home orders. The District posted daily Park District-themed activity sheets, including word finds, mazes, word scrambles, scavenger hunts, coloring sheets, and more. Staff also created a free, downloadable *Mundelein Parks Activity Book*.

Staff introduced online "Boredom Buster" challenges to keep the community engaged and entertained. Contests included Cake Wars, Art Wars, Best Pet Trick, Best DIY Obstacle Course, Mundelein's Got Talent, TikTok Dance, Free Throw Challenge, Egg Decorating Contest, Pet Photo Contest, and more.

The District **connected our community to a sense of normalcy** by offering virtual programs, including baking, art, dance, language, STEM, sports, and bingo.

Dancers in the long-term dance program continued their instruction with classes on Zoom.

Staff reinvented the traditional spring recital into a produced video. They carefully recorded all

-more-

routines while dancers wore face coverings and then edited it into a final presentation. The audience socially distanced at an outdoor showing of the recital recording.

To **connect our community to celebrations** when in-person gatherings were discouraged, staff developed a Porch Party package. A 10 ft. colorful balloon garland was delivered to homes and displayed on porches.

Instead of a Mother's Day event, staff created Marvelous Moms, a tribute video created with photos and messages submitted by our community. Local businesses partnered with the District and donated prizes for a raffle. Not only did this allow residents to honor their moms, but it also was an opportunity to bring attention to local businesses during this challenging time.

The District **connected with heart** through video messages from teachers in their Big & Little Child Development Center and Rec Connection (Before-and-After school care program). To offset isolation, the Adult Recreation Supervisor sent daily email letters to Regent Center members. Staff invited members to submit videos with a message to share with other Regent Center members.

Lastly, the District **kept our community informed** by producing Director Update videos. These Videos explained changes and safety procedures with the reopening of the Fitness Center, Big & Little Child Development Center, and swimming lessons.

"This award focused on innovation of agencies during COVID-19 and types of activities, services, programs and operations offered to our community," said Ron Salski, Mundelein Park & Recreation's Executive Director. "Congratulations go to so many people for this team effort during one of the most challenging times! I am amazed at the ingenuity of our staff as we continue to develop new ways of keeping our community safely connected through recreation."

# # #