

FACILITIES CLOSED

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WE PLAY TO WIN: THE WEEKLY PLAYBOOK

JAN. 13, 2026

SPOTLIGHT ON RISE

LOOKING BACK AT THE SUCCESS OF 2025

In late 2023, the RISE Committee launched its Lunch & Learn series, events designed to educate staff members about cultural topics that relate to the different communities Columbus Recreation and Parks Department serves. In 2024, the committee hosted four Lunch & Learn events. Last year, we hosted the following four events:

- **Tour the King Arts Complex:** A free tour of the historic Martin Luther King Jr. Performing and Cultural Arts Complex. The tour was guided by Jevon Collins, Chief Operating Officer of the King Arts Complex. There were 30 staff in attendance.
- **A Conversation With the Women of CRPD:** A conversation featuring a panel made up of some of the women of our department as they shared what they've learned during their careers. The panel featured: Jill Brumfield, Taylor Glynn, Corinne Smith, Kelly Messer and Melissa Michel-Thomas. It was attended by 47 staff.
- **RISE Connects:** In an effort to engage staff who are unable to leave their location, we worked with Community Centers and Programs to host two speakers who spoke about Columbus' immigrant community and one who spoke about the importance of mental health. All Community Center and Programs staff members were in attendance for this event, roughly 70 staff members total.
- **Collective Conversations:** Chris Scannell, a member of our Design and Construction team, spoke about being an active member of the military as well as serving as a Marine overseas. We also recognized some of our department's veterans in attendance. The event was attended by 20 staff.

In all, we had an average attendance of 42 participants per event in 2025, which would not have been possible without your support. We will continue to host events this year and look forward to hosting you!

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Jan. 19):** Observed on the third Monday in January, this federal holiday celebrates the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. King was the chief spokesperson for nonviolent activism in the Civil Rights Movement, which protested racial discrimination in federal and state law. King was assassinated in 1968. The holiday was signed into law in 1983 and was first observed on Jan. 20, 1986.
- **International Holocaust Remembrance Day (Jan. 27):** This day commemorates the victims of the Holocaust, which resulted in the genocide of one-third of the Jewish people by Nazi Germany between

English



1933 and 1945. In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly designated Jan. 27 as a day of

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and special ceremonies in educational institutions, the festival signifies the arrival of spring and is considered an auspicious time to begin new educational or artistic endeavors.

- **Black History Month (February):** This annual observance celebrates Black history and culture. Black educators and Black United Students (BUS) at Kent State University first proposed Black History Month in February 1969, before holding the first celebration at Kent State from Jan. 2-Feb. 28, 1970. President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976. Black History Month is observed in Canada during February, and in Ireland and the United Kingdom in October.
- **World Interfaith Harmony Week (Feb. 1-7):** The United Nations initiated this week in 2010 to promote harmony among people regardless of their faith.

CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS AROUND TOWN

- [Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Celebration](#): Jan. 15, 12-1 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church (125 E. Broad St. | 43215)
- [40th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Breakfast](#): Jan. 19, 7:30 a.m. at Columbus Convention Center (400 N High St. | 43215)
- [Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Learning](#): Jan. 19, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. at Capital University (1 College and Main | 43209)
- [MLK Day Open House](#): Jan. 19, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Ohio History Center (800 E 17th Ave. | 43211).
- [MLK Day of Youth Service](#): Jan. 19, 12-3 p.m. at Ohio History Center (800 E 17th Ave. | 43211).
- [MLK Day March](#): Jan. 19, 3 p.m. at the Lincoln Theater (769 E. Long St. | 43202)
- [MLK Day March Program](#): Jan. 20, 4:30 p.m. at the Lincoln Theater (769 E. Long St. | 43202)
- [Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration](#): Feb. 4, 10 a.m.-noon at Columbus State Community College, Center for Workforce Development fourth floor ballroom (315 Cleveland Ave. | 43215)

NEWS AND INFORMATION

HR UPDATES

New in 2026: Digital Time & Attendance Forms: Coming soon, we'll launch a department-wide Smartsheet to replace the current missed punch and exception forms. This new system will allow staff to submit forms digitally for manager approval and entry into Dayforce—no paper required. It will also give HR a complete, year-long record for legally required records retention.

Manager Reminder: Submit Staff Resignations: If an employee tells you they are resigning—whether they're moving, retiring, returning to school, staying home or not planning to work again—please obtain a resignation form. This allows HR to promptly remove them from payroll and maintain accurate records. You can find the resignation form in the main folder of the P drive - look for the file "Resignation Letter_2026.pdf."

GET A JUMPSTART ON A HEALTHY 2026

There are easy, free ways to kick off your fitness goals this year.

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Prefer to Work Out on Your Own? Sign up for the City of Columbus Employee Fitness Pass. This free pass gives you access to 20 Get Active Fitness Centers and open gyms at 27 community centers. To enroll, stop by any center with proof of employment (ID, paystub or work email). This benefit is free for employees and cost-neutral for the department, with all discounts reimbursed. The more staff who participate, the better!

Start moving toward your 2026 fitness goals—your future self will thank you!

ATTEND THE NEXT EXTENDED LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING

The next Quarterly Staff Leadership Meeting is Tuesday, Jan. 27, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Fran Ryan Center. Hear updates from the extended leadership team and learn what's happening across the department.

- All extended leadership team members should plan to attend.
- All staff are encouraged to join.

Have a question? [Submit it online](#), anonymously if you'd like. Selected questions will be addressed during the meeting and shared in the newsletter.

REFRESH YOUR HOME LIBRARY WITH THE C.R.E.A.T.E. BOOK EXCHANGE

Are you looking to expand your reading repertoire or make room in your home library for new reads? Participate in the C.R.E.A.T.E. Book Exchange!

There's no cost to participate; simply take a book or leave a book between Jan. 12 and Jan. 30. All genres and age ranges are accepted (nothing too crazy), so please read the description of any books you take. Stop by the east lobby at 1111 E. Broad St. (by the mural of Topiary Park). Any books left over after the book exchange will be donated. Email CREATE@columbus.gov with questions.

It's a great time to check out a new book and pass along your favorite reads in an environmentally friendly way!

KNOW WHO TO CALL: NEW CONTACTS FOR SAFETY

To ensure a safe environment for our staff, we have a dedicated team focused on a wide range of safety-related areas. This team manages iReports (incident/injury reporting), offers CPR/First Aid and Safety training and ensures we're complying with regulations.

With recent staff changes, there are updated contacts for safety-related issues. Please contact Alex Bangudi (AKBangudi@columbus.gov or 614-645-1493) or Lauren Nye (LMNye@columbus.gov or 614-353-2087). James Sheridan has left the department for a new opportunity, and we wish him all the best!

TOOLBOX TIPS: PREVENT SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Slips, trips and falls may seem minor—but they're a serious workplace risk. In 2024, they caused more than 240,000 injuries that required time away from work. They are also the second leading cause of workplace fatalities, accounting for 16 percent of occupational deaths (OSHA Outreach Courses, 2025).

The good news: these incidents are 100 percent preventable with awareness, housekeeping and safe habits.

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- Hazard Awareness: Watch for wet floors, loose mats, uneven surfaces and obstacles. Secure cords and hoses that cross walkways. Use handrails on stairs and ramps.
- Footwear & Personal Habits: Wear slip-resistant shoes with good tread. Stay alert—avoid phone distractions while walking. Take shorter steps on slick surfaces. Don't rush.
- Proactive Safety: Report hazards and near misses to your supervisor. Make sure you can see clearly in front of you when carrying items. Slips, trips and falls are predictable—and preventable. Slow down, look ahead and fix hazards when you see them. A few extra seconds can make all the difference.

[Check out this month's Toolbox Talk for more information.](#)

1/26/2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



There are no events on this day.

KEY DATES

JANUARY

C.R.E.A.T.E. Book Exchange

Jan. 12-30 | 1111 E. Broad, First floor east lobby

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NOMINATE A COWORKER FOR THE STAFF SPOTLIGHT

[Fill out this form to nominate a coworker.](#) The employee and their assistant director will be notified that they were nominated.

REINVESTING IN YOU

START THE NEW YEAR BY LEARNING SOMETHING NEW

The Citywide Training and Development 2026 Winter Catalog is out now! Offerings in January-March include:

- Leveraging Neurodiversity in the Workplace
- Wellbeing, decision making & stress management with Emotional Intelligence
- Goal Setting
- Introduction to Computers and Microsoft Office

Family members can also take advantage of most courses (exceptions are noted in the catalog).

[Visit the Training Gateway](#) to explore courses and register today.

AWARDS AND CERTIFICATIONS

Ashley Wise Nicholson | Marketing and Brand Manager-Community Relations | Master of Science in Marketing, University of Cincinnati

ARCHIVE