



# WE PLAY TO WIN: THE WEEKLY PLAYBOOK

APRIL 7, 2026

## SPOTLIGHT ON RISE

### SENSORY INCLUSIVE SPACES

We are constantly receiving information from the world around us. We do this through sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste, movement and orientation. However, everyone processes sensory information from physical surroundings in their own way. Every person, situation, and environment is unique. As a result, individuals may experience the same environment differently. One person may need more sensory input, and another needs less.

Many of our Columbus Recreation and Parks Department sites are action packed facilities where dynamic programs abound! So how can we better serve those participants who may need less external stimuli?

Join Accessible Ohio on Wednesday, April 22, from 1-4:30 p.m. for a free program focused on sensory inclusion. At this event, participants will discuss practical strategies for creating welcoming environments for all using sensory kits, sensory spaces, sensory maps, sensory hours and more. Accessible Ohio specialists will provide an All About Sensory educational session, guided discussion and sensory exploration, and a Social Narrative workshop to help organizations build sensory-inclusive spaces, resources and events. This in-person event will take place in the Large Meeting Room A at the Grove City Library, 3959 Broadway, Grove City, 43123.

There is no charge to attend, but pre-registration is required due to limited space. [Complete a brief form here to reserve your spot.](#)

Can't attend the workshop, but interested in learning more about creating sensory inclusive spaces? [Learn more here.](#)

If you have more ideas about how to make our department more equitable and accessible, or if you have resources to share that would benefit your coworkers, please reach out Geoffrey Martin, RISE Co-Chair, at [GAMartin@columbus.gov](mailto:GAMartin@columbus.gov).



# NEWS AND INFORMATION

## TAKE THE CITY EMPLOYEE SPORTS LEAGUE SURVEY BY APRIL 17

Starting this summer, Columbus Recreation and Parks Department will begin offering all City of Columbus employees the opportunity to sign up and participate in City employee sports leagues at no cost to them! As part of this benefit, City of Columbus employees will be allowed to include the following people as part of their team in these leagues:

- All adult dependents on their insurance plan 18 or older
- One adult guest per sports league

To be eligible to join one of these sports leagues, City employees will have to register for a Fitness Pass, which is also free to City of Columbus employees and gives them access to 20 fitness centers and open gyms at 27 community centers. [Click here to register for a Fitness Pass online.](#)

As we gear up for this new initiative, we are asking each employee to complete the following short online survey to give us a better understanding of which sports you are most interested in and when would be the best time to offer the City employee sports leagues:

[Take the City Employee Sports League Survey](#) here.

**Please complete this survey by Friday, April 17.** Your completion of this survey is important, as the information gathered will help determine the days, frequency and number of leagues offered as we look to build out this program.

Once we've had the opportunity to review the surveys, we will share additional information on how to register for these leagues so stay tuned!

## JOIN US FOR TAKE YOUR SECTION TO THE PARK DAY ON MAY 6

Join the CREATE Culture Committee at Tuttle Park Community Center on Wednesday, May 6, for Take Your Section to the Park Day. This fun-filled event designed to help us better understand—and appreciate—the incredible work happening across our department.

Staggered start tours will begin at 9:30 a.m. and will run every 15 minutes. Each station will share a quick demo or highlight—and you'll rotate through them on foot. Plus, your completed tour map can be entered to win a prize (even if you can't stay all day). The last tour will begin at 12 p.m.

After your tour, enjoy a free hot dog lunch with chips, cookies and a drink (vegetarian option available). Lunch will be served between 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Registration is required for lunch, but drop-ins are encouraged for the tour. [Register for your spot here.](#)

## PLAY IN THE HICKORY HACKER GOLF TOURNAMENT AT CHAMPIONS GOLF COURSE

Do you want to play golf the way it was meant to be played? Don't miss the Hickory Hacker Golf Tournament at Champions Golf Course on Friday, May 1! For this tournament, you play with hickory-shafted clubs like they did back in the 1920s!

With a 1 p.m. shotgun start, the cost is \$70 per person, which includes 18 holes of golf, a cart, sleeve of low compression balls and awards. The format will be a four person scramble, but individual flights will also be available.

Hickory clubs are required for registration. Sets (for right hand only) will be available to rent at \$25 per set for people who need them. One set is required for every two people. Customers are responsible to pay for any damaged equipment.

The deadline to sign up is Friday, April 24. Call the pro shop at Champions Golf Course to register today at 614-645-7111. Don't miss out on the chance to play hickory golf!

## REMINDER: C.R.E.A.T.E. CLOTHING SWAP STARTS APRIL 13

Join the C.R.E.A.T.E. Committee for our Spring Clothing Swap, where you can exchange gently used clothing for some fresh, like-new pieces. Whether it's workwear, casual wear or something in between, we're looking for clothing in excellent condition—no bags of old, worn-out items, please. Drop off your items at 1111 E. Broad St., Suite 101 in the Capital Planning area. Please bring only pieces that are still in great shape and ready to be worn again. Think clean, well-maintained items that could use a second life with someone new. Everyone is encouraged to stop by for the swap at 1111 E. Broad St. from April 13-24. There's no cost, and you don't need to contribute items to browse the selection and take something home. We can't wait to see what treasures you'll contribute! All remaining clothing will be donated.

4/8/2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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	1	2



There are no events on this day.

# KEY DATES

## APRIL

### Free Fitness Classes

Tuesdays and Thursdays | 11:25 a.m.-noon | 1111 E. Broad St., Hungry Soldier Room

### [Spring Wellness Challenge](#)

March 23-April 24

### C.R.E.A.T.E. Spring Clothing Swap

April 13-24 | 1111 E. Broad St., Capital Planning Area

### All Staff Meeting - [Submit Your Questions for Leadership](#)

April 28 | 1-2:30 p.m. | Espy Adaptive Sports Complex

## MAY

### Take Your Section to the Park Day

May 6 | Tuttle Community Center

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT



## THAD ALEXANDER

### ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER OF THE VOICE PROGRAM WITH YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

**How long have you worked for the department?** Five years.

**What's your favorite aspect of working for the department?** Having a passionate team around me and the opportunity to impact the community in a positive way.

**What is your favorite project you have worked on at the department?** Piloting programs for our local hospitals to provide direct service. Also, VOICE Program Wellness Responses that utilize our department's facilities and teams to help support the well-being of our participants in VOICE.

**What's your favorite ice cream?** Butter Pecan!

**What's your favorite book or movie?** Inception.

**What's one piece of advice you'd share?** Stay committed to your passions, and help our community members. Keep the main thing the main thing!

## 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.

## LIVING OUR VALUES

### BUILD STRONG CONNECTIONS: TAKING THE TIME TO FOCUS ON OUR YOUTH



We wanted to give a shout-out to Suzanne Schwartz, center manager at Schiller Community Center! The Friends of Schiller Park highlighted her on their social media channels last month after little kids found a dead squirrel outside of the center, and they were devastated.

Suzanne didn't rush them, but she found a box and led them through a small eulogy so the children could say goodbye to the dead squirrel.

The Friends of Schiller Park wrote, "But she understood that feelings matter. That small moments shape how children learn to process loss, care for one another, and move through the world. That instinct to slow down and honor what people are feeling is at the heart of how she leads the Schiller Community Center. And that is why Schiller's community center doesn't just operate. It thrives."

Thanks for Building Strong Connections, Suzanne!



# REINVESTING IN YOU

## NEW MENTORING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH CITY PARKS ALLIANCE

All Columbus Recreation and Parks Department staff are members of City Parks Alliance. This organization has opened up a new networking platform where you can access networking, connections and community through Groups in the online member portal. You can sign in to use these spaces to ask questions, share resources and exchange insights with peers across the field by asking questions. Groups include: public agencies, park nonprofits, maintenance and operations, data and technology, environmental resilience, funding, public safety, and staff recruitment and retention. [Sign in to the portal to check out this resource!](#)

## FEATURED JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Know someone looking for a new opportunity? Tell them to check out Columbus Recreation and Parks!

Current opportunities include:

- **Summer positions:** Part-time seasonal opportunities, including lifeguards, park maintenance and summer camp staff. We would love to get these positions filled as we head into summer so please share!

[All job opportunities are posted online.](#)

## MEET MORE OF THE CITY'S WELLNESS TEAM

Are you taking advantage of all of the great wellness benefits the City of Columbus provides? Now is the time! The City of Columbus works to provide employees with access to high-quality care and programming. As City employees, your work matters greatly to our residents. Helping you achieve your best health reduces stress and allows you to bring your best self to work, while serving the needs of countless residents who depend on our services.

The Employee Benefits and Wellness Team is taking steps to ensure you feel valued, heard and supported on your journey to your best health. Our work is supported by experienced professionals who are dedicated to helping you achieve your health and wellness goals. Offering these professionals to employees increases the value of our Total Rewards program, which is designed to help you thrive at work while reducing your outside costs for services such as gym memberships or personal training. Reminder: all conversations and interactions with the wellness team are confidential and tailored to meet your individual needs.

### Health Engagement Nurses

Whitney Rostorfer, RN, BSN, and Meghan Murray, RN, BSN, are designated health engagement nurses for the City. They are located at 77 N. Front Street, just near the building entrance.

The pair is available Monday through Friday to help employees and their families make healthcare decisions, navigate Anthem tools and resources and even refer you to a physician. Whitney has served the City for three years, and Meghan started working with us this year. To reach the nurses, contact 614-645-NURS or email them directly.

Meghan Murray – 740-739-3534, [Meghan.Murray@elevancehealth.com](mailto:Meghan.Murray@elevancehealth.com)

Whitney Rostorfer – 380-999-8815, [Whitney.Rostorfer@elevancehealth.com](mailto:Whitney.Rostorfer@elevancehealth.com)

### Wellness Consultant

Bre Newman is available to the City through our partnership with OhioHealth to help employees build healthy habits. Bre specializes in wellness, certified personal training and exercise physiology.

As our wellness consultant, Bre supports City employees as they work toward their personal and professional well-being goals throughout the year. Through various healthy lifestyle programs and ongoing health webinars, Bre is committed to helping you build sustainable habits and continue advancing your wellness journey. Bre is available five days a week and can be reached at [Brianna.Newman@OhioHealth.com](mailto:Brianna.Newman@OhioHealth.com).

### **Free Fitness Classes at the Jerry Hammond Building**

Don't forget - the City also offers free fitness classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:25 a.m.-12 p.m. in the Hungry Soldier Room in the basement of the Jerry Hammond Building at 1111 E. Broad St. All weights and mats are provided, just change into workout clothes and bring some water! You are also allowed to do the workout class during your work time as long as your job performance is not impacted. This is a huge employee benefit to be able to workout during the work day so don't miss out!

## ARCHIVE

**2026**



**2025**



**2024**



**2023**



**2022**



### **NATURE**

[Nature](#)

[Conservation](#)

[Educational Gardens](#)

[Nature Preserves](#)

[Outdoor Education and Recreation](#)

[Parks](#)

[Pollinator Habitats](#)

[Trails](#)

[Urban Forestry](#)