

The **Portland Parks Foundation** mobilizes support to improve Portland's system of parks, natural areas, and public spaces.

We help people help parks.

We accomplish this mission through delivering leadership, partnership and funding that advances a commitment to excellence, accessibility and good stewardship of our parks. Our primary partner is Portland Parks & Recreation.

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Our annual U.S. Bank Parks Champion Awards **recognize individuals who provide outstanding volunteer service to a park, community center, natural area, or community garden.**

PPF will make a grant of \$1,500 on the recommendation of the honorees to a community organization that aligns with **PPF's vision to help Portland communities create more equitable access to nature, play, health, and places of connection.**

Nominations were made through an online form open to everyone and promoted through the foundation's email newsletter and social media accounts and direct outreach. They were accepted between February 2021 through March 19, 2021. ∞

Thank you to our sponsor U.S. Bank and partner Portland Parks & Recreation.



We had 48 nominations this year.

To those who submitted nominations, thank you. To those who were nominated, we recognize the thousands of hours you put in to support your communities and parks and recreation areas. We also recognize there are thousands more amazing volunteers that aren't listed in this book. Thank you to all of you for your commitment to creating more equitable access to nature, play, health, and places of connection.

We received nominations for volunteers contributing the following activities to our communities:

- Service spanning decades to places like Leach Botanical Gardens, Columbia Children's Arboretum, Mt. Tabor Park, Lan Su Chinese Garden and Terwilliger Parkway.
- Place justice advocacy in North Portland working to revitalize George Park and downtown.
- Reimagining what public space looks like with community-led design and education programs at the Boise Eliot Native Grove.
- Advocating for recreation and programming and creating a sense of belonging through biking and soccer and hiking.
- Providing safe and inclusive educational and healing opportunities in nature for BIPOC community members.
- Maintaining parks and public gardens through pulling weeds, cleaning up debris and invasive species in places like Marquam Nature Park, Portland Japanese Garden, the Lilac Garden at Duniway Park and Forest Park.
- Cleaning up trash and graffiti and increasing safety in Laurelhurst Park, the Pearl District and Waterfront District.
- Assisting community members to grow their own food by providing accessibility and supplies and general support.
- Advocacy for accessible playground equipment and park improvements all over the city.
- Creating and maintaining free, accessible youth recreation programs and educational opportunities in our parks to youth with a specific focus on youth of color and low-income communities in places like Lents Park, Brooklyn Park, Tanner Springs, Whitaker Ponds and the Columbia Slough Watershed.
- Managing countless volunteer groups and inspiring others to form new friends groups in places like Argay Park, Mt. Tabor Park, Tryon Creek State Natural Area and Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden.

PARKS CHAMPIONS

Nominees

01. Allen Field | Sewallcrest Community Garden



WHAT THEY DO

Allen has managed the Sewallcrest Community Garden for more than ten years. He coordinates work parties and plans fun events, secures compost and other supplies, gives seasonal garden advice and information, communicates garden needs and concerns, and facilitates inter-garden communication. He helped secure funding for the Community Garden program, which acts as a food lifeline for many.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.portland.gov/parks/sewallcrest-community-garden>

02. Andrine de la Rocha & Howard Patterson | Boise Eliot Native Grove

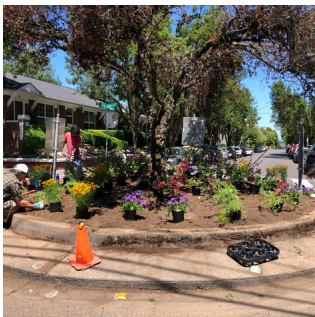


WHAT THEY DO

Andrine & Howard imagined, designed, and organized the creation and maintenance of the Boise Eliot Native Grove, a native pollinator pocket-park in their inner-urban neighborhood. They transformed a vacant lot into a flourishing native plant haven in an historically Black neighborhood, providing education, play, art, and native habitat for neighbors and wildlife to enjoy. Throughout the process, they've engaged dozens of students from Boise Eliot and The Ivy School, worked with local community groups to design and install a bench, and installed educational signage, art by neighborhood children and a variety of native habitats.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.nativegrovepdx.org>

03. Aubrey Russell | Neglected planters and greenspaces in NW Portland and more



WHAT THEY DO

Aubrey makes visible changes to neglected and overgrown City landscape areas. He rescues flowerbeds and public spaces all over NW Portland. Aubrey is quiet, sincere, and determined to leave beauty wherever he goes. He's on a mission to make Portland more beautiful one flower bed at a time. He inspires others to get involved, including teenagers.

04. Benjamin Tarne | Brooklyn Park

WHAT THEY DO

Benjamin Tarne created and runs the Friends of Brooklyn Park (FOBP) organization that puts on the free summer youth program at Brooklyn City Park. Benjamin established FOBP when funding for the Brooklyn neighborhood's summer youth program was cut. He plans the fundraising efforts, does community outreach, builds relationships with local businesses, plans and develops FOBP's online and social media, and works with Portland Parks and Recreation to ensure our youth have a place to grow, play, and discover. With Benjamin's leadership he has brought back the SYP with support for the community and local businesses. The program continues to provide youth with healthy games, activities, and crafts; teach them the value of community; and take responsible care of our community resources. Having this program is essential to Brooklyn and families that don't have the means for paid summer camps and programs.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.friendsofbrooklynpark.org>



05. Bill Bannister | Forest Park

WHAT THEY DO

Bill is a Rapid Responder and an Independent Volunteer with the Forest Park Conservancy, meaning he reports trail damage and other issues and can work without a staff member present as long as there's open communication with staff. He helps the organization and staff in a number of ways, both with regular volunteer duties and in ways that are above and beyond. "Having Bill around feels like having another colleague on our field staff team – when we need him, he's there; and he's there and helping even when we don't realize we need his help until later." - Forest Park Conservancy Staff Member.

FOR MORE INFO <https://forestparkconservancy.org>

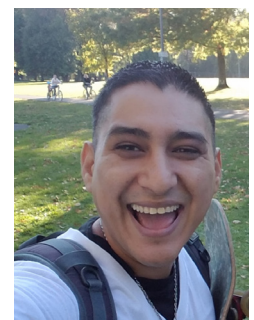


06. Cesar Huerta | Tryon Creek State Natural Area

WHAT THEY DO

Cesar creates community amongst stewardship volunteers for the Eco Crew program while also helping improve plant diversity and trails at the park. Over the previous two years Cesar became a leader of fellow stewardship volunteers, coming early, staying late and always welcoming individuals and making sure they were happy during their volunteer time at Tryon. His accomplishments went beyond regular volunteer tasks -- he helped build a welcoming community of volunteers.

FOR MORE INFO <https://tryonfriends.org>

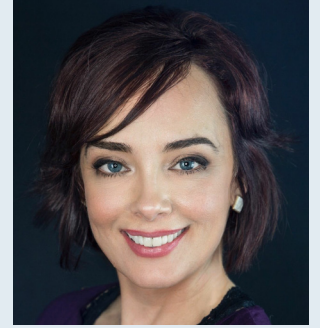


07. Christie Quinn | Lents Park and more

WHAT THEY DO

Christie operates The Bookmobile Babe, a nonprofit bookmobile for children, and distributes free books to children around the Portland metro area, especially at Lents Park. She uses books written mostly by BIPOC or women authors with diverse characters, with many books being in other languages. Over the past year, she has distributed more than 500 books to children.

FOR MORE INFO <https://linktr.ee/bookmobilebabe>

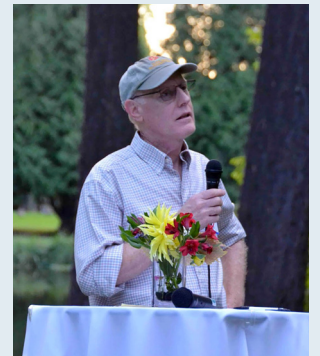


08. Dan McLaughlin | Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden

WHAT THEY DO

Dan has offered his services as a volunteer for more than 10 years and now manages the garden, representing the Portland Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. Dan has supervised projects, served as the liaison with Portland Parks & Recreation, motivated and inspired the other garden volunteers, helped manage the garden's website, supported the care of the garden's plants, and successfully transitioned the annual in-person sales events to an online campaign in 2020. He provides a welcoming approach to visitors.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.crystalspringsgardenpdx.org>



09. Darlene Chirman | Leach Botanical Garden

WHAT THEY DO

Darlene has worked tirelessly to restore a habitat above the formal gardens at Leach, including pulling blackberry and other invasives and planting native plants. This sort of restoration work is really hard, but can transform a degraded slope into great habitat and useful parkland. The restoration work that Darlene does will help the plant and animal species of the Johnson Creek watershed flourish and will provide a place for Portlanders who live far from the more well-known parks to enjoy the respite of nature.

FOR MORE INFO <https://leachgarden.org>



10. Dave Hillman | Mt. Tabor Park



WHAT THEY DO

Dave is a founding member of Friends of Mt. Tabor Park (FMTP). He also started the FMTP Foot Patrol, established the park's Visitor Center, and served as Board Chair for many years. By creating the Visitor Center, Dave "put a face" to FMTP and the park itself - the Center's volunteers create a connection between visitors and Mt. Tabor Park by answering questions, educating about the FMTP mission, providing volunteer opportunities, and more.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.taborfriends.org>

11. Dave Manville | SW Portland parks and trails



WHAT THEY DO

For many years Dave has worked with PP&R as an individual and a member of SWTrails PDX to maintain and repair trails within the city. In partnership with PP&R and local Friends groups, Dave helped build maps, led walking tours, and generally created stronger pedestrian and bike connections between schools, bus stops and grocery stores to the natural areas of the hilliest part of the city. He has also led groups of young Portlanders in volunteer efforts to maintain our parks. Those opportunities connect our youth with our natural areas while also helping them gain skills and internalize the idea that it is every Portlanders responsibility to help maintain these important spaces for all.

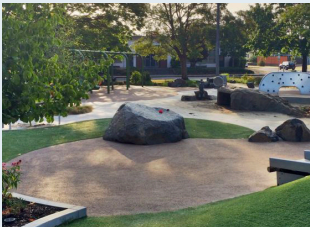
FOR MORE INFO <https://swtrails.org>

12. David Gutzler | Harper's Playground Arbor Lodge Park



WHAT THEY DO

David volunteers 2-3x a month to clean up the inclusive playground at Harper's Playground Arbor Lodge Park. Because of the pandemic, we have been unable to host group work parties due to social distancing constraints. David took it upon himself to show up multiple times every month throughout the entire pandemic to clean up the playground so that families, especially those who need an accessible space, can still use it. He drives all the way from Beaverton to North Portland to invest his own time in ensuring that this neighborhood has a clean and safe playground to gather.



FOR MORE INFO <https://www.harpersplayground.org>

13. Donovan Smith | George Park, Dawson Park, Cathedral Park, and more

WHAT THEY DO

Donovan Smith, along with Mat Randol, helped start a Friends of George Park group with a focus on Black and Latinx communities. Donovan is also a part of the City Repair mural project for this park and is getting community feedback on the mural as well as what kinds of services and amenities the site needs. Additionally, Donovan has been showing up for years to city and other mainstream events and meetings building a presence for Black community in these spaces. As an artist and community activist, he helped promote and start events such as the Illamette HipHop festival and this summer's following rally/concert/march at Cathedral park. Donovan's volunteer efforts bring people out to the parks who would otherwise not be included in traditional placemaking/stewardship events, "He knows how to collaborate with historically excluded communities to support events in our parks that center people of color, and the way they like to use and recreate in parks. He is a catalyst of inclusion for those who have been historically policed, pushed out and left behind by traditional styles of management of our public spaces." - NECN staff member.



FOR MORE INFO <https://www.portland.gov/parks/george-park>

14. Duane Hanson | SE Portland around Mt. Tabor

WHAT THEY DO

Duane conducted many projects. He planted dozens of trees with Friends of Trees, designed an emergency prep NET workshop, chaired the community building, supported the annual South Tabor Harvest Fest, worked with the PCP MULTCO Dems, was twice union President of SAG-AFTRA, ran the Soroptimist tree lot, and more. He helps create a sense of community around the area.



15. Gary Quinn | Clinton Community Garden

WHAT THEY DO

Gary helps provide food for those with limited access to groceries.

He is the Clinton Community Garden manager and coordinates the Produce for People Program. He grows extra produce, beyond the call of duty, for that program. He is responsible for the maintenance of the outside-the-fence part of the garden, which provides folks in close-in SE Portland with a green space for relaxation. Gary is committed to supplying fresh produce, which many people cannot afford or get at food pantries. He has a regular route of deliveries, where our produce is anticipated weekly.



FOR MORE INFO <https://www.portland.gov/parks/clinton-community-garden>

16. Gordon Campbell & Kathleen Madden | Multnomah Arts Center

WHAT THEY DO

Kathleen & Gordon have put extensive efforts into supporting the all-volunteer non-profit friends group, the Multnomah Arts Center Association, for hundreds of hours each in recent years. They have both been tireless advocates of supporting affordable and accessible arts education, fundraising through three major art sales each year, doing annual appeals to community members, and working with volunteers to write grants too. This past year, they fundraised and advocated for the purchase and distribution of over \$40,000 in art supplies, distributing them to kids throughout the city in coordination with PP&R's Free Lunch + Play program.



FOR MORE INFO <https://www.multnomahartscenter.org>

17. Ian Jaquiss | Throughout Portland

WHAT THEY DO

Ian provides a city-wide perspective to PP&R. He served 2 full terms on the Parks Board, providing a comprehensive and strategic perspective for a full range of Portlanders and park users, particularly those with different levels of physical ability.



18. Jacob Thoreson | Southwest Community Center/ East Portland Community Center

WHAT THEY DO

Jacob is the lead coach at Street Soccer USA Portland and has served more than 300 youth and their families in the city. Jacob helps connect participants, a large portion of which are refugees and immigrants, to resources around the city. Jacob assists players and their families with a natural support system where they can receive assistance from other local agencies with whatever they may need, from parks information to food resources.



FOR MORE INFO <https://www.streetsoccerusa.org/playforpdx>

19. Jane Roffey Berry | Argay Park

WHAT THEY DO

Jane began and has held together a Volunteer Group at Argay Park for more than twenty years. She leads the group that maintains the garden area off of Sandy Blvd and NE 141st. She informs, motivates, and follows up with members in a meaningful way. She also volunteers her knowledge and time to inform other people interested in learning how to operate their own park volunteer group.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.portland.gov/parks/argay-park>



20. Jason Baird | Gateway Green

WHAT THEY DO

What they do: Jason devotes his time to caring and maintaining the cycling facilities and trails at Gateway Green. Jason's work keeps the parks running smoothly so that the entire community is able to enjoy it.

FOR MORE INFO <http://www.gatewaygreenpdx.org>



21. Jim and Geri Rovello | Berkeley Park, Alex Rovello Memorial Tennis Courts

WHAT THEY DO

Jim and Geri Rovello care for and maintain the tennis facilities and memorial. They sponsor summer tennis events with prizes for kids of all levels and work with park bureau employees to maintain the courts, making sure the facilities are in excellent condition.

FOR MORE INFO <http://alexrovellomemorial.org>



22. Kate Bodin | Portland Botanical Gardens



WHAT THEY DO

Kate is the volunteer Executive Director of Portland Botanical Gardens. Over the past year she has organized a group of people dedicated to realizing the “vision” that the proposed Portland Botanical Gardens (PBG) will become a global and Metro-area leader in horticultural training, climate change research, and environmental justice and equity. She helps ensure PBG cultivates a community where people connect, discover, and celebrate the beauty, strength, and resilience of plants.

FOR MORE INFO <https://portlandbg.org>

23. Katie & Ron Goodwin | Leach Botanical Garden



WHAT THEY DO

The Goodwins work together out in the garden every week doing whatever kind of maintenance work needs to be done. They have raked, weeded, and tended every single garden bed and path on the property many times over. They have also helped with every important fundraising event the Garden has held going back many years, and in some cases were the Chairs of the events. The Goodwins constantly take the initiative in engaging with visitors and other volunteers, they make each and every person they encounter feel welcome, and they are tireless ambassadors for the Garden. They’ve made an impact on the garden for decades.

FOR MORE INFO <https://leachgarden.org>

24. Kay Dannen | Elizabeth Caruthers Park



WHAT THEY DO

Kay has been a tireless volunteer for the waterfront community for the past 15 years. Over the years she has volunteered to ensure the waterfront district is clean and safe for all members by picking up trash, weeding, and organizing volunteers to clean up graffiti.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.portland.gov/parks/elizabeth-caruthers-park>

25. Kim Luey | Lan Su Chinese Garden

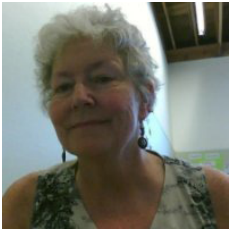


WHAT THEY DO

Kim was a wonderful garden host and family activity volunteer. Kim recently passed away in November 2020 due to Covid-19. She started volunteering at Lan Su in 2000 and is their only volunteer to reach 4,000 volunteer hours. She enhanced visitor experience and assisted families to have an enriched experience during their visit while participating in various family activities. She was an inspiration to staff, volunteers, and visitors.

FOR MORE INFO <https://lansugarden.org>

26. Laura Feldman | Columbia Slough Watershed, Nuclear Free NW, CORE, Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board



WHAT THEY DO

Laura honors the earth by using a bicycle everywhere she goes. She volunteers upwards of 20-25 hours a week doing everything from nuclear cleanup actions through CORE to the Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board to the Columbia Slough watershed group. She's been a part of numerous actions with SOLVE, was a volunteer coordinator for The Cascadia Film Arts Festival: Living in a Nuclear Landscape, and has been volunteering for Save Columbia Pool.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.columbiaslough.org>

27. Laurie Kitxke | Gabriel Park Community Garden



WHAT THEY DO

Laurie assists gardeners with watering, weeding, maintaining plots. She is a garden ambassador and makes a huge impact for the garden especially related to her support in helping seniors maintain their garden plots and obtain fresh vegetables.

FOR MORE INFO www.portland.gov/parks/gabriel-community-garden-and-orchard

28. Mary Kinnick | Mt. Tabor Park

WHAT THEY DO

Mary was Board Chair for Friends of Mt. Tabor Park (FMTP) for many years and is currently volunteering with the Weed Warriors as a Crew Leader, guiding others to remove invasive plant species from the park and plant native plants. She also spearheaded the campaign to raise funds for the FMTP Stewardship Coordinator position.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.taborfriends.org>

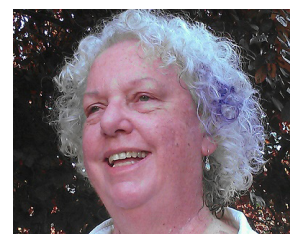


29. Maryhelen Kincaid | Columbia Children's Arboretum

WHAT THEY DO

Maryhelen has volunteered for many programs and parks for the past 18 years. Highlights include her advocacy, grant writing and capital improvements with the Friends of the Columbia Children's Arboretum, Vanport, North Portland Parks Advisory Group and the Board of the Multnomah County Drainage District. Additionally, when 42 acres of wetlands were in the early planning stages of development near her East Columbia home, she worked with the Bureau of Environmental Services to purchase the land. It is now protected wetlands and could someday become a park.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.portland.gov/parks/columbia-childrens-arboretum>



30. Masaki Shimada | Portland Japanese Garden

WHAT THEY DO

Masaki is a garden ambassador, horticulture volunteer, and art exhibition docent. Masaki does whatever needs to be done. He cleans benches, picks up trash, weeds, sweeps, levels pathways and mentors new volunteers. During the past year, he helped to bring peace and tranquility to over 100,000 people in a pandemic through his volunteer work. Additionally, Masaki shares his Japanese culture with Garden visitors to educate them about the beautiful and rich culture of Japan.

FOR MORE INFO <https://japanesegarden.org>

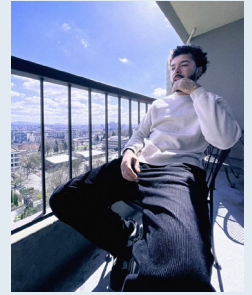


31. **Mathew Randol** | Kidz N The Park Festival/George Park

WHAT THEY DO

Mathew helped create a Friends of George Park group to help make changes to the park as a whole. One of Friends of George Park's main goals is to bring attention and awareness to the park. Additionally, Mat is working to upgrade the play structure for the neighborhood kids and hold an annual music festival in the park.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.portland.gov/parks/george-park>



32. **Michele Shapiro** | Tanner Springs Park

WHAT THEY DO

Michele has developed a group of volunteer gardeners and guides them in caring for Tanner Springs. She does so with respect for the Park's needs and the volunteers' skills and preferences, while liaising with Portland Parks and Recreation staff. She talks with visitors and explains the park and its native plantings, provides educational opportunities for school children to learn about native plants growing in the park, serves as volunteer coordinator for the group, chairs its Board, is an active naturalist and horticulturist, and developed and maintains the Friends' website.

FOR MORE INFO <http://friendsoftannersprings.org>



33. **Mike Street** | Pearl District/North Park Blocks

WHAT THEY DO

Mike has gone out every day for 15 years to clean graffiti throughout the entire Pearl District.

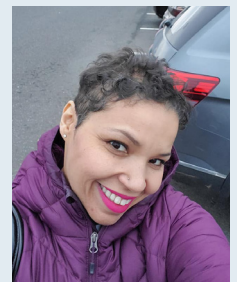


34. **Nicole Williams** | Friendly House

WHAT THEY DO

Nicole headlined the centennial Black History Month at Friendly House, was the first DEI chair for Chapman Elementary PTA, and organized the Black Lives Matter march at Fields Park. She helps create representation and builds empathy in an area where there isn't much for marginalized communities and people of color.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.friendlyhouseinc.org>



35. Pam Slaughter | Whitaker Ponds, Smith and Bybee Lakes, and Oxbow Park



WHAT THEY DO

Pam has been a consistent volunteer with the Columbia Slough Watershed Council and has participated in several stewardship events throughout the year. In addition, she runs an organization called People of Color Outdoors, all volunteer-based, and is continually creating meaningful, inclusive and safe connections to the outdoors and local parks and waterways for the Portland BIPOC community. In 2020 she wrote a book on bird watching and hosted more than 30 outdoor community events. The outings helped BIPOC community members to not only cope, but to experience a sense of hope and belonging during a difficult time.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.meetup.com/People-of-color-outdoors>

36. Rick Pope | Forest Park Conservancy



WHAT THEY DO

Rick spends countless hours with his partner, Sue Brickey, going out and reconstructing trails that have been damaged by the storms. He takes pride in his work, ensuring that the Forest Park trails are accessible for thousands of users.

FOR MORE INFO <https://forestparkconservancy.org>

37. Robin Jensen | Marquam Nature Park



WHAT THEY DO

Robin is the volunteer leader for Friends of Marquam Nature Park. She provides leadership vision, collaborates with partners and stakeholders, and manages the many projects and activities for the Friends. Marquam Nature Park would not be the nature preserve it is today without the oversight and coordination that Robin provides.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.fmnp.org>

38. Robin Vesey | Terwilliger Parkway



WHAT THEY DO

Robin has been a dedicated Board Member with the Friends of Terwilliger Parkway for 25 years. She enthusiastically leads on-the-ground work parties in partnership with PP&R, supplying the volunteer power needed to restore the Terwilliger Parkway's urban forests, oak habitats, and amazing views of the City. Robin has been instrumental in addressing invasive ivy and other canopy weeds that overrun many SW Portland Parks and has helped to enhance these lands for wildlife and people. Through her commitment, Robin has worked with more than 1,500 volunteers contributing over 6,000 volunteer hours. These efforts have cleared 13.5 acres of ground ivy, 16.68 acres of tree ivy and over 3,459 trees have also been cleared of ivy.

FOR MORE INFO <http://terwilligerfriends.org>

39. Scott McKinley | Gabriel Community Garden



WHAT THEY DO

Scott has led the maintenance of all the garden's grapevines for years, which are many years old and span nearly the entire perimeter of the garden fence. He also educates other gardeners about appropriate grapevine maintenance. When someone needs help, he jumps right in.

FOR MORE INFO www.portland.gov/parks/gabriel-community-garden-and-orchard

40. Tamara Layden | Portland Parks & Recreation Board



WHAT THEY DO

For the past 3 years, Tamara has served on the PP&R Board, as well as serving as Chair of the Community Development Working Group and serving on the Board Nominating Committee. Tamara has also focused on improving the Board's inclusive and equitable recruitment and onboarding. She tirelessly works to better equity, diversity and inclusion from a systemic level.

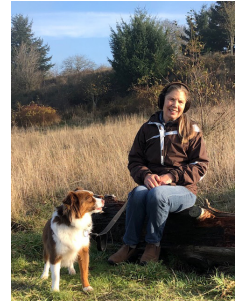
FOR MORE INFO <https://www.portland.gov/parks/portland-parks-board>

41. Teresa J Browning | Laurelhurst Park

WHAT THEY DO

TJ Browning has been an active advocate for safe public use of Laurelhurst Park for many years working with many different groups and stakeholders. She trains people on the Neighborhood Safety Committee on what to watch for and how to report problems or crimes in a positive way. Reporting to the neighborhood association, she connects specialists from the community to inform neighbors on current topics. She is a dedicated guide for new and long-standing neighbors on how to promote public safety in the park respectfully.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.laurelhurstpdx.org>



42. The Lilac Garden at Duniway Park Committee of The Portland Garden Club | The Lilac Garden at Duniway Park

WHAT THEY DO

The Portland Garden Club's committee has worked in the Lilac Garden at Duniway Park since 2014. The women of the committee have photographed, documented, weeded, divided, pruned, and added new lilacs, under-plantings and bulbs and developed a master plan and professional design for the eventual remodel of the park. Working in partnership with PP&R, their ultimate goal is to make the garden one of Portland's special exhibit gardens and a premier lilac garden of the northwest.

FOR MORE INFO <https://www.theportlandgardenclub.org/community/lilac-garden>



43. Wes Risher | Terwilliger Parkway

WHAT THEY DO

Wes' passion is protecting, advocating for and educating people about Terwilliger Parkway: its history, its special character as a linear park and, most recently, helping to locate and document the 1972 Par Course exercise circuit in aid of its renovation. Concerned also about the iconic Elk Point totem pole, Wes alerted the Regional Arts and Cultural Council to its deteriorating condition. He helped develop the geotechnical maps supporting the successful application to list Terwilliger Parkway on the National Register of Historic Places.

FOR MORE INFO <http://terwilligerfriends.org>



