

---

# WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Waukegan Park District to Host Celebration of African Americans in the Arts**

**Waukegan, Illinois (February 23, 2022)** – The Waukegan Park District is hosting a celebration of African Americans in the arts on Saturday, February 26, 2022 from 1pm to 3pm at the Jack Benny Center for the Arts, located at 39 Jack Benny Drive in Bowen Park. Those attending the free event will have the opportunity to see live performances from African American artists.

Performers include Shaquita Blanks, Juliette Z. Payne, and students from the Legacy Reentry Foundation's Legacy Arts and Media Program (L.A.M.P.). The schedule of Celebrating African Americans in the Arts is as follows:

- **1pm to 2pm:** Student Performers from L.A.M.P. (Guitar Soloist, Rapper, and Dancer)
- **2pm to 3pm:** Actor Portrayals/Readings from *Portraits of African-American Heroes* by Tonya Bolden

*Portraits of African-American Heroes* is a book consisting of portraits in pictures and words of twenty outstanding African Americans. The individuals range from historical to contemporary figures and represent diverse fields of endeavor, from the law to athletics, science, and more. For each individual, there is a three-page biography by the noted author Tonya Bolden and a striking black-and-white portrait that captures not only the subject's likeness but is a work of art in itself.

There will be coloring sheets of famous African American historical figures available for families to color while listening to music of African American musicians, including Billie Holiday, Ray Charles, Nat King Cole, Anita Baker, and Johnny Mathis.

More details about the Waukegan Park District's special programming during Black History Month are available at [waukeganparks.org/blackhistorymonth](http://waukeganparks.org/blackhistorymonth).

###

## **About the Waukegan Park District**

Established on December 26, 1916, the Waukegan Park District (WPD) has 53 properties and more than 742 acres of land, including the 18-hole Bonnie Brook and 9-hole Greenshire Golf Courses. Properties are managed to the highest environmental and conservation standards. Facilities operated by the WPD include the Field House Sports, Fitness and Aquatics Center, Jack Benny Center for the Arts, Waukegan's Greg Petry SportsPark, Waukegan Skate Park, BMX Track, SplashZone, Percussion Playground, recreational centers, disc golf course, dog exercise area and agility course, outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, splash pads, and sports courts including basketball, tennis and pickleball. A full range of programs and services are offered year-round for all ages, from infants to seniors, as well as special need populations. Healthy lifestyles, wellness initiatives, and a connection with the outdoors and nature are integrated throughout programs, services, and special events. Cultural events are provided by the Waukegan Symphony Orchestra and Concert Chorus, and the Waukegan History Museum. We offer something for everyone!

The WPD is a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) and the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA). They employ 64 full-time and about 235 part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees and are recognized by the IPRA as an Exceptional Workplace.

The WPD is nationally accredited by the NRPA Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and State accredited through the IAPD Distinguished Agency Accreditation. The WPD has received Government Finance Officer Association (GFOA) awards for Distinguished Budget Presentation and Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting for eleven consecutive years and received the coveted GFOA Triple Crown Award recognizing the District's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, Popular Annual Financial Reporting and Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for 2019. The WPD was awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013 and named a Gold Medal Finalist in 2012, 2013, 2019, and 2021.

JP/02/22/2022

### **Contact:**

Josue Pasillas, MPA  
Communications Supervisor  
Waukegan Park District  
(847) 360-4789  
jpasillas@waukeganparks.org  
waukeganparks.org