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Go Play!: Non-Profit

Organization KaBOOM! Names

Sanford

One of 93 "Playful City USA" Communities

- Communities Across the Country Make Play a Priority Despite Economy -

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In a time when 82 percent of parents believe children don't spend enough time playing outside[^], 93 communities across the nation have taken innovative approaches to make play a priority for the health and well-being of their kids. Communities large and small, urban and rural, have created initiatives designed to increase the quantity and quality of play and playgrounds, while improving access to existing play opportunities.

To honor cities and towns making this commitment to play, KaBOOM!, a national non-profit dedicated to bringing play back into children's lives, named Sanford as one of its Playful City USA communities. Of the 93 communities named 5 were in NC including Durham, Greensboro, Greenville, Creedmoor and Sanford. These communities created and implemented programs to positively impact childhood wellness, public safety and the quality of life.

According to the non-profit KaBOOM Sanford demonstrated creative commitments to the cause of play in the areas of quantity, quality and access. Quality relates to the number of usable, open playspaces. Quality involves subjective factors that encourage repeated use and make playspaces engaging, exciting, interesting and fun. Access entails the ability to get to a playspace (roads, trails) and a lack of barriers to the playspace (cost, safety, traffic, locked gates, equity).

Playful City USA celebrates and highlights these unique initiatives developed by communities across the country. A primary goal of Playful City USA is to encourage cities and towns to share creative ideas, concepts and programs in an effort to increase play opportunities for children.

KaBOOM! also selected Sanford for its dedication to play. The City's Play Task Force is working to ensure that all residents have access to playspaces by partnering with the Director of Public Housing to create play time at each of the low income housing sites to ensure that children and families have access to play. The City is also adding, managing, and maintaining the popular pocket parks that allow the neighborhood park system to be available to residents throughout Sanford and is developing a neighborhood park plan for East Sanford that will enhance community development strategies.

Mayor Cornelia Olive noted that Council is delighted to have the designation of Playful City USA, "We're at an early stage of developing our parks and open space strategies so we are very pleased to receive this recognition of our efforts. We continue to partner with Lee County for recreation programs but we've recognized the need for a city of 30,000 to be actively engaged in creating play opportunities for our children. Our pocket parks development is an example."

The KaBOOM! vision is a great place to play within walking distance of every child. Playful City USA communities create best practices, like the ones above, to reach a similar goal. They serve as role models for other communities and prove that enhancing children's well-being by increasing the opportunity for play is an attainable goal for every community.

"Our country is facing two monumental deficits: a lack of unstructured play among children and a lack of resources to address this very issue," said Darell Hammond, KaBOOM! CEO and Co-founder. "Sanford took a stand and determined that the future of their community—their children—deserve a commitment to the cause of play. This is an investment in the future, not an expenditure and cities and towns across the country can

replicate initiatives from these Playful City USA communities so that they too can bring play back into the lives of their children.”

^ 2009 Harris Interactive Poll

2009 Playful City USA Communities

Allentown, Pa.
*Ankeny, Iowa
Annapolis, Md.
#Arlington, Texas
*Atlanta, Ga.
Auburn, Wash.
Baldwin Park, Calif.
Bismarck, N.D.
#Bloomington, Ind.
#Brentwood, Calif.
Casa Grande, Ariz.
#Cerritos, Calif.
*Chandler, Ariz.
Columbia, Ill.
Columbus, Ohio
Commerce City, Colo.
#Coolidge, Ariz.
Coral Gables, Fla.
Corpus Christi, Texas
*Creedmoor, N.C.
#Danville, Va.
Delray Beach, Fla.
#DeRidder, La.
*Dothan, Ala.
Durham, N.C.
#Encinitas, Calif.
Eules, Texas
Evans, Colo.
#Findlay, Ohio
Fishers, Ind.
*Gilbert, Ariz.
#Grand Prairie, Texas
#Green River, Wyo.
*Greenbelt, Md.
Greensboro, N.C.
Greenville, N.C.
Hamilton, N.J.
#Henderson, Nevada
#Hernando, Miss.
Hilo, Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii
#Huntsville, Ala.
Indianapolis, Ind.
*Kenner, La.
*Kerman, Calif.
Killeen, Texas
#La Mesa, Calif.
*Lake Charles, La.
*Lake Worth, Fla.
#Landfall, Minn.

Laramie, Wyo.
Las Cruces, N.M.
#Lauderdale Lakes, Fla.
Laurel, Md.
*Longview, Wash.
#Mercer Island, Wash.
Mesa, Ariz.
Miami Lakes, Fla.
Missoula, Mont.
#Murray, Ky.
#Nampa, Idaho
*New Lenox, Ill.
New Port Richey, Fla.
*New Roads, La.
#New York City, N.Y.
Niagara Falls, N.Y.
*Norfolk, Va.
#Northglenn, Colo.
#Orlando, Fla.
#Palm Bay, Fla.
#Parkland, Fla.
*Phoenix, Ariz.
*Portsmouth, Ohio
Richmond, Ind.
#Riverside, Calif.
#Safety Harbor, Fla.
#St. Petersburg, Fla.
San Antonio, Texas
San Bernardino, Calif.
*San Francisco, Calif.
Sanford, N.C.
*Shirley, Mass.
*Spartanburg, S.C.
#Springdale, Ark.
Takoma Park, Md.
Tempe, Ariz.
Thornton, Colo.
*Tucson, Ariz.
#West Palm Beach, Fla.
Wichita, Kan.
#York, Pa.
#Yorkville, Ill.
*Yuma, Ariz.

* Three-time honoree

Two-time honoree

2009 Playful City USA Communities by State:

12: Florida

9: Arizona, California

6: Texas

5: North Carolina

4: Colorado, Indiana, Louisiana, Maryland

3: Illinois, Ohio, Washington

2: Alabama, Hawaii, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Wyoming

1: Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Carolina

Applications for 2010 Playful City USA recognition will be available beginning in the fall of 2009.

The KaBOOM! National Campaign for Play, including the Playful City USA program, is made possible via the support of the Omidyar Network.

About KaBOOM!:

KaBOOM! is a national non-profit organization that envisions a great place to play within walking distance of every child in America. Since 1995, KaBOOM! has used its innovative community-build model to bring together business and community interests to construct more than 1,600 new playgrounds, skateparks, sports fields and ice rinks across North America. KaBOOM! also offers a variety of resources, including an online community, free online trainings, grants, publications and the KaBOOM! National Campaign for Play, which includes Playful City USA and Playmakers – a national network of individual advocates for play. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., KaBOOM! also has offices in Chicago and San Mateo, Calif. For more information, visit www.kaboom.org.

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