

For Immediate Release

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2022 Legacy of Play Contest Awards Two Kiwanis Clubs \$25,000 to Support Inclusive Play

Kiwanis Clubs in Albert Lea, Minn., and Clermont, Fla., Bring Play to All Abilities

Delano, Minn. (Oct. 18, 2022) — Children of all abilities in Minnesota and Florida will soon have all-inclusive playgrounds at parks in their communities to play on thanks to their local Kiwanis clubs. The Albert Lea Noon Kiwanis Club in Albert Lea, Minn., and the Kiwanis Club of South Lake in Clermont, Fla., are co-winners of the ninth annual Legacy of Play contest, sponsored by Kiwanis International and Landscape Structures Inc. Each Kiwanis club will receive US\$25,000 in inclusive playground equipment.

“Oh wow!” exclaimed Sarah Stultz, member of the Albert Lea Noon Kiwanis Club, after learning her club was named a winner. “Our club is celebrating its 100th anniversary next week so this will be a great addition to that celebration. Thank you so much!”

Albert Lea, Minn., about 90-miles south of the Twin Cities, is home to nearly 20,000 people. And while the city has many great parks and playgrounds, none provided children of all abilities a place to play together. After learning of a parent group working to bring an inclusive playground to their community, the Albert Lea Noon Kiwanis Club committed to helping. The vision for the inclusive playground is for children of all abilities to play side-by-side with their peers, deliver a rich, sensory environment that encourages children to grow and learn at their own pace, and allow everyone to access every point of the space.

“Oh wow! Thank you. Wow that is awesome!” laughed Mike Henleben, member of the Kiwanis Club of South Lake. “I can’t wait to bring this news to the club. And the community; they’ve been Facebooking me asking ‘Did we win? Did we win?’”

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“This is so great,” added Cheryl Henleben, Kiwanis member and submitter of the application. “Getting the first big funder is the hardest.”

The City of Clermont, Fla., a community just 22-miles west of Orlando, is known for being home to the United States Triathlon National Training Center. With the city motto being “Choice of Champions,” the Kiwanis Club of South Lake felt they needed to help children of all abilities feel like champions on the playground with an inclusive playground, which had been lacking in the community. Kiwanis and community members envision children of all abilities and their families easily accessing the playground as well as freestanding playground components like the We-Go-Round®, plus there will be activities that enhance sensory, cognitive, motor, social and emotional skills through sensory play panels and Rhapsody® Outdoor Musical Instruments.

Both clubs saw an outpouring of community support for the projects from the beginning, but particularly when it came time for the public vote on Facebook. Additionally, both clubs are working closely with the City of Albert Lea and City of Clermont as well as have other strong partnerships with community organizations to ensure that the inclusive playground projects are installed and ready for children by 2024.

“On behalf of Landscape Structures, I would like to congratulate the Albert Lea Noon Kiwanis Club and the Kiwanis Club of South Lake on co-winning the Legacy of Play contest,” said Pat Faust, president of Landscape Structures. Landscape Structures is a leading manufacturer of playground equipment and works with communities of all sizes to develop play spaces for adults and children of all abilities. “These two clubs brought forth some incredible projects, and we’re honored to award both clubs US\$25,000 and help them bring inclusivity to communities in Minnesota and Florida. We are thankful for the clubs’ commitments to their community, inclusion and play. We look forward to working together with Kiwanis members and the community of Albert Lea and Clermont to bring life to these inclusive playgrounds.”

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Elizabeth Warren, director of programs and partnerships at Kiwanis International, was thrilled to see so many strong entries for this year's contest.

“The judges looked at Kiwanis club involvement for each project, among other things,” Warren said. “We had a high level of participation, and it shows that clubs want to roll up their sleeves to improve communities.”

This year marks the ninth year of the contest sponsored by Kiwanis and Landscape Structures. The contest's goal is to encourage Kiwanis clubs to bring play and playgrounds to their communities, providing a legacy of play for future generations.

Clubs that entered the contest but did not win the US\$25,000 in playground equipment will receive a complimentary ReviWheel™ Spinner, ReviWhirl™ Spinner or ReviRock™ Bouncer, all of which were designed with inclusion in mind, if they continue their playground plans with Landscape Structures.

To find a Kiwanis club near you, go to kiwanis.org/findaclub.

About Landscape Structures Inc.

Since 1971, Landscape Structures Inc. has been the leading manufacturer of commercial playground equipment in the world. Our employee-owned company designs community and school playgrounds that encourage kids of all ages and abilities to learn persistence, leadership, competition, bravery, support and empathy through play. We push the limits—of design, inclusion, play—to help kids realize there is no limit to what they can do today and in the future. For a better tomorrow, we play today. To bring a Landscape Structures playground to your community, visit playlsi.com.

About Kiwanis International

Founded in 1915, Kiwanis International is a global organization of clubs and members dedicated to serving the children of the world. Kiwanis and its family of clubs, including Circle K International for

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university students, Key Club for high school students, Builders Club for middle school students, Kiwanis Kids for elementary school students and Aktion Club for adults living with disabilities, annually dedicate more than 18 million hours and raise more than \$100 million to strengthen communities and serve children. Nearly 552,000 adult and youth members in more than 80 nations and geographic areas comprise the Kiwanis International family. For more information about Kiwanis International, visit www.kiwanis.org.