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<http://expressmilwaukee.com/article-19930-issue-of-the-week-wa.html>

Heroes of the Week: Volunteers, Organizations Behind Westlawn Playground

On Sept. 29, KaBOOM!, Humana and the Humana Foundation, as well as the Westlawn Resident Council, the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee and more than 200 community volunteers came together to build a multi-generational playground in Milwaukee's Westlawn neighborhood (5480 N. 67th St.). Previously, Westlawn did not have a playground of its own or any publicly accessible playgrounds nearby.

KaBOOM!, a national nonprofit dedicated to saving play, seeks to help playground deserts like the Westlawn area and is partnering with Humana and the Humana Foundation to construct more than 50 multi-generational playgrounds across the United States within the next four years. Once the Housing Authority and Westlawn Resident Council were awarded the playground, a "design day" was held Aug. 8 for children to draw and share their dream playgrounds and local community members to provide input on the adult-oriented components of the site. These fantastic thoughts were incorporated into the playground, which was built in less than eight hours and measures 2,500 square feet. Mayor Tom Barrett attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

"We are not just building a playground, we are building a community," says Paul Williams, communications coordinator with the Housing Authority. "This project has been a very powerful tool for building positive, lasting relationships that will make the community stronger."

Though the playground will be maintained through a joint effort of the Westlawn residents and Housing Authority staff, monetary donations are needed to help defray the side costs of the playground build. For those who would like to donate, please contact Paul Williams at 414-224-0528 or paul.williams@hacm.org. To learn more about any of the organizations listed above or the project itself, please visit their websites at www.hacm.org, www.kaboom.org, www.humana.com, or www.humanafoundation.org.