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**New York Junior League to Restore Columbus Park for 33rd Annual Playground Improvement Project**

*Park renovation will invest more than $90,000 alongside trained volunteer teams to restore much-loved community space*

New York, New York (February 9, 2024) - The [**New York Junior League (NYJL)**](http://www.nyjl.org) is pleased to announce that its [**Playground Improvement Project**](http://nyjl.org/pip) program has selected [**Columbus Park**](https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/columbus-park-m015/)as the site of its 2024 revitalization project in partnership with the [**New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks)**](https://www.nycgovparks.org/). This spring, the Playground Improvement Project program will lead NYJL and community volunteers in painting, landscaping, and restoring one of the City’s oldest parks.

The 2024 project will mark the Playground Improvement Project’s 33rd restoration. Since 1991, the NYJL’s Playground Improvement Project has partnered with NYC Parks to plan and execute a yearly large-scale park or playground improvement project in Manhattan, creating safe and beautiful play spaces for the greater New York City community to enjoy. Public green spaces are vital to improving physical and mental health while strengthening communities. By offering free spaces to exercise and interact, well-tended parks improve lifetime wellbeing, provide healthy and accessible opportunities for foundational childhood growth, and foster close-knit communities.

“We are thrilled to undertake this restoration of one of the oldest and most important parks to the Lower Manhattan community,” said NYJL President Serra Eken. “By matching the strength of our trained volunteers with an investment of approximately $90,000, we can revitalize this much-loved park for all to enjoy and expand public access to the many benefits green spaces have to offer.”

“The New York Junior League's Playground Improvement Project stands as a remarkable initiative that has helped to preserve and enhance cherished play areas in Manhattan. This year, we're thrilled that Columbus Park, one of the city's oldest parks, will get new life due to this vital program," said NYC Parks Commissioner Sue Donoghue. "Under this administration we’ve launched a strategic initiative to engage a record number of New Yorkers to care for parks, and we’re so grateful to all the volunteers whose unwavering dedication ensures the vitality of our parks throughout the five boroughs. The New York Junior League's steadfast commitment to nurturing New York City's green spaces resonates citywide, and we’re extremely grateful for its partnership."

Columbus Park is one of New York City’s first major urban parks. Previously known as Mulberry Bend Park, Five Points Park, and Paradise Park, it has been the heart of one of the oldest residential areas in Manhattan and a space enjoyed by generations of immigrants newly arrived to the City. When it opened in 1897, thanks to the support of urban reformers, the park transformed the tenement neighborhood around it — proving the positive impact access to sunlight and nature has on the community.

To learn more about the New York Junior League’s Playground Improvement Project and how to volunteer, email [pip@nyjl.org](mailto:pip@nyjl.org) or visit [nyjl.org/pip](http://www.nyjl.org/pip).

**About the New York Junior League**

Since 1901, the New York Junior League (NYJL) has responded to New York City’s most pressing socioeconomic challenges. Powered by 2,500 women volunteers, the NYJL works with more than 60 community-based organizations to advance children’s social-emotional learning and to provide life skills programs to youth and adults who are navigating periods of difficult transition. Bringing their diverse experiences and talents, trained NYJL volunteers engage women and children in health, education, and arts workshops specially customized to their needs. The NYJL advocates with state and city government for women- and children-centered policies and develops volunteers’ leadership skills for service in the NYJL and on other nonprofit boards, all while cultivating a community that reinforces women’s personal relationships and collective power as drivers of positive change. The NYJL also responds to community partners’ requests for immediate support and invests funds and volunteers’ time in restoring public parks and community spaces to create welcoming environments conducive to fitness, health, recreation, and socialization.

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