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Tony Hawk Foundation and Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation
Celebrate “International Go Skateboarding Day” Weekend, June 21-23rd
“Built to Play” Skatepark Grantees host celebratory events, skateboard pro demos, clinics and more!

Detroit, MI (June 18, 2019) – The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation (RCWJRF) and Tony Hawk Foundation (THF) are celebrating “International Go Skateboarding Day” this Friday, June 21 and continuing the festivities through the weekend with a variety of skatepark events and activities hosted by their *Built to Play*-skatepark grantees and partners throughout Southeast Michigan.

Since 2018, more than seven skatepark projects in the region have received matching grants of up to \$250,000 through the *Built to Play* initiative, which was developed by RCWJRF in partnership with THF to help support and accelerate the development of free, public skateparks in low-income communities.

“If we want our children to be more active in our communities, they need more safe and accessible places to play. Skateparks are a great solution and they’re what kids are asking for in our region,” said Jim Boyle, vice president of programs & communications, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation.

“The *Built to Play* skatepark grants offer a great opportunity for communities looking to provide recreational alternatives for their youth. Skateparks are a safe place for all ages to exercise, socialize, and pursue a healthy lifestyle,” said Trevor Staples, Built to Play Skatepark Manager with the Tony Hawk Foundation. “The funding from RCWJRF greatly shortens the time it takes to develop a public skatepark, while the experience of THF ensures that these public skateparks will be of the highest quality and serve the communities for decades to come.”

Kids and families are invited to attend the following events and activities:

Friday, June 21st

- ***Ypsilanti Township Skatepark Groundbreaking Ceremony*** (10am, Community Center Park at the corner of E. Clark Rd. and Midway) Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation, Ypsilanti Township, THF and RCWJRF representatives will participate in a ceremony marking the start of the design & build phase of the new skatepark. **(2018 Built to Play grantee)**
- ***Chandler Park Skate Jam & Fundraiser Kickoff*** (5-8pm, 12600 Chandler Park Dr., Detroit, MI 48215)
The Chandler Park Conservancy is celebrating with a fundraiser and skate jam for skaters of all ages to enjoy food and music while they skateboard, roller skate or inline skate throughout the park. **(2019 Built to Play grantee)**

Saturday, June 22nd

- ***Ferndale’s Geary Park Cleanup with Skate Park Respect*** (8-10am, 1198 Earle Blvd., Ferndale, MI 48220)
Ferndale Parks & Recreation and Skate Park Respect is hosting a park clean-up and preview of the soon-to-open skatepark. Volunteers will be entered into a raffle for prizes. **(2018 Built to Play grantee)**
- ***Detroit’s Riverside Park Skatepark Grand Opening*** (10am-12:30pm, 3621 W. Jefferson, Detroit, MI 48216)
The City of Detroit Parks & Recreation is hosting a grand opening celebration with food, music and giveaways. Activities also include skateboard clinics and professional skateboard demonstrations by Andy MacDonald, Alec Beck, Ron Allen, John Kelly, and Janthavy Norton. A formal ribbon-cutting with the City of Detroit, THF and RCWJRF representatives will take place at 11am. Open skating starts at 12:30pm. **(2018 Built to Play grantee)**

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Sunday, June 23rd

- **Ann Arbor Skatepark's 5-year Anniversary Celebration** (11am-4pm, 350 N. Maple Rd., Ann Arbor, Michigan)
Friends of the Ann Arbor Skatepark are celebrating the park's 5th birthday with "Light Up the Park." Presented by Dug & Linh Song, the event will help raise funds for park lights. Activities include an "All Girls Skate" from 9-11am and demos by Andy MacDonald, Alec Beck, Ron Allen, Gabby Rataiczack, John Kelly and Janthavy Norton.
(2011 THF grantee)

The Tony Hawk Foundation will open the next round of *Built to Play* skatepark grants in the fall of 2019. To-date *Built to Play* skatepark grants have been provided to the following communities in Southeast Michigan: Detroit (Riverside Park); Ferndale (Geary Park); Port Huron (Optimist Park); Ypsilanti (Community Center Park); Detroit (Chandler Park); Detroit (Ride It Sculpture Park); and Wyandotte (Memorial Park).

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Tony Hawk Foundation

A charitable, non-profit organization, the Tony Hawk Foundation was established in 2002 by its namesake, professional skateboarder Tony Hawk. THF promotes and provides advocacy training and funds for high-quality public skateparks in low-income areas throughout the United States that promote healthy, active lifestyles, and to International programs that enrich the lives of youth through skateboarding.

Domestically, the Foundation's Skatepark Grant programs have awarded over \$9-million to 623 communities in all 50 States, including \$3-million through its Built to Play Skatepark Program in partnership with the [Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation](#). THF focuses on working with local officials and grassroots, community-based organizations that plan to hire designers and contractors with strong experience designing and building skateparks.

The Foundation's International Program has provided technical support to skatepark projects on every continent and awarded \$150,000 to assist youth through the [Skateistan](#) educational programs in Afghanistan, Cambodia, and South Africa (www.skateistan.org).

The Tony Hawk Foundation was established by a gift from Tony Hawk. Its directors raise additional funds through events, donations, and continuing contributions from Tony and other entities. For more information, visit the Foundation's Web site at www.tonyhawkfoundation.org. You can also visit [THF on facebook](#) and [Instagram @tonyhawkfoundation](#), and on [Twitter @THF](#).

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation is a grantmaking organization dedicated primarily to sustained investment in the quality of life of the people of Southeast Michigan and Western New York. The two areas reflect Ralph C. Wilson, Jr.'s devotion to his hometown of Detroit and greater Buffalo, home of his Buffalo Bills franchise. Prior to his passing in 2014, Mr. Wilson requested that a significant share of his estate be used to continue a life-long generosity of spirit by funding the Foundation that bears his name. The Foundation has a grantmaking capacity of \$1.2 billion over a 20-year period, which expires January 8, 2035. This structure is consistent with Mr. Wilson's desire for the Foundation's impact to be immediate, substantial, measurable and overseen by those who knew him best. For more information visit RCWJRF.org. You can also visit [RCWJRF on Facebook](#) and [Instagram @RCWJRF](#), and on [Twitter @RCWJRF](#).

Built to Play

In 2018, the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation launched the \$10 million-Built to Play initiative designed to give children and youth across Western New York and Southeast Michigan more opportunities for free play through the creation of new, interactive public play spaces. The Foundation partnered with Tony Hawk Foundation (THF), an organization focused on promoting high-quality, public skateparks in low-income areas throughout the U.S., and KaBOOM!, a national nonprofit dedicated to giving all kids great, safe places to play, to work with communities across its two regions of focus on the development of various uniquely designed spaces. More information at RWBuilttoPlay.org.