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**KaBOOM! and Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation Renew Partnership  
to Bring Play to More Communities in Need**

Building upon the initial *Built to Play* Initiative, another \$1 million is now available across Western New York and Southeast Michigan for creative ideas that incorporate play into everyday life in unexpected places

WASHINGTON, D.C. (January 14, 2019) – Today, [KaBOOM!](#), the national non-profit dedicated to giving all kids the childhood they deserve through great, safe places to play, renewed a partnership with the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation through its *Built to Play* initiative and will launch the second [Play Everywhere Challenge](#). The Challenge will award organizations a total of \$1 million across Western New York and Southeast Michigan to create lasting, scalable design installations that provide more opportunities to play for the kids who need it most.

This year's Play Everywhere Challenge will build upon the initial endeavor bringing amazing places to play for thousands of kids. Last year, 23 organizations created innovative playspaces that will make it easier for families to incorporate play into their daily lives. Because there is still a play deficit in both regions, and a surplus of creative play design ideas, the partners are returning to Western New York and Southeast Michigan to ensure organizations can create even more opportunities for kids to get the play they need to thrive. The Challenge is a call for innovative design submissions that reimagine where and how play can happen in communities, from sidewalks and vacant lots to bus stops, open streets and beyond.

Play is essential to kids' healthy development, and kids are the future of our communities. Play is necessary for developing critical life skills, including how to solve problems, build relationships and think creatively. Unfortunately, many kids across the U.S., especially in underserved communities, do not have the opportunity to play every day. Families are hard-pressed for time, and play often falls to the bottom of a long list of things to do. Additionally, convenient playspaces that fit into an existing daily routine can be difficult to find. The projects implemented through the Play Everywhere Challenge will help make play the easy choice for families and support kids in getting the physical activity they need to thrive.

"When kids have opportunities to play, they grow up happier, healthier and ready for life," said James Siegal, CEO of KaBOOM!. "Together with the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, we will help ensure that kids in areas that lack great, safe places to play are not overlooked. It is our priority to help all kids get the childhood they deserve, filled with creative and active play, and we are grateful to the Foundation for their commitment and leadership in this area."

The Play Everywhere Challenge is part of a broader effort led by the *Built to Play* initiative intended to give kids in Western New York and Southeast Michigan more opportunities for free play. Through the Play Everywhere Challenge, the Built to Play initiative will create more than 20 new playspaces for kids that reach thousands of kids in Western New York and Southeast Michigan.

"We are thrilled to partner with KaBOOM! again as part of our *Built to Play* initiative and bring more places to play in the regions we deeply care about," said Jim Boyle, vice-president of programs & communications, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation. "The creative, innovative play ideas from the first Challenge inspired us and we are excited to see the new projects come to life in Western New York and Southeast Michigan to support the kids who need it most."

Applications are open now through March 22, 2019. Applicants can be government entities, non-profits or individuals/groups who have partnered with them. We invite applicants from the following regions to participate: Southeast Michigan – Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, Livingston, Monroe and St. Clair counties; and Western New York – Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, Monroe and Wyoming counties. [Learn more about the Play Everywhere Challenge, including a gallery of winning ideas from cities across the U.S.](#)

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### **About the 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 www.rcwjrf.org](http://www.rcwjrf.org).

### **About KaBOOM!**

KaBOOM! is the national non-profit dedicated to giving all kids – especially those living in poverty – the childhood they deserve through great, safe places to play. KaBOOM! inspires communities to make play the easy choice and works to drive the national discussion about the importance of PLAYces. KaBOOM! has collaborated with partners to build or restore more than 17,000 playspaces, engaged more than 1.5 million volunteers and served over 9 million kids. To learn why play matters for all kids, visit [kaboom.org](http://kaboom.org) and join the conversation at [twitter.com/kaboom](https://twitter.com/kaboom), [facebook.com/kaboom](https://facebook.com/kaboom), and [instagram.com/kaboom](https://instagram.com/kaboom). #playmatters #PLAYceforKids