



# Anderson Park District

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Anderson Park District**

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## **Anderson Parks Awarded Grant for Outdoor Classroom**

The Anderson Park District was awarded a \$73,000 grant for the MariMac Outdoor Classroom project at W. M. Johnson Hills Park. The grant was submitted through the twenty-fifth round of the NatureWorks grant program, administered by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

The MariMac Outdoor Classroom project is an experiential learning space where children and adults can connect with nature through active and passive activities. The facility will include amphitheater seating for 40-50 people, a shelter, fire pit, utility upgrades and accessible walkways. Nature and environmental education elements will feature native plant species of southwest Ohio, native animal species and habitats, watersheds and watershed stewardship, and a rain garden.

The park district has hosted nature programs and scout group campouts in this space for several years. Science teachers from both Anderson and Turpin High Schools actively visit W. M. Johnson Hills Park for astronomy class and club activities including star parties, eclipse viewing parties and other astronomy program curriculum.

Construction for the MariMac Outdoor Classroom is planned for 2019. The estimated cost of the project is \$232,200. Additional funding is being raised by the Anderson Foundation for Parks & Recreation (“Foundation for Parks”), an independent 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to fundraising for the Anderson Park District. The Foundation for Parks has pledged \$10,000 towards the Outdoor Classroom project. To get involved with this effort, please visit: [FoundationForParks.org](http://FoundationForParks.org).

W. M. Johnson Hills Park was acquired from the estate of Marian and Mack Johnson, where their house, “MariMac Manor”, stands today. In 1937, William McNeilan (“Mack”) Johnson presented the beautiful home as a wedding gift to his bride, Marian. The MariMac Outdoor Classroom will be constructed adjacent to MariMac Manor, where a pool and pool shelter formerly existed.

For additional information, call park district Executive Director, Ken Kushner, at (513) 388-2492.