



## Healing Through Horses

Chastain Park is a well-known favorite in Atlanta! However, few people know about its therapeutic services. Chastain Horse Park (CHP) has been a 501c3 nonprofit for 22 years and offers adaptive and therapeutic horsemanship services that improve physical, cognitive and emotional wellbeing.

Executive Director Trish Gross says, "Many of the individuals we serve have a life-long disability." There are exceptions. A 10-year-old treated for cancer successfully completed therapy with CHP and now attends a standard school program. Physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech-language pathology are provided for individuals ages 2 and up. "The physical and cognitive connection between humans and horses builds trust and acceptance," Gross shares. "And people want to come! They love being here in the city of Atlanta in this amazing park setting to have therapy."

CHP partners with agencies like the Shepard Center, Atlanta Public Schools and Wellspring Living and assists victims of

trauma, as well as those with varying disabilities. Campers who attend Coan Park's Camp Best Friends also enjoy the benefits of horse therapy.

The impact Chastain Horse Park's therapeutic services is making is tremendous! The organization currently serves 32 of Atlanta's 41 zip codes, with 47% of participants living in at-risk-communities where the median income is less than \$29,000. Over the years, CHP has awarded more than \$1M in subsidies and scholarships to Atlantans.

The organization broke ground on its new Therapeutic Horsemanship Center August 24. The \$9M investment is the result of its "Healing Through Horses" Capital Campaign. Those attending included the City of Atlanta, the Department of Parks and Recreation, generous donors and guests.

To find out more, call 404.252-4244. To volunteer, email [volunteer@chastainpark.org](mailto:volunteer@chastainpark.org). No horse experience required.



# A Dedication to “Hammerin’ Hank” Aaron



On August 4, City of Atlanta officials, the Aaron family, and community members gathered at Adams Park to celebrate the life of baseball legend, Henry Louis Aaron.

“Henry “Hammerin’ Hank” Aaron was born in Alabama, but he is an Atlanta “favorite son.” So, it is fitting that this trailblazing icon’s bust and new mural have a home here in Adams Park,” said Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens.

Mrs. Billye Aaron still resides in the Adams Park area, where she and her husband, Hank, spent their years until his death January 22, 2021. He was 86. “He [Hank Aaron] sought to better the life of young kids,” Mrs. Aaron shared.

During the Major League Baseball player’s pursuit to beat Babe Ruth’s home-run record, the Aaron family encountered death threats. However, it didn’t stop his 715th grand slam! Hank’s experiences with Jim Crow laws and blatant racism eventually led to a life of activism that began during the Civil Rights Movement.

Mrs. Aaron still carries on the Baseball Hall of Famer’s legacy through the Hank Aaron Chasing the Dream Foundation, providing scholarships to underprivileged youth across the nation. Some attended the celebration.

## Meet the Muralist: Aziza Andre

“It’s something I genuinely enjoy and have a passion for. I feel like I’m giving back to the community, and they encourage me,” shares Aziza Andre’.

[Muralist Aziza Andre](#) is the creative inspiration behind the now, unveiled mural at Adams Park. The building that sits adjacent to “Hammerin’ Hank” Aaron’s bust is filled with beautiful images of Aaron, his baseball achievements, and a special portrait featuring the late MLB legend and his wife, Billye.

“I just hope that people enjoy it; honestly, I feel like it’s been a really challenging time during the pandemic. These are small ways for me, as an artist, to give back,” Aziza reveals.

Aziza also [gives thanks to her mural assistants](#) for their hard work. Check out more art work from the muralist: [Aziza Andre Art](#).





# MEET COMMISSIONER JUSTIN CUTLER

The Department of Parks and Recreation welcomes Commissioner Justin Cutler! His appointment officially began August 1. Cutler is a Certified Parks & Recreation Executive (CPRE) by the National Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA) with over 20 years of experience.

Prior to joining the City of Atlanta, he served as the Director of Recreation Services for the City of Seattle where he worked to improve parks and recreation opportunities for historically underserved communities through partnerships with community and non-profit organizations.

“Justin is a parks pro who shares our vision of the role that parks and recreation plays in creating a more equitable city,” said Mayor Andre Dickens. “As a result of Atlanta voters approving this year’s bond referenda, he will oversee

the implementation of more than \$100 million in funds for parks and recreation expansion and improvements, in addition to significant DPR investments from the FY23 budget.”

Originally from Issaquah, Washington, Cutler received a Bachelor of Arts in Recreation and Leisure Studies from Washington State University and later obtained a Master’s in Public Administration from Portland State University Hatfield School of Government.

“Atlanta is a city on the move, and after meeting with Mayor Dickens and his team, I could not be more thrilled to join Atlantans in building an equitable parks and recreation system that serves all our neighbors and communities!” Commissioner Cutler exclaimed. Commissioner Cutler and his wife are the proud parents of two children ages 7 and 11.



# TEENS AND GREEN CAREERS

Recently, our partners at Trees Atlanta celebrated two groundbreaking events. The organization hosted its first-ever Career Fair for Youth Tree Team members and graduation ceremony. This team of high school-aged teens (13-18) are getting a jump start on networking for internships and paid job opportunities.

According to Arboricultural Manager Jasen Johns, the City of Atlanta’s Department of Parks and Recreation funds 10 positions for Trees Atlanta’s Youth Tree Team to learn and gain hands-on experience in forestry, landscape design, horticulture, and arboriculture.

Trees Atlanta, Park Pride, Georgia Power, WorkSource Atlanta, and other green youth employment programs were amazed by the group’s skill level and interest in what Trees Atlanta calls “Green Collar” professionals.

In July, Trees Atlanta held a commencement ceremony with a record number of 48 graduates.



# THE CHAMPS ARE HERE!



Champions: Pittman Black



Runner Up: Best of the Best

Congratulations to our 2022 Summer Teen League Basketball champions, team Pittman Black. We would also like to congratulate our runner up, team Best of the Best. Special thanks to our Teen Program Director, Nicholas Clark, Teen Leaders Academy staff and everyone who came out to support.

## Upcoming Events

### Dolphins Swim Team

Registration Opens:  
September 1 (ongoing)  
Season Begins: September 15  
Ages: 6-18  
Register: Onsite at C.T. Martin Natatorium or online  
[www.atlantaga.gov/iparcs](http://www.atlantaga.gov/iparcs)

### Prime Time Senior Program

Registration: Ongoing  
Season Begins: September 6  
Register: [www.atlantaga.gov/iparcs](http://www.atlantaga.gov/iparcs)

### TOT Flag Football

Registration Now Open  
Season Begins: September 7  
Ages: 5-12  
Register: Rec Centers or  
[www.atlantaga.gov/iparcs](http://www.atlantaga.gov/iparcs)

### Afterschool Program and Atlanta Teen Leaders Academy

Registration: Ongoing  
Schedule: M-F, 2:30-7:30 p.m.  
Ages: 5-12 & 13-18  
Register: Rec Centers or online  
[www.atlantaga.gov/iparcs](http://www.atlantaga.gov/iparcs)

### Youth Cheer and Football

Registration: Ongoing  
Season Began: August 26  
Ages: 5-12  
Register: Rec Centers or online  
[www.atlantaga.gov/iparcs](http://www.atlantaga.gov/iparcs)



## Fall Programs are Underway

After a successful summer, the Department of Parks and Recreation is excited to announce the return of fall programming. Our afterschool program for students ages 5 -12 and teens ages 13-18 are underway, and registration is ongoing. The programs feature homework assistance and fun activities along with a snack and hot meal. Our Prime Time Senior program begins September 6. There are activities galore including field trips, bingo, line dancing, quilting and more! Sign up for one of our programs today!

# WE WISH FOR FISH



Department of Parks and Recreation has partnered with Georgia Department of Natural Resources for new recreational fishing programs in City of Atlanta parks. Georgia DNRs Gateway to Fishing programming seeks to stock public waters with native game fish to bring fishing close to home for all Georgians. Additionally, Georgia DNR provides both fishing gear and instruction at kid's fishing events, fishing classes, and family fishing days to improve community access. To kick off this partnership, DPR representatives Bridget Johnson, Jasen Johns, and Shanesha Blount met with Georgia DNR program coordinator Michael Sellers to visit lakes in Piedmont Park, Adams Park, Chastain Park, Loring Heights Park, Falling Waters, and Jimmy Carter Presidential Library & Museum. These sites were assessed for existing fish populations, fish stocking capacities, habitat enhancements, and fishing access.

*Our thanks to Arboricultural Manager, Jasen Johns for contributing this article.*



Commissioner Justin Cutler & DNRs Michael Sellers



# 21 for 21

Recently, the PGA Tour reached out to Golf Services General Manager, Jeff King to film footage of popular Atlanta rapper 21 Savage at City of Atlanta's Top Holmes Memorial Golf Course. Seems the British-born star has taken an interest in the game since visiting Top Golf. "It was the first time he's ever swung a club on a real golf course," said Jeff King. "He was super nice and extremely humble: the coolest celebrity I've ever met!" With some assistance and a few tips from King, 21 Savage was able to successfully play 3 holes in 21 strokes. Click here to view the video:

<https://bit.ly/3RxDHQB>





# More of Aziza Andre's Hank Aaron Mural



## Prime Time Seniors programming is back and FREE!

Programming will begin on Tuesday, September 6.  
REGISTER NOW via [www.atlantaga.gov/iPARCS](http://www.atlantaga.gov/iPARCS)  
or visit any participating recreation center.

## CONTACT

If you have a story or topic that you'd like us to consider, email us at [informdpr@atlantaga.gov](mailto:informdpr@atlantaga.gov).

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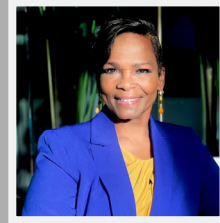
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## EDITOR'S NOTE

In this month's issue of Inform, we are excited to share the latest updates. To begin, the Department of Parks and Recreation is pleased to welcome Commissioner Justin Cutler to the team. He brings a wealth of experience and fresh new ideas for public engagement to the organization. Learn more about the commissioner on p. 3. A new bust and mural of legendary hall of famer, Hank Aaron was recently installed at Adams Park. Chastain Horse Park is changing lives through its Healing Through Horses program. Our summer basketball league was a great success. Check out the pictures of this year's winners inside. Finally, if you enjoy fishing, you'll be excited to read about the latest initiative to restock ponds in City of Atlanta Parks. All this and more in this month's issue. Enjoy!

Yolanda Harris

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