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**Manchester Receives $35,000 Grant to Support**

**Local Out-of-School Time Program**

**July 30, 2016** –Manchester Parks & Recreation, in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), has received a $35,000 grant to support its out-of-school time healthy food access and nutritional literacy programs. The gift is part of a $2.5 million grant NRPA received from the Walmart Foundation to support out-of-school time programs in 80 park and recreation agencies. The purpose of the grant is to:

         Increase the number of healthy meals children in low-income communities receive through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) during out-of-school times;

         Provide evidence-based, age-appropriate nutrition literacy to children that create behavior change by teaching the importance of healthy eating;

         Implement nutrition and physical activity standards that increase access to healthier foods and increase opportunities for physical activity; and

         Promote meal and program efficiencies that will reduce costs, maximize existing resources, decrease food waste, and lead to more sustainable meal programs.

Manchester’s grant will help increase access to healthy foods and improve opportunities for physical activity in their Fun In The Sun program.  They will also receive additional support for meals provided through USDA afterschool and summer feeding programs as well as nutritional literacy materials to help ensure life-long healthy habits for Manchester’s youth.

This grant supports NRPA’s campaign—Commit to Health—which encourages the implementation and evaluation of Healthy Eating, Physical Activity (HEPA) standards in park and recreation sites across the country. NRPA’s goal is to have at least 2,000 participating sites in five years.  Within the first two-years of the program, 991 sites have pledged to Commit to Health and over 108,000 children now have improved access to healthy foods and increased opportunities for physical activity.

According to Share our Strength’s No Kid Hungry Campaign, one in five children in America struggles with hunger. Over 21 million low-income children receive free or reduced meals during the school year to help them meet their daily nutrition needs, but only 3 million of these children are getting these meals during the summer.  During summer months, these children may not have access to quality and healthy food to help them grow—making Manchester Parks & Recreation’s work during out-of-school times that much more critical.

“Thanks to a successful two years with Commit to Health and the Walmart Foundation, over 108,000 children now have improved access to healthy foods and physical activity,” said Barbara Tulipane, President and CEO of NPRA. “Parks and recreation are proving their critical role in the health of their communities and we can’t wait to see the impact this year’s grants will have on fostering life-long healthy habits in children across the country.”

“We are excited to partner with the NRPA and the Walmart Foundation and are so excited to receive this grant.”, said Janet Horvath, Recreation and Enterprise Manager for the City.  “We are always looking for fun and creative ways to educate, inform and help our children understand the benefits of making healthy food choices and to participate in physical activity every day.  This grant is a huge help in reaching for the sky, to better the lives of Manchester families and all residents through recreation.”

**About National Recreation and Park Association**

The National Recreation and Park Associationis a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of more than 50,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit [www.NRPA.org](http://www.nrpa.org/). For digital access to NRPA’s flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit [www.parksandrecreation.org](http://www.parksandrecreation.org/).