



A Newsletter from The Douglas Center :: AUTUMN 2016

A Grand Opening of High Fives the Adapted Outdoor Sports Recreation Program

The Douglas Center hosted the grand opening of their *High Fives* Adapted Outdoor Sports Recreation Program for individuals with special needs. The Douglas Center transformed an area of unused waste land into a productive and cutting edge adapted physical recreation program designed to deliver proven benefits for individuals with special needs.



The transformation of the empty space into a program designed to improve the overall health of individuals living with disabilities is an example of what can be done through collaboration and empowerment.

Clark McCain of The Coleman Foundation began the event with the unveiling of the title sign for the *High Fives* program and the donor appreciation dedication sign. Mayor George Van Dusen of Skokie officiated the ribbon cutting ceremony. Rifath Khan, CEO of The Douglas Center spoke briefly about the purpose of the program and its goals. "The goal of the *High Fives* program is to encourage and empower our program participants living with intellectual, developmental and

physical disabilities to participate in physical activities to a greater degree," stated Rifath Khan, CEO. "The increase of physical activity participation will provide overall health benefits as well as numerous physical, psychological, cognitive benefits and an improvement of their communication skills."

Program participants have eagerly taken part in the new program. Within a short period of time, the staff has witnessed some impressive results among several participants. Lawrence who has been challenged by anger management issues now utilizes the facility regularly playing outdoors with other participants. Chris prefers isolation to social interaction;

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CLOSING SCHEDULE

Thanksgiving:	Nov. 24th & 25th
Closed for Christmas Holidays:	December 24th
Reopening:	January 2nd, 2017

MADE POSSIBLE BY GRANTS FROM

The Coleman Foundation & Field Foundation of Illinois




You are invited...
HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE
art gallery opening and gift shop
 December 7th from 1:00 – 4:00pm
Art From The Heart ❤️ **Creations**



The Douglas Center
A ray of light for individuals with special needs

Dear Friends, Supporters and Colleagues:



Rifath Khan, CEO
The Douglas Center

This summer The Douglas Center has had some very exciting accomplishments. Besides the opening of the *High Fives* Outdoor Recreation Center highlighted in our feature article, we've earned our accreditation from CARF. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) is an independent, non-profit organization focused on advancing the quality of services used in the industry for the best possible outcomes and provides accreditation at the request of health and human services providers. This inspection is especially important because it acknowledges a provider's commitment to continually improving services and serving the community.

We not only passed, but The Douglas Center was rated excellent. As part of the accreditation process, the CARF survey team interviewed current funders, parents, guardians, board members and staff of the organization. Upon completion, the organization received CARF's decision along with their findings report. During the CARF exit conference with the staff and board of The Douglas Center, CARF surveyors informed the center that they had no recommendations to give. Which means the center is in the top 3% of organizations surveyed by CARF internationally.

Since its inception, The Douglas Center has continued to earn CARF's highest rating. I would especially like to thank the staff, parents, guardians and board members for taking part in the process. With your help, we are able to continue our mission to assist adults

living with intellectual, developmental and physical disabilities in improving their independent living skills and enrichment of their quality of life. We look forward to provide continual growth and innovative ideas for special needs adults.

Your support and help is always needed and appreciated. Very recently I was asked how Douglas Center is doing financially, it's a common question these days that every social service agency is asked periodically. I was pleased to answer "The Douglas Center is financially healthy" and we are able to provide multiple programs, therapies, choices and opportunities to the participants we serve to give them life changing experiences only because of your support, with that I would like you to please consider donating any dollar amount on #Giving Tuesday, November the 29th 2016 because every dollar you give on that day will be matched a 100% by Coleman Foundation.

Please DONATE on line to THE DOUGLAS CENTER on the 29th of November 2016. We greatly appreciate your support.

High Fives Grand Opening (continued)

however, he is now choosing to play outdoors with other participants. Jennifer and Ryan also challenged by anger management issues are choosing to take part in the outdoor physical activity and have shown improvement upon returning back to work.

Special guests attending the *High Fives* grand opening included Nate Parsons of Sports Court Midwest, Tran Nguyen, Senate Aide to Senator Richard Durbin. The Douglas Center also expressed their gratitude to Home Depot-Evanston, Uline and Corky's Catering for their generous in-kind donations.

The Douglas Center *High Fives* outdoor physical recreation area has been designed with the adaptations necessary for greater participation of physical activity by our program participants living with disabilities. Thank you to Nate Parsons of Sports Court Midwest, who provided our guests with an in-depth presentation of the facility and its therapeutic benefits. This area consists of several activity zones that are designed to promote overall health-fitness benefits and increase motor skills development for all levels. Each zone is designed to promote (continued on page 3)



“...increased physical activity will provide overall health benefits as well as physical, psychological, cognitive benefits...”

– Rifath Khan

The Douglas Center Holds Speech Communication Device Evaluation Clinic

The Douglas Center recently held a clinic to evaluate several program participants for the possibility of receiving an Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AAC) device. This device enables individuals who have difficulty in communicating with words to be able to express themselves via typing or selecting pictures. Some devices speak messages resulting from the individual touching images on a touch screen.

This clinic was conducted by Tobii-Dynavox, manufacturer of AAC devices, and The Douglas Center Speech Language Pathologist, Jacob Sanders. Four participants were selected as candidates for this evaluation. Each candidate participated in a speech therapy session designed to test out several types of communication devices to

determine whether there was any improvement in communication abilities. If a device showed potential, the participant was loaned a device for a trial period to be utilized at our center and at home. After the trial period, a device would be ordered for the participant through Medicare/Medicaid.

This was an extraordinary opportunity for our participants. The Douglas Center is committed to meeting the ever-increasing needs of our participants by providing the programs and resources so urgently needed. The Douglas Center would like to thank Tobii-Dynavox for their participation and Jacob Sanders for arranging this clinic.



High Fives Program Featured on ABC7 Chicago Eyewitness News

Grand Opening (continued)

confidence building while incorporating exercise. Zone 1: Basketball; Zone 2: Mini-Tennis/ Soccer/ volleyball; Zone 3: Balance floor games (tetherball units, four square, etc. The design and equipment in each zone will accommodate a wide range of disabilities including those that are wheelchair bound.

In addition to the physical benefits derived from this program the area includes a space for improving the participant's social and independent living skills. This space consists of picnic tables, seating and outdoor grills. There are plans to further enhance the space. The Horticulture program will grow and maintain the plants and flowers. Also mosaic planters and possibly a mural will be future projects for the participants in the *Art From The Heart Creations Program*.



The *High Fives* Adapted Sports Recreation program was recently featured on ABC7Chicago Eyewitness Weekend News. The segment featured an interview with Rifath Khan, CEO, highlighting the purpose of the program and its goals.

The ABC7 Chicago "Disability Issues" feature provided an overview of the many types of physical recreation available to participants of The Douglas in the newly created sports facility. Ms. Khan shared that since the program's inauguration, The Douglas Center staff has witnessed remarkable results among many of the participants.

There is a significant disparity in the level of physical activity participation among people with disabilities in comparison to those without a disability. Approximately 56% of adults with disabilities report no leisure physical activity. The lack of physical activity among this population places them at greater risk for the chronic illnesses. Additionally, they are also at risk for secondary conditions (medical, social and/or emotional). Many of these chronic conditions (fatigue, obesity, social isolation, reconditioning, etc.) can be improved with increases of physical activity. Furthermore, the strength and stamina developed by participating in physical activity can help to maintain a higher level of independence. In addition to the overall health-fitness benefits, increasing the amount of physical activity participation provides numerous physical, psychosocial and cognitive benefits as well as the improvement of communication skills.

 View the ABC7Chicago news segment on our YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/sepwsNiMG58>



The **Douglas Center**

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OUR MISSION

The Douglas Center serves to assist adults living with intellectual, developmental and physical disabilities in improving their independent living skills and enrichment of their quality of life.

This Holiday Season Be Sure to Shop Amazon Smiles

Amazon through its **AmazonSmiles** program will donate 0.5% of a customer's purchase price to The Douglas Center at NO extra cost to you. We hope you will take the opportunity to support The Douglas Center with your eligible purchases on **AmazonSmiles** this holiday season.



CAN WE COUNT ON YOU?

TO PLEDGE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES



#GIVINGTUESDAY™

November 29th is #GivingTuesday, a global movement to kick off the giving season. We have an unique opportunity again this year, to raise twice as much. The Coleman Foundation will match donations, but **only online on the Tuesday** after Thanksgiving.

Can we count on your help to make this campaign a success?

Some ways you can help are:

- > **Give on Tuesday, November 29th, 2016**
(fill out the form at <http://tinyurl.com/qh873ff> and we will send a reminder)
- > Liking The Douglas Center on Facebook
- > Liking and sharing our weekly Facebook Post
- > Send a personal email to family and friends
- > Post on Instagram and tag #givingTuesday and #DouglasCenter

HELP SPREAD THE WORD. HAVE FUN, SHOW YOU CARE ~ SHARE.

Find out how we can help you save on manufacturing and fulfillment costs.

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