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## **Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation Puts Spotlight on Inclusion During Disability Awareness Month**

Carmel, Ind. (February 27, 2017) – As a national leader in inclusion, Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation (CCPR) encourages the community to join with them during Disability Awareness Month to celebrate inclusion through acceptance of individuals of all ages, levels and abilities.

According to the Governor’s Council for People with Disabilities, designating March as Disability Awareness Month is recognized in an effort to increase awareness and promote independence, integration and inclusion of all people with disabilities. “We are proud to promote inclusion for all individuals year-round, and Disability Awareness Month gives us the opportunity to raise awareness for this important cause,” said Michelle Yadon, CCPR inclusion supervisor.

These efforts were recognized in October during the annual meeting of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) when CCPR received the Excellence in Inclusion Award recognizing an agency or organization that has implemented the inclusive processes and practices while providing well-planned supports for inclusive participation by people with disabilities and diversity in all programs, services, and facilities.

In addition to a multitude of adaptive programming throughout the year and a commitment to hiring individuals with special needs that reflect a culture of inclusion and disability awareness, “The Roundabout Playback Troupe” is scheduled for its third annual performance March 24 and 25. The Troupe – founded at CCPR in 2015, and the only one of its kind in the Midwest -- is an inclusive playback group that includes members with and without disabilities who work together to act out scenes based on audience stories and feedback. This year’s performance, “I See You” features stories based on life experiences written and read by individuals with disabilities. The second act features The Troup acting out scenes based on audience stories and feedback. Tickets for the 6 p.m. performance can be purchased for \$5 at the Monon Community Center; an ASL interpreter will be at the March 25 show.

For more information about the program or to arrange an interview, contact Lindsay Labas at [llabas@carmelclayparks.com](mailto:llabas@carmelclayparks.com) or 317.573.4020.

### **About Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation**

Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation (CCPR) holds the Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management by the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA) in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) for parks serving populations of 75,001 to 150,000. As an accredited agency, the department serves the recreation, fitness, and nature needs of the community, manages and develops existing spaces and resources and creates a sustainable future for parks and recreation programs through a financially viable and environmentally conscious parks system. CCPR manages and maintains more than 500 park acres and numerous recreation facilities, including the Monon Community Center and The Waterpark. In addition, CCPR has partnered with Carmel Clay Schools to establish Extended School Enrichment (ESE), a before and after-school care program for K-6 students located at all eleven Carmel elementary schools. The Summer Camp Series is a component of ESE that offers 12 different summer camps accommodating children ages 5-15. For more information, visit [carmelclayparks.com](http://carmelclayparks.com)