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‘Play Ball’: Grand Opening for Murfreesboro Miracle Field

Custom-designed Facility Opens a ‘Field of Dreams’ for Special Players

Project One Four, a David Price Foundation, and City of Murfreesboro gathered for an official Grand Opening ceremony of the Murfreesboro Miracle Field at Sports*Com in McKnight Park, Saturday, May 6. The special event included three one-inning games between the new Miracle League’s first six teams.

Miracle Field is a custom-designed, special rubberized baseball field built for children and adults with special needs and accommodates wheelchairs and other assertive devices.

Fundraising for the \$3.2 million project was spearheaded by the Project One Four Foundation. Murfreesboro native and Boston Red Sox pitcher David Price donated \$300,000 at the groundbreaking ceremony in February 2016. Price, a standout pitcher for Blackman High School and Vanderbilt University, became a Cy Young Award winner in 2012 for Tampa Bay. In Tampa, he first experienced the joys of pitching in the Miracle League. Price participated with the league on Saturday mornings in Tampa and enjoyed seeing the excitement of the children and their parents. "Being a father is something I always cherished and wanted to do," says Price, noting the example of his own parents, who have been married more than 40 years and who raised three sons.

The Miracle League removes the barriers that keep children with mental and physical disabilities off the baseball field and lets them experience the joy of America’s favorite pastime. Since the main barriers for these adults arise from the natural grass fields used in conventional leagues, Miracle League’s rubberized turf fields accommodates wheelchairs and other assertive devices while helping to prevent injuries.

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“We are extremely grateful for the work of the Project One Four Foundation in partnering with the City of Murfreesboro and support from organizations such as, the Christy Houston Foundation, to bring Miracle Field to our community,” said Mayor Shane McFarland. “We encourage everyone with a heart for children and adults with physical and mental challenges to continue to join us in building this field of dreams in Murfreesboro.” Project One Four continues to engage the community for sponsorships and is also offering a Paver Program. Information is available at www.project14.org or email bonnie@project14.org.

“We are excited to be able to partner with the City of Murfreesboro on this much-needed baseball field and playground for the special needs children in our community. It will be so rewarding for not only the special needs children but also the “buddies” who will be there to help in any way they can,” said Debbie Price, David’s mom and board member of Project One Four.

Miracle Field is about more than just playing a game. The Miracle League is about making new friends, building self-esteem and being treated just like other athletes. To help the athletes, the Miracle League uses a “buddy” system – pairing each player with an able-bodied peer. The result is a bond that cannot be described. The Miracle League serves children and adults who suffer from any physical or mental disabilities, which causes them to be excluded, whether intentionally or not, from conventional Baseball leagues. For more information on the Murfreesboro Miracle League contact 615-907-2251 or MiracleLeague@murfreesborotn.gov.

“We are thrilled to proclaim “Play Ball” and officially open Murfreesboro Miracle Field. This facility is profoundly needed to ensure that athletic opportunities are provided equally for everyone,” said Angela Jackson, Director of Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation.

“Our project specifically incorporates a variety of features within the Miracle Field Complex.”

The Murfreesboro Miracle Field complex also includes a special playground. Inclusive playgrounds benefit all children from exploring the four defined areas of developmental skills when at play; Sensory, Motor, Cognitive, and Social/Emotional. Playground features include:

- The [Sway Fun® Glider](#) is a wheelchair-accessible glider.
- The [OmniSpin® spinner](#) provides upper-body support with its high back seats and encourages interactive play; easy transfer points for accessibility.
- With easy transfer points, the [Roller Table™](#) delivers tactile stimulation to help kids develop their sensory receptors.
- [Rhapsody® Outdoor Musical Instruments - Harmonious Play for All Ages and Abilities.](#) Rhapsody® Outdoor Musical Instruments encourages people of all ages and abilities to share their musical creativity.
- [ZipKrooz®](#), features playground zip lines that offer a two-way ride—kids will zip from one end to the other, and back again for nonstop fun.
- Our interactive play panels, installed at the ground level of the playground create fun while helping children learn.

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The Miracle Field itself includes a covered seating area, restroom building, and concession building. The unparalleled [PebbleFlex® safety surfacing](#) allows easy access for individuals using mobility devices. Other features include a standard baseball/softball field, an open synthetic turf area, and an inclusive playground. The complex has a main plaza with a central kugel ball water feature (the sphere is a representative of a baseball with David Price's signature) and two donor walls. Additionally, the complex includes picnic tables and benches throughout.

The project was constructed by locally-owned Trinity Builders, led by Project Manager Russ Morrow. Lose and Associates, Inc. of Nashville provided professional architectural, engineering, and design services, and the initiative was coordinated by Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Athletic Superintendent Thomas Laird.

McKnight Park is an 81-acre community park located in the northern area of Murfreesboro. In addition to Sports*Com, outdoor facilities include four youth softball fields and Star*Plex, a five-field youth/adult baseball/softball complex. For more information contact Thomas Laird, 615-907-2251 or MiracleLeague@murfreesborotn.gov.

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