Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

2025 Annual Report

Parks Foundation
of Miami-Dade

MIAMI-DADE
COUNTY

- **Table of Contents:**

- Board of Directors.....3
- Executive Summary.....6
- 2025 Highlights.....7
- Financials.....21

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Message from the President

Dear Friends,

Parks are an essential part of a healthy, vibrant and connected community. They are places where children learn to swim and play, young people discover new interests and abilities, families and neighbors come together, volunteers care for our environment, and people of every age and ability can be active, enjoy the outdoors and connect with one another.

Miami-Dade County is fortunate to have one of the nation's largest and most diverse park systems, and the Parks Foundation is proud to work alongside Miami-Dade Parks to help strengthen the programs, places and experiences it provides to our community.

In 2025, that partnership reached many areas of park life. The Foundation helped expand access to Learn2Swim lessons, joined the Zero Drownings Miami-Dade partnership, and facilitated the innovative technology behind it. We invested in programs such as Fit2Lead and Girls Got Game that support young people's physical and mental well-being, while advancing conservation and environmental stewardship throughout our park system. These efforts reflect the remarkable breadth of ways parks contribute to the health, well-being and quality of life of our residents.

Our parks also build community. Over the past year, the Foundation continued to work with partners in support of parks special events and time-honored traditions that bring residents together. We continued our support of the Independence Day celebration at Tropical Park, co-sponsored Fourth on the Fairway at Palmetto Bay Golf Course to help connect South Dade families with County parks and programs, facilitated sponsorships for the annual In the Company of Women awards, and supported other events celebrating our community, culture and parks.

The Foundation can contribute to this work in many ways—through direct support, fiscal sponsorship and partnerships that connect resources with important park programs and initiatives. During 2025, more than $600,000 in support was contributed or facilitated through the Foundation. Behind those resources are children gaining potentially lifesaving skills in the water, young people finding positive opportunities to learn and grow, thousands of trees and plants strengthening our urban canopy, and programs and events that make our parks welcoming places for all.

In 2025, our Board also took steps to strengthen the Foundation's ability to serve Miami-Dade Parks and our community. We began expanding Board membership and established a Foundation Director position focused on fundraising and strategic partnerships. We look forward to welcoming our new Board members and Foundation Director in 2026 and sharing more about these efforts—and how you can be part of them—as this work moves forward.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend my sincere thanks to all who consistently champion parks, especially Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners and other elected leaders; Miami-Dade County Parks Director Christina White and her dedicated team, whose work serves our community every day and gives purpose to the Foundation's mission; and the donors, sponsors, community partners and volunteers who make all that we do possible. I also thank the people of Miami-Dade County for their continued patronage and appreciation of our parks.

Parks belong to all of us. By working together to support them, we are investing in the health, well-being and quality of life of our community today and for generations to come.

Caroline O'Connor
President
Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade, Inc.

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade Inc. Board Members 2025

- **Caroline O'Connor, President:** COO, Miami Marlins
- **Jose Felix Diaz, Vice President:** Partner, Ballard and Associates
- **Danlys Hernandez**, **Secretary:** CEO, Oak Construction Officer
- **Maira Diaz-Giusti:** Senior Vice President, Oak Grove Bank and Trust
- **Loren Parra:** Director, Miami-Dade Environmental Resources Management
- **Dwight Stephenson:** Owner, D. Stephenson Construction
- **Christina White:** Director, Miami-Dade Parks Recreation and Open Spaces – effective June 2025

Miami-Dade County Recreation and Tourism Committee

Chairman:	Senator René Garcia (13)
Vice Chairwoman:	Commissioner Micky Steinberg (4)
Members:	Commissioner Marleine Bastien (2)
	Commissioner Kionne L. McGhee (9)
	Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado (7)

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Daniella Levine Cava
Mayor

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Anthony Rodriguez
Chairman

Kionne L. McGhee
Vice Chairman

Oliver G. Gilbert, III
District 1

Marleine Bastien
District 2

Keon Hardemon
District 3

Micky Steinberg
District 4

Vicki Lopez
District 5

Natalie Milian Orbis
District 6

Raquel A. Regalado
District 7

Danielle Cohen Higgins
District 8

Kionne L. McGhee
District 9

Anthony Rodriguez
District 10

Roberto J. Gonzalez
District 11

Juan Carlos Bermudez
District 12

Senator René Garcia
District 13

Juan Fernandez-Barquin
Clerk of the Court and Comptroller

Tomás Regalado
Property Appraiser

Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

Parks Foundation
of Miami-Dade

The Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade was created in 2004 in support of the Building Better Communities Bond Issue when visionary community leaders acknowledged that additional private and public sector support is essential to maintain, expand, and sustain the needs of the rapidly growing community that relies on Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department for quality of life. Today, Miami-Dade Parks is one of the nation's largest and most diverse park systems and stewards **307** heritage, regional and neighborhood parks, **73** recreation centers**,** **20** pools, **6** marinas, **17** miles of beaches, **5** golf courses, **5** campgrounds, and approximately **40,000** acres of parklands, natural area, and environmentally endangered lands.

The Parks Foundation remains committed to working closely with Miami-Dade County to foster a healthier, more livable and sustainable Miami-Dade by providing year-round support for park facilities and equitable access to parks programs for our community's residents, with a focus on children, special needs groups, and active older adults. Through corporate and community partnerships, fundraising initiatives, and fiscal sponsorships, we support scholarships for children to participate in park programs, including swimming lessons, afterschool and summer camps, conservation and environmental education projects, including volunteer cleanups, and other parks activities.

Executive Summary

The Board of Directors of the Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade is pleased to share our annual report for 2025. This report provides a snapshot of outstanding parks projects and programs we were privileged to support during the 2025 calendar year. The partnership between the Parks Foundation and Miami-Dade County advances a shared goal: to improve the health and overall quality of life for everyone through parks!

- In 2025, the Parks Foundation contributed **$33,359** in direct donations and facilitated **$549,679** in its role as fiscal sponsor, for a total of **$602,732** that supported projects and programming implemented by Miami-Dade County Parks in the community.

- The Parks Foundation contributed **$5,600** in Learn2Swim scholarships in 2025 that funded **12,536** swim lessons across **15** county pools. Miami-Dade Parks continues to be the largest public swimming education program in South Florida.

- The Foundation served as fiscal sponsor for **$164,300** to support the high-tech platform powering the Zero Drownings Miami-Dade partnership. In 2025, the program served **1,200** children, including **11%** with disabilities.

- In 2025, the Foundation provided fiscal sponsorship to the Neat Streets Miami/Million Trees Miami initiative, receiving **$168,980** in funding, of which **$118,961** was expended to support efforts to increase Miami-Dade County's tree canopy, including the planting or distribution of 9,000 trees and plants.

- The Foundation served as fiscal sponsor for **$121,000** in sponsorship funds for the 36th annual In the Company of Women Awards, which recognized **13** outstanding women leaders, with the support of our generous corporate, community, and public sector sponsors, and advanced the Foundation's mission to support sports development programs for girls.

- The Parks Foundation provided **$75,991** in support for Miami-Dade Parks' 2025 Independence Day celebrations, including **$50,991** in fiscal sponsorship and **$25,000** in direct funding, helping welcome more than 20,000 residents for community celebrations.

These accomplishments advanced the mission of the foundation to mobilize dollars and advocacy in continued support Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces, and in this way, help improve and sustain the community's recreational, health, educational, environmental, and cultural life.

Parks Foundation
of Miami-Dade

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Health & Fitness: 2025 Highlights

Drowning Prevention: Learn2Swim

- In 2025, The Parks Foundation contributed **$5,600** in Learn2Swim scholarships that funded **12,536** swim lessons across **15** county pools.
- Miami-Dade Parks continues to operate the largest public swimming education program in South Florida, helping children build confidence in and around the water while learning critical skills and safe water practices. Swimming lessons and water safety education are demonstrated successful strategies for reducing preventable drowning incidents.
- The importance of this work is particularly significant in our community. Drowning is the leading cause of death among children ages 1-4 in Florida and the leading cause of death among children ages 1- 9 in Miami-Dade County, underscoring the importance of ensuring that every child has an opportunity to learn to swim.
- Through its support of Learn2Swim, the Parks Foundation supports Miami-Dade County Parks' partnership with Nicklaus Children's Hospital, the American Red Cross Greater Miami and the Keys, the Miami-Dade Drowning Prevention Coalition, and other community organizations working to expand access to swimming instruction and promote water safety throughout Miami-Dade County.

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Health & Fitness: 2025 Highlights

Drowning Prevention: Zero Drownings Miami-Dade Partnership

- In 2025, the Parks Foundation partnered with Miami-Dade Parks to support Zero Drownings Miami-Dade, a countywide initiative providing free swim and water-safety instruction to young children across Miami-Dade County. The Foundation served as fiscal sponsor for **$164,300** that supported the technology platform used to help coordinate and manage the initiative across participating families, schools, instructors and program partners. The platform was highlighted at the 2025 eMerge Americas Technology Conference in Miami.
- In 2025, the program served **1,200 children** through fall swim lessons, including **11%** of participants with disabilities, and expanded to year-round programming and private school participation.
- Miami-Dade Parks' Office of Drowning Prevention serves as the initiative's logistics hub, coordinating and facilitating program operations.
- Zero Drownings Miami-Dade is a collaborative of The Children's Trust, Miami-Dade County, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, the American Red Cross, The Miami Foundation, United Way Miami and other partners.
- Zero Drownings Miami-Dade also received national recognition in 2025, earning **Best in Category**: Children and Youth in the National Association of Counties Achievement Awards.
- Learn more at www.ZeroDrowningsMiamiDade.org

ZERO DROWNINGS MIAMI-DADE

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Health & Fitness: 2025 Highlights

Drowning Prevention: Aden Perry Hero Life Ring Initiative

- In 2025, the Parks Foundation served as fiscal sponsor for **$1,440** in life ring rescue equipment supporting the Aden Perry Hero Life Ring Initiative, a partnership with the Aden Perry Good Samaritan and Scholarship Fund.

- The initiative honors the legacy of Aden Perry and expands access to emergency water-rescue equipment through clearly marked stations equipped with U.S. Coast Guard-regulated life rings and the lifesaving message “THROW DON’T GO.”

- Tropical Park was the first Miami-Dade County facility to receive the installations, with **10** life ring stations placed near the water. Later in 2025, the initiative was also expanded to Little River Park, Chapman Field and Greynolds Park**.**

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Health & Fitness: 2025 Highlights

Girls Got Game

- The Parks Foundation contributed **$400** to support the 4th Annual Miami-Dade Parks Girls Got Game celebration, held February 1, 2025, at Tropical Park Stadium in recognition of National Girls and Women in Sports Day.
- The event welcomed **275** girls ages 6–17 and their families for a day of sports, recreation and inspiration, connecting participants with community partners, local sports organizations and accomplished female athletes and leaders.
- Special guests included Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava; Director of Player Development for the Miami Marlins Rachel Balkovec,; Olympic sailor Sarah Newberry Moore; and Olympic gold medalist Twanisha “Tee Tee” Terry, who grew up participating in activities at Goulds Park—a meaningful example of the role parks and recreation can play in the lives of young people.

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Health & Fitness: 2025 Highlights

Youth Development: Fit2Lead Art Enrichment

- In 2025, the Parks Foundation served as fiscal agent for **$3,992** that supported virtual art enrichment for Miami-Dade Parks' nationally recognized Fit2Lead Youth Development and paid Internship Parks Program.
- In 2025, Fit2Lead served **750** youth ages 15–19 from high-need communities through an evidence-based afterschool program that combines paid internship experience with leadership development and enrichment opportunities.
- Foundation-supported art instruction gave participants access to virtual creative learning, Adobe Express tools and digital animation projects that encouraged self-expression, skill-building and collaboration.
- Students created original graphics and animations, shared their work with peers and participated in a final collaborative project, making the art cohort a meaningful addition to Fit2Lead's youth development experience.

Conservation & Stewardship 2025 Highlights

Sea Turtle Conservation Program

- In 2025, the Parks Foundation provided fiscal sponsorship to **$3,800** in Coastal Conservancy grant funds that supported Miami-Dade Parks' Sea Turtle Conservation Program by facilitating procurement of two portable Sea Turtle-Friendly Lighting educational exhibits from nonprofit partner Coastal Connections.

- The exhibits use visible-spectrum lighting demonstrations and sea turtle-friendly light tests to educate the public about wildlife-friendly lighting and its importance in reducing hatchling disorientation along Miami-Dade County beaches. One exhibit is located at Miami-Dade heritage park Deering Estate, where it provides conservation education to approximately **75,000** visitors annually. The second educational exhibit is mobile and travels to park programs and community events, extending the program's educational reach throughout the County.

- In 2025, Parks' Sea Turtle Conservation team monitored **700+** sea turtle nests and supported the release of approximately **50,000** hatchlings. Sea turtle numbers are a recognized indicator of the health of the world's oceans.

- The Sea Turtle Team also worked with municipal partners to reduce artificial light pollution affecting sea turtles through the 2025 Flip the Switch campaign in partnership with the City of Miami Beach and in collaboration with other beachfront municipalities.

Summer Fruit Festival

- The Parks Foundation facilitated **$1,350** in donor-supported funding for Miami-Dade Parks' 2025 Summer Fruit Festival at the historic Fruit & Spice Park, the only public botanical garden of its kind in the nation, supporting the annual celebration of South Florida's agricultural heritage and tropical growing traditions.

- Held June 21–22, 2025, the festival engaged visitors through tropical fruit displays and tastings, educational workshops, and local fruit, produce and plant vendors, highlighting the diversity of crops that thrive in South Florida's unique climate.

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Conservation & Stewardship: 2025 Highlights

Growing Parks Stewards Through Volunteer Programs

- In 2025, the Parks Foundation provided fiscal sponsorship to **$1,700** in community partner funding for Miami-Dade Parks' Volunteers in Parks (VIP) program, including contributions from AIR Gives, Royal Caribbean, and Santander Bank.
- The VIP program hosted **240** volunteer and outreach events in 2025, which engaged **8,700** volunteers and generated an estimated **$780,000** in volunteer service value.
- On April 26, 2025, Miami-Dade Parks, in partnership with the Parks Foundation, hosted an Earth Day/Arbor Day service event at Larry & Penny Thompson Park, in collaboration with Keep Florida Clean, Cartier, Rotary Clubs, TD Bank and the USDA Forest Service.
- More than **150** volunteers participated in stewardship activities, including planting **125** native trees and **188** native plants to support pine rockland habitat restoration and Urban Forestry Grant-funded enhancements.
- Volunteers also removed **268** pounds of debris, cleared **495** gallons of invasive plants, and painted **932** protective stakes to help safeguard **233** sea turtle nests.

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Placemaking: 2025 Highlights

Increasing Tree Canopy

- In 2025, the Foundation provided fiscal sponsorship to the Neat Streets Miami/Million Trees Miami initiative, receiving **$168,980** in funding, of which **$118,961** was expended to support efforts to increase Miami-Dade County's tree canopy, including the planting or distribution of **9,000** trees and plants.

- These trees improve climate resilience and help attract businesses to Miami-Dade County. It has been established that improving a community's tree canopy produces numerous benefits, from addressing the rising heat index to improving air quality to strengthening social ties among neighbors.

- Trees increase property values and job performance and satisfaction, while reducing energy costs. Research has shown the presence of trees can help reduce crime in a neighborhood.

- Canopy trees enhance a community's resiliency by beautifying and greening resident commutes, pollution absorption, wind protection, noise pollution reduction and storm water retention.

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Parks Events: 2025 Highlights

Black History Month Showcase

- The Parks Foundation served as fiscal sponsor **$3,790** in event expenses for Miami-Dade Parks' 5th Annual Black History Month Showcase.
- Held February 15, 2025, at JL (Joe) and Enid W. Demps Park, the free community celebration centered on the national theme "African Americans & Labor," recognizing the contributions of African Americans to the workforce, labor movement and community life.
- Foundation-sponsored expenses supported professional event production and enhanced the event's cultural programming.
- The event featured remarks by Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava and former Miami-Dade Police Department Director Stephanie Daniels, along with live music, spoken word, art exhibits, local vendors, food trucks and activities for children.

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

In The Company of Women Awards

Parks Events: 2025 Highlights

- In 2025, the Parks Foundation served as fiscal sponsor for **$121,000** in sponsorship funds for the 36th Annual In The Company of Women Awards, held on March 13, 2025, at the historic Coral Gables Country Club.
- The Parks Foundation partners annually with Miami-Dade Parks and the Miami-Dade County Commission for Women to present this signature Women's History Month event, honoring outstanding women whose leadership, professional achievements and community service have made a lasting impact on Miami-Dade County.
- The 2025 event recognized **13** exceptional women leaders and welcomed **350** attendees, including elected officials, community partners, sponsors, and residents.
- The event generated an additional **$45,900** in in-kind sponsorship support, bringing total cash and in-kind sponsorships to **$166,900**, with partners including Bacardi and Guitars over Guns, among others.
- Event proceeds help advance the Foundation's support of Miami-Dade Parks programs benefiting children and families, including the Girls Empowerment and Mentoring (G.E.M.) Summer Arts and Leadership Program and Girls Got Game.

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Parks Events: 2025 Highlights

Independence Day & National Park and Recreation Month Celebration

- In 2025, the Parks Foundation provided **$75,991** in support of Miami-Dade Parks' 2025 Independence Day celebrations, including **$50,991** in fiscal sponsorship and **$25,000** in direct funding, for community celebrations that showcased County parks, recreation programs and services while celebrating the launch of National Park and Recreation Month.

- Tropical Park, welcomed more than **20,000** residents for live entertainment, Parks programming, food vendors and fireworks.

- Univision, Miami-Dade Parks' longtime media partner, provided significant in-kind support, including pre-event promotional coverage, live musical entertainment featuring popular artists and groups, on-site emcee and stage entertainment throughout the event.

- The Foundation also supported "4th on the Fairway", held in partnership with the Village of Palmetto Bay at Miami-Dade County's Palmetto Bay Golf Course. The celebration provided South Dade residents with a community Independence Day event at a County park while creating an opportunity for Miami-Dade Parks to showcase recreational, youth and environmental programs to local families.

Parks Events: 2025 Highlights

Sugar 4 Kids Holiday Toy Drive

The Parks Foundation partnered with the Sugar 4 Kids Foundation to support its 10th Annual Holiday Toy Drive and community celebration, held on December 14, 2025, at Miami-Dade County's Wilbur B. Bell Park. The Foundation facilitated **$2,500** in donor-supported funding that covered the cost of the stage and sound Showmobile used for the event.

The annual celebration provided more than **1,000** toys and bicycles to children and families across Miami-Dade County. The Showmobile supported event programming and helped create an engaging community celebration for participating families.

Commission District 11 Autism Awareness Event

- The Parks Foundation partnered with Miami-Dade County Commission District 11 and Miami-Dade Parks to facilitate **$900** in support of the District 11 Autism Awareness event held on April 25, 2025, in recognition of Autism Awareness Month.
- The free community event brought families together for an inclusive afternoon featuring live entertainment, family activities, food trucks, and access to community resources.
- The event featured face painting, bounce houses, interactive activities and performances while helping raise awareness, reduce stigma, and connect autistic and neurodivergent individuals and their families, and other members of the community, with information, education and support.

Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade

Parks Events: 2025 Highlights

South Dade Summer Youth Band Camp

- In summer 2025, the Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade once again supported the South Dade Summer Youth Band Camp, providing **$77,637** in funding for the six-week program.
- The free program enrolled **55** youth, including students with no prior musical experience. Participants learned to read music and play both wind and percussion instruments while developing marching and dance skills.
- In 2025 Summer Youth Band Camp was led by retired Broward County band director Anthony Williams, with longtime program leader and retired FAMU Marching 100 Director Dr. Julian E. White continuing as general consultant.
- The program culminated in a July 23, 2025, community performance showcasing participants' musical, marching and dance skills developed throughout the summer.
- Marching bands represent a natural element of football programs, many of which are in communities struggling with gun violence and other high-risk behaviors in youth. Since 2016, the Summer Youth Band Camp has taken hundreds of young people off the streets and provided them with a positive environment to learn not only marching and music, but self- worth and useful life skills.

Foundation Financials

Through the generosity of community residents, partner nonprofits, corporate partners, and its Board of Directors the Parks Foundation advances its mission to create a healthier, more livable and sustainable Miami-Dade community by providing support for park facilities and for equitable and accessible recreation programs for all, with a focus on children, active older adults and people with disabilities.

ASSETS		
Cash	$	509,175
Accounts Receivable	$	122,858
Prepaid Expenses	$	5,455
Investments	$	1,041,720
Total Assets	$	1,679,208
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	$	24,358
Fiscal Sponsorship Funds	$	161,586
Deferred Revenue	$	-
Total Liabilities	$	185,944
NET ASSETS		
Total Net Assets	$	1,493,264
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	$	1,679,208

* Amounts per audited financial statements at 12-31-25

REVENUE		
Donations	$	81,582
Grants	$	-
Sponsorships & Admin Fees	$	18,059
Event Revenue (net)	$	(7,197)
Investment Income (Loss)	$	129,832
Total Revenue	$	222,276
EXPENSES		
Program Services	$	47,231
General Support	$	49,000
Total Expenses	$	96,231
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS		
Increase in Net Assets	$	126,045

Consistent with national fundraising standards referred to in Section 4(a) of the amended and restated agreement between Miami-Dade County and the Parks Foundation of Miami-Dade, Inc. approved by Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners Resolution No. R-573-15, and the requirements of Chapter 496 of the Florida Statues, the Foundation provides the Parks Director an annual report that includes audited financial statements complying with OMB Circular A-133; Form 990 including all attachments as filed with the Internal Revenue Service; and a financial report form as filed with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, pursuant to the requirements of Florida Statues Section 496.407.