



HANA AND ARTHUR GINZBARG

nature discovery center

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Nature Discovery Center Gateway Project Phase Two Underway

BELLAIRE (6/29/16) The Nature Discovery Center is pleased to announce that Phase Two of the Gateway Project is now underway. The Gateway Project represents a \$1.26 million capital initiative to improve the historic Henshaw House (Phase One) and Russ Pitman Park (Phase Two), both of which are managed by the Center. The initiative is funded in part by a \$500,000 City of Bellaire bond referendum, and by generous funding from community groups, individuals, and foundations who have helped transform the Gateway Project dream into a reality.

"As community members living and working in the City of Bellaire, Horizon is honored to be part of the team working on the celebrated Gateway Project this year" said Laura Thurmond, of Horizon Group International, Gateway Project contractors. "The site amenities constructed under this project will serve to enhance an already thriving educational program while preserving the wonderful natural features of this historical estate." These sentiments were echoed by Scott McCready, of SWA Group, landscape architects on the project, who said "We are very excited for the kickoff of Phase Two the Gateway Project. This renovation will offer the Center not only improved facilities for environmental education and visitor experience, but it will also establish a precedent for the continued stewardship of this unique urban nature park."

Phase One of the Gateway Project, the renovation of the 1925 Henshaw House that serves as the nature center, was successfully completed in spring 2014. This included new interior and exterior paint, new wall coverings, new blinds, new office furnishings, refinished floors, and more.

Phase Two of the Gateway Project will create a bright, fresh, and welcoming feeling in the one acre surrounding the Center through the redesign of the outdoor animal enclosures, resurfacing of the pavilion area, addition of a new outside bathroom, redesign of the native landscaping, and creation of a new sensory garden. These improvements, just underway, are anticipated to be complete by the end of December 2016.

"This is an exciting time to enhance the exterior space surrounding the Center. The improvements being made will have lasting and appreciable benefits to the tens of thousands of people who use the center and park each year. The momentum we have built around the Gateway Project has been incredible and I cannot say thank you enough to the donors and community. It is through these partnerships that we continue to thrive as a nonprofit organization," said Henry Owen, Executive Director of the Nature Discovery Center.

Though the Center's north parking lot will be closed, and a portion of the park will be fenced off for the duration of the project, the Center itself and the majority of Russ Pitman Park will be open for visitors and programs. During construction, visitors should park in the south parking lot off of Evergreen Street and walk down the main path to access the Center.

For more information about the Nature Discovery Center and its ongoing programs for children and families, and for Gateway Project updates, visit www.naturediscoverycenter.org.

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ABOUT THE HANA AND ARTHUR GINZBARG NATURE DISCOVERY CENTER

Founded in 1988, the Hana and Arthur Ginzburg Nature Discovery Center, a 501(c)(3) organization, ignites lifelong curiosity, understanding, and respect for nature through high-quality educational programming and its four-acre outdoor classroom, Russ Pitman Park.