



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For information about the playground project

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Roseann Bentley Musical Playground campaign launched
Donations will fund new feature at Phelps Grove Park

November 17, 2022: Community Partnership of the Ozarks (CPO), in partnership with the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, has established a donation campaign to recognize Roseann Bentley for a lifetime of service to our community.

The campaign will fund the new Roseann Bentley Musical Playground at Phelps Grove Park. This interactive and fully-accessible musical playground is designed for kids of all ages and abilities — the first of its kind for the Park Board. Eight playground-grade instruments include xylophones, drums and other percussive tones, built in colorful shapes of flowers and trees, installed in the center of the current playground area at Phelps Grove Park.

Bentley was a founding member of the CPO Board of Directors, serving more than 20 years, including as Board President in 2009. She also served on the statewide Families and Community Trust (FACT) Board, representing CPO for more than 10 years. Through these efforts, Bentley helped to shape the direction of twenty Community Partnerships across Missouri.

“As a longtime champion for children and early childhood education, Roseann’s impact on Springfield-Greene County, the region, and our state has been immeasurable,” said Janet Dankert, President/CEO of Community Partnership of the Ozarks. “The CPO Board and staff as well as the Springfield-Greene County Park Board agree that this project is the perfect way to recognize and honor Roseann’s contributions for years to come.”

In addition to her work with CPO, Bentley spent more than five decades in public service, advocating on behalf of children and education. She started her career teaching kindergarten and first grade, before going on to serve on the Springfield Board of Education, the Missouri State School Board, the National Association of State Boards of Education and the Parents as Teachers National Board.

Bentley was the first woman elected to the Missouri State Senate from southwest Missouri, serving Springfield’s District 30 1995-2003. She was the first woman to serve on the Senate Finance Committee

and chaired the Children's Services Commission. After the state senate, Bentley served as Greene County District 2 Commissioner for 12 years, retiring in 2016.

Bentley help found Ozarks Public Television in the early 1970s and the United Way of the Ozarks Day of Caring in 1993. She earned the Association of Junior Leagues International Mary Harriman Award in 1992, the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce Springfieldian Award in 2003, Missouri Women's Council Award of Distinction in 2006 and the Community Foundation of the Ozarks Humanitarian Award in 2012. She is the namesake of Springfield Public Schools Roseann Bentley Administrative Center. She is married to Dr. John Bentley and resides in Springfield.

The Roseann Bentley Musical Playground will be funded entirely by donation, and is planned to be unveiled in summer 2023. CPO is coordinating donations with the Community Foundation of the Ozarks holding the funds. Contributions may be made at bit.ly/3DanV9G. Naming opportunities for park benches and other playground features are available by reaching out to Janet Dankert at 417-888-2020.

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ABOUT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP OF THE OZARKS

The mission of Community Partnership of the Ozarks is to facilitate and promote the building of resilient children, healthy families, and strong neighborhoods and communities through collaboration, programming and resource development. For more information on the Partnership's collaborative efforts and programs, visit www.cpozarks.org.