

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Vale – Asche Foundation Grant To Fund 5<sup>th</sup> Playground Without Limits**

*Metropolitan Multi-Service Center Will Be Site of New Accessible Playground*

Vale-Asche Foundation recently awarded a grant to HPARD to fund the construction of a Playground Without Limits at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center, 1475 West Gray, 77019. This new playground, which exceeds ADA requirements, will give children with physical and sensory disabilities a place to play and interact with their friends and family members. This Playgrounds Without Limits Campaign is spearheaded by Houston philanthropist Dr. Carolyn Farb and is managed by the Houston Parks Board in partnership with the Houston Parks and Recreation Department.

“Every child should have the opportunity to share the joy of playing with family and friends at a favorite playground,” said Mayor Annise Parker. “The Vale-Asche Foundation Playground at the Metropolitan Multi-Service Center will allow children of all abilities to experience this childhood past time. We thank the foundation for its generosity and commitment to Houston’s Children.”

This is the second “Playgrounds Without Limits” made possible through the generosity and support of The Vale-Asche Foundation. The first Playgrounds Without Limits Playground was built in Memorial Park in 2006 and has been well received by all park users.

“The Trustees of the Vale-Asche Foundation are pleased to have been afforded the opportunity to provide such a unique resource for the children of Houston. All children, regardless of physical limitations, should be free to enjoy the special happy experience that using a playground provides,” said Mrs. Vale Russell, Vale-Asche Foundation.

Carolyn Farb has championed the effort of bringing boundary-free playgrounds to Houston’s children since the Playgrounds Without Limits Campaign was begun in 2006.

“Play is a vital part of how children grow. Playgrounds are where children learn to explore, build friendships, and develop social skills they will use throughout their lives. The laughter of children at play will echo in our hearts and become cherished memories of their childhood. The Vale Asche Foundation epitomizes its commitment to the children’s needs for playgrounds that touch the heart and stir the mind,” said Carolyn Farb.

Currently, the Houston Parks and Recreation Department has six accessible playgrounds. The Buddy Carruth Playground for All Children, built in 1995 at Hermann Park, and four Playgrounds Without Limits built since the campaign began in 2006. These playgrounds are located at Memorial Park, Tidwell Park, Alief Park and Eastwood Park. The Metropolitan Multi-Service Center Playground Without Limits will make the fifth playground in the Playground Without Limits Campaign. Playgrounds Without Limits facilities are designed with a ramp and poured in place pad that allows children and parents with disabilities the opportunity to access up to 90% of the play structure.

“We cannot sufficiently express in words our gratitude to the Vale-Asche Foundation for their generous support and commitment to children of all abilities,” said Joe Turner, Director, Houston Parks and Recreation Department. “A lot of people say they are committed to a cause but the Vale-Asche Foundation does more...they commit resources that make dreams realities. Because of their generosity Houston’s children will have the opportunity to play with their family and friends regardless of their abilities.”

### **About the Playgrounds Without Limits Campaign**

The Playgrounds Without Limits Campaign was created to address the limited play opportunities faced by children with disabilities. Philanthropist Carolyn Farb chairs the project which is designed to seek funding for playgrounds that exceed ADA requirements and allow children of all abilities the opportunity to play together on the same playground. The Houston Parks Board, a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, working in conjunction with the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, oversees the funding and building of the playgrounds in City of Houston parks.

### **About the Houston Parks and Recreation Department**

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (H.P.A.R.D.) stewards and manages over 38,992 acres of parkland and greenspace for the City of Houston and develops and implements recreational programming for citizens of all abilities. For more information on Playgrounds Without Limits, Adaptive Recreation, or the Houston Parks and Recreation Department, call (832) 395-7022 or visit [www.houstonparks.org](http://www.houstonparks.org).