

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**BENNETT'S VILLAGE ANNOUNCES FIRST RUN/WALK/ROLL/DANCE MOVE CHALLENGE**

**FUNDRAISING EVENT INVITES ALL TO SUPPORT AREA'S FIRST MULTI-GENERATIONAL, ALL-ABILITIES PLAYGROUND BY SAFELY MAKING WAY THROUGH ONE-MILE COURSE AROUND ITS FUTURE HOME AT PEN PARK OR TO PARTICIPATE VIRTUALLY**

*Two-Week Challenge to Take Place from September 19 Through October 3 and Will Welcome Individuals as Well as Teams to Participate*

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – September 14, 2020 – This Fall, Bennett's Village is encouraging all of us to get moving for a good cause with the launch of its first Run/Walk/Roll/Dance MOVE Challenge.

The special fundraising event features a one-mile journey around Pen Park, the future home of Bennett's Village, a multi-generational all-abilities playground named after Bennett McClurken-Gibney, who passed away at the age of 5 in 2018. Bennett loved to play, but he had few options to do so in the Charlottesville/Albemarle community, where parks are largely inaccessible to people in wheelchairs. Bennett's Village, which will be designed by the award-winning Baltimore-based landscape architecture firm Mahan Rykiel Associates (MRA), will be a place that will serve the needs of all, including people with mobility limitations, sensory processing disorders and developmental delays.

The Bennett's Village MOVE Challenge course will be open for two weeks, from Saturday, September 19 through Saturday, October 3. Participants encouraged to participate at any time, and if sharing the course, are asked to keep a distance of at least 6-feet from other community members. While on the course, participants will get a sneak peek at the new Bennett's Village logo on the "Future Home of Bennett's Village" sign. The logo is a collaboration between David Robinson of Birch Studios, artist Tim Jones, and the Bennett's Village Board. Those who are unable to get to the course in person are encouraged to participate in the challenge virtually from wherever they are!

The MOVE Challenge is open to individuals and teams, and all are invited to sign up at <https://runsignup.com/Race/VA/Charlottesville/BennettsVillageAPlaceForAlltoMOVEChallenge>

"We are really excited to bring people together in a way that is both safe and fun to bring attention to our efforts to create a place that we know will make a difference in countless lives, said Kara McClurken, who along with Bennett's father Brian Gibney, launched the dream of Bennett's Village soon after the tragic loss of their son. "We hope to share in the experience by asking participants to share their pictures and videos to our Facebook and Instagram pages in

the following ways: take a silly selfie by our new sign, videotape yourself dancing along the new course, or place a rock along the course.” Prizes will be offered, McClurken said, for most money raised, and best social media submissions.

Plans for Bennett’s Village include a fully-accessible play structures and spaces, a tree house, sensory garden, cableway, water play area, restroom pavilion, and native landscaping. Commemorative donor opportunities are available for several of the spaces and features.

The need for a place like Bennett’s Village is great, and growing, McClurken said. “The most recent data in our region shows that we have more than 9,000 people under the age of 65 who have a disability.” That number, she added, jumps to 1 in 3 when you look at those over 65, and these statistics do not even include those with temporary injuries, or the many families who come here for health care/treatment.

To learn how you can help, visit [www.bennettsvillage.org](http://www.bennettsvillage.org).

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