



MINNEAPOLIS
PARKS
FOUNDATION

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New Season Begins Thursday, November 15, at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Presented by Minnesota Public Radio
Florence Williams – author of the Audible best seller, The Nature Fix – launches the 2018-2019 season of the Next Generation of Parks event series

Events continue in 2019 with The High Line's Robert Hammond, on March 21, and Dr. Robert Zarr, founder of Park RX America, on May 7

Minneapolis, Minn. – “Walk into a forest and within five minutes your body and brain start to change,” says Florence Williams, the journalist and author of *The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes Us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative*. Williams is the opening night speaker in the [Minneapolis Parks Foundation's 2018-2019 Next Generation of Parks™ Event Series](#), which focuses on how parks contribute to our emotional, physical, social, and cultural health. Her talk will take place at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Thursday, November 15, 2018, 6:30-8:00pm. Tickets are free and advance registration is recommended [via Eventbrite](#).

Williams, who is a podcaster and public speaker in addition to her work as an author and journalist, spent two years researching and writing *The Nature Fix*. Her talk will delve into what she learned during her investigations – how scientists in Japan quantified the benefits of forest bathing, where school bullies are sent on the “happy train” for nature-based rehabilitation, and what “dose of nature” is most effective (hint: five hours a month is good; more is better). Ultimately, Williams challenges us to ask, “How can cities make places of awe and restoration?”

When the Minneapolis Park System was founded in the late 1800s, parks were thought of as an antidote to ailments associated with rapid industrialization, like low mood and a lack of physical activity. Fast-forward to today, and we're surrounded by a digital environment, as well as a concrete one. “In Theodore Wirth's time, only about 30% of Minnesota's population lived in Minneapolis and St. Paul. By 2040, six in 10 Minnesotans will live in the Twin Cities,” says Tom Evers, Executive Director of the Minneapolis parks Foundation. “It's more important than ever that we protect and expand access to nature, because parks are the places that connect us, heal us, and make us whole.”

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2018-2019 SERIES CONTINUES

The Parks Foundation's exploration of how parks transform human life continues in 2019, with Next Generation of Parks™ events featuring:

Robert Hammond, The High Line: Parks, Placekeeping, and Resisting Gentrification

Thursday, March 21, 2019 • Walker Art Center

Presented in partnership with the Walker Art Center

The co-founder of Friends of the High Line, **Robert Hammond** helped lead the effort to build an elevated park on an abandoned railway line in Manhattan. He is now Executive Director of Friends of the High Line and his recent talks are focused on the lessons learned from creating this space, the effects it has had on the neighborhood around it, and how public parks can better serve their communities.

Dr. Robert Zarr, Park RX America: Prescribing Parks for Health & Wellbeing

Tuesday, May 5, 2019 • Location TBA

Dr. Robert Zarr is a board-certified pediatrician at Unity Health Care, located in Washington, DC, where he cares for low-income and immigrant populations. He is Founder and Medical Director of [Park Rx America](#), a community health initiative to prescribe nature to patients and families to prevent and treat chronic disease and promote wellness. He previously served as the Park Rx Advisor to the National Park Service in his national advocacy to connect people to parks.

Additional event details will be posted on the Parks Foundation's website as they become available and announced before each event.

The 2018-2019 Next Generation of Parks™ Event Series is presented by [Minnesota Public Radio](#) and produced in partnership with the [American Society of Landscape Architects](#), [Walker Art Center](#), and [Minneapolis Institute of Art](#).

About the Minneapolis Parks Foundation

The Minneapolis Parks Foundation transforms human lives through parks and public spaces by aligning philanthropic investment and community vision. The Parks Foundation co-leads the [RiverFirst Initiative](#) with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and is responsible for private fundraising and implementation of the [Water Works](#) and [Great Northern Greenway River Link](#) projects. The Parks Foundation also supports innovative Minneapolis parks projects, including [Little Free Libraries®](#) at all recreation centers, through equity funding, and champions world-class design through its [Next Generation of Parks™ Event Series](#). Learn more at [MplsParksFoundation.org](#).

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