



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | April 4, 2019

Next Generation of Parks™ Event Series Presented by Minnesota Public Radio
The Parks Prescription with Dr. Robert Zarr, Founder & Medical Director of Parks Rx America, Tuesday, May 7, 6:30pm

Recently featured in Time Magazine and on NBC Nightly News, Dr. Zarr shares his groundbreaking approach to chronic disease management with parents, teachers, caregivers, nature lovers, wellness-seekers, and community health advocates

Minneapolis, Minn. – “There’s a paradigm shift in the way we think about parks: Not just as a place to recreate, but literally as a prescription, a place to improve your health,” Dr. Robert Zarr, Founder and Medical Director of Washington D.C.-based [Parks Rx America](#) told Time Magazine (November 2018). At the leading-edge of an international movement to address chronic diseases like depression and obesity with the most natural medicine available – nature itself – Dr. Zarr will speak at The Trailhead in Wirth Park as part of the [Minneapolis Parks Foundation’s Next Generation of Parks Event Series](#), Tuesday, May 7, 6:30-8:00pm. Tickets for the event – which is produced in partnership with The Loppet Foundation – are free and pre-registration is recommended [via Eventbrite](#). A light reception with cash bar will follow.

Parks Rx America research indicates obesity costs the United States \$190 billion each year, some 29 million Americans suffer from diabetes, and 15.7 million American adults reported having at least one major depressive episode in the past year. While improving health outcomes for adults can save lives and unburden the health care system, giving children access to nature sets them up for success before chronic illness takes root. According to Park Rx America, “being outside in a park or close to trees ... increases physical activity, improves children’s school grades and behavior, and helps children become more social and resilient.”

“There’s no more critical time than now to elevate the role parks and urban nature plays in individual and community health,” says Tom Evers, Executive Director of the Minneapolis Parks Foundation. “It’s estimated that more than 60% of Minnesota’s population lives in the Twin Cities. Creating opportunities for metro communities to spend time outdoors – consistently and across all seasons – should be a priority for human health and wellbeing.”

About Dr. Robert Zarr

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. You will often find him riding his recumbent trike on the Capital Crescent Trail.

Thank You to Our 2018-2019 Sponsors and Partners

This season, the Parks Foundation’s event series is presented by [Minnesota Public Radio News](#), produced in partnership with the [Walker Art Center](#), [Minneapolis Institute of Arts](#), and made possible with additional support from the [American Society of Landscape Architects-Minnesota Chapter](#) and [Barr Engineering](#).

About the Minneapolis Parks Foundation

The Minneapolis Parks Foundation transforms human lives through parks and public spaces by aligning philanthropic investment and community vision. Since 2003, the Parks Foundation has raised more than \$20 million for transformative parks projects in Minneapolis. Currently, 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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