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### **NDC Renovated Due to Collective Community Support**

BELLAIRE (7/19/2017) The Nature Discovery Center is extremely grateful to the City of Bellaire voters and to the wider community for backing our efforts to renovate the Center and Russ Pitman Park. The renovations, which started in 2014 and were completed early this year, represented a \$1.5 million capital initiative to improve the historic Henshaw House and our park's unique habitat zones. The Nature Discovery Center leveraged the public funding from a \$500,000 City of Bellaire bond referendum with an additional \$1,000,000 in private funding from community members and foundations, as well as significant in-kind contributions.

It is important to note that this was never funded as a full park renovation initiative. Rather, it was funded as an upgrade primarily for the historic 1925 Henshaw House that needed updating after decades of heavy use. Due to board encouragement, neighborhood passion, and collective community philanthropy (including donor brick campaign contributors) the project morphed into a significantly broader scope of work.

A partnership-centered approach combined with strategic resource management was the conduit that enabled full park renovations. "We could not have undertaken these improvements without the generous participation of our close partners at Resource Environmental Solutions, who donated their time, labor, equipment, and expertise to restore, enhance and expand our habitat zones," said Ben Cowan, President of the Nature Discovery Center's Board of Directors. "The combination of the Gateway Project and the nature park improvements together, on top of our recent renovations to the Henshaw House, have had a huge impact on the programs and experience we can offer and have really begun to generate a buzz in the community about the incredible transformation that has taken place at the Nature Discovery Center."

This effort follows a long trend of community contribution at the Nature Discovery Center. To establish the park in the 1980s, over 400 local businesses contributed items from labor to nails to air conditioning units and made the dream of an accessible greenspace a reality. "With the investment by our amazing donors, the Center is proud to have delivered a premier education center and destination nature park that can continue to create personal nature connections for many generations to come," said Henry Owen, Executive Director of the Nature Discovery Center. In closing (and to add a small teaser), the Center does not intend to stop here but will focus on renovating the playground area in the future.

To learn more about upcoming year-round programs and events at the Center, please visit:  
[www.naturediscoverycenter.org](http://www.naturediscoverycenter.org).

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#### ABOUT THE HANA AND ARTHUR GINZBARG NATURE DISCOVERY CENTER

Founded in 1988, the Hana and Arthur Ginzburg Nature Discovery Center sparks interest in nature and science through high-quality educational programming and its four-acre outdoor classroom, the Russ Pitman Park. The 501(c)(3) organization aims to stimulate a desire to explore, discover, learn, nourish the inquiring mind, and keep a sense of wonder alive for all ages.