



Latin American Community Center Playground

The LACC is building an outdoor playground for children ages 5-12 enrolled in Before and After School Community Learning Centers and Summer Day Camp. Currently, staff and children must walk several blocks to a community park for outdoor play, risking student safety and limiting the amount of time children have outdoors. This project will benefit 300 low-income, minority youth annually who live in Wilmington's Hilltop neighborhood and the surrounding areas. This effort will provide a safe space where children can be active and further enhance their learning and development.

Access to an outdoor play space has a positive impact on health outcomes. Approximately 50% of Hispanic children have a BMI that falls in the overweight or obese category (Nemours). Childhood obesity has been found to lead to various diseases in adulthood. The LACC playground will promote health and physical activity that will work to reduce health disparities for Hispanic children in Delaware and help them to form habits that will persist through adulthood.

The playground will be built on the corner of 4th and Harrison Streets. Homsey Architects will conduct a property and topographical survey and develop a construction plan, EdiS Company will conduct necessary demolition and site preparations, and KOMPAN will install the equipment. The LACC conducted extensive research to select playground equipment. This included bringing children to various playgrounds to determine their equipment preferences as well as in depth research on the developmental benefits of various structures. This enabled the LACC to select playground equipment that will be fun for children, accessible for all ages and abilities, and will promote child development, positive play, and enhanced health outcomes. The LACC has chosen the following pieces of equipment.

- 1) Triple Tower Physical- A play unit that offers many levels of play including inclined climbing nets, curly climber, slides, wackle bridge, and banister bars
- 2) Galaxy Draco- A unit consisting of a variety of climbing apparatuses to challenge children and grow concentration and fine motor skills
- 3) Supernova- A large slating rotating ring with 7 divided areas designed to motivate children to explore countless play options. Activities promote balance, spatial awareness, social-emotional skills and cognition, cooperation skills, and logical thinking.

4) Explorer Arch- A net climbing structure which encourages children to make up new games to play.

The LACC will use a variety of methods to evaluate project success. Community level data will be collected via kids count and Rodel Foundation. Before the playground opens, LACC staff will provide parents with a health questionnaire to assess each student's overall health. This questionnaire will be administered again 3, 6, and 12 months after the playground is open to measure the difference in the child's overall health and physical activity time. Additionally, Youth Development programming will continue to utilize the evidence-based curriculum, Afterschool Energizers, to promote an active lifestyle and collaborate with UD Cooperative Extension to provide age appropriate workshops. Impact will be achieved by providing students a safe place to play, grow, and learn for years to come.

Homsey Architects is an award-winning architecture firm founded by noted husband-and-wife architects, Victorine du Pont Homsey and Samuel Eldon Homsey in 1935. Located in Wilmington, Delaware, the firm has been a key contributor to the revitalization efforts of downtown Wilmington. They have conducted projects on a variety of scales from university buildings, to historical restoration, to residential projects. The LACC has collaborated with Homsey Architects in the past and has been impressed by the results. Our primary contact is Charles B. Ryan, AIA.

EDiS Company provides diverse services centered on their customers' building and property assets. They provide planning, building and operation expertise to private and public markets. Their core services are delivered through their construction management and design-build solutions. The LACC has utilized EDiS for many building renovation projects, including our recent construction project to convert two classrooms to infant and toddler classrooms. Our primary contact is John Paulson, Superintendent.