



TOWER GROVE  
— PARK —

ANNUAL REPORT  
2019





## ANNUAL HIGHLIGHT

At Tower Grove Park, our staff believes in conservation, plant science, and outdoor recreation. It's part of our mission to educate children about the importance of the natural world in engaging ways, which is why we offer new digital tree walks and facilitate educational programs to elementary students.

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Left: William Reininger and Stephen Kidwell  
 Right: The Piper Palm House and lily ponds  
 Cover: The Missouri state tree, the flowering dogwood, in early spring  
 First page: Children explore the prairies by Kelli Rae Patton

## From Our Leadership

Tower Grove Park is the confluence of St. Louis' history and its contemporary communities. Located at the heart of our city's most diverse collection of neighborhoods, the Park is the shared backyard of thousands of lifelong city residents, recent transplants, and new Americans from all walks of life. The Park welcomes everyone—the fourth-graders on a science field trip, the neighbor on her morning dog walk, the geese who devotedly block Main Drive, and the trees that tower over it all.

Home to native flora and fauna, our public park seamlessly bridges the divide between conservation and community, particularly in an urban environment. Bordered by the neighborhoods of Shaw, Tower Grove South, Tower Grove East, and Southwest Garden, the Park serves a wide radius that includes St. Louis' most diverse populations. Tower Grove Park welcomes visitors from the global neighborhood of South Grand, the Latino communities of Cherokee and Gravois Park, the Bosnian communities of Bevo, and families from The Tiffany, The Hill, Benton Park, and more. Neighbors can walk some of the busiest streets and bustling business districts to reach a place of nourishing tranquility and recreation.

An integral part of St. Louis' identity, the Park is deeply rooted in the community, quite literally, with thousands

of diverse trees, which helped earn us a level II arboretum status by Arbnet. Year-round, we offer affordable rentals, sports fields, miles of trails, and outdoor places of gathering. A new partnership with Vetta Sports helps offer programs and classes at the Henry Shaw Memorial Tennis Courts. Cultural events—the Tower Grove Farmers' Market, Festival of Nations and Tower Grove Pride, to name a few—receive hundreds of thousands of visitors.

In addition to a growing forest and engaging events, we preserve a remarkable collection of historic pavilions, buildings, and statues. The Landmarks Association of St. Louis awarded the Park the Most Enhanced Award for the restoration of the historic stable complex. In the spring, with a generous grant from Emerson, we restored the aging porch of the Director's Residence, a project that followed the National Park Service's guidelines for historic preservation.

Finally, we must thank the generous members of Tower Grove Park, ranging from Young Friends to Society. With a deep relationship to the Park, our members know its importance as a beloved institution. There's no other community like the one you'll find here. The funds from membership are crucial to restoring, maintaining, and advancing the Park. Membership protects trees like the visitor-favorite catalpa, and keeps our rentable spaces, like the candy-striped Turkish Pavilion, affordable and pristine.

We proudly celebrate another momentous year in Tower Grove Park's extensive history, finishing 147 years of providing St. Louis with meaningful events and accessible recreation. Our growth and success would not be possible without support from our members, corporate partners, donors, and visitors. We express our sincerest gratitude within the pages of our report.

Your support helps us continue Tower Grove Park's success without compromising any of the qualities that make it such a special place for visitors year-round. The continued health and vitality of a historic wooded park, at the center of a richly diverse urban area, is critical to the vigor of the neighboring communities and a contributing factor to the quality of life for the greater St. Louis region.

Sincerely,

*William Reininger*

William E. Reininger, Jr.  
 Executive Director

*S. M. Kidwell*

Stephen M. Kidwell  
 President of the Board of Commissioners

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# Tower Grove Park is a historic park and arboretum

Within the pages of this report, you'll find stories of community and connection, of people using the Park as it was intended—as a public, outdoor space. Founded by Henry Shaw, the Park is a place where people of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs and interests can come together.

The mission of Tower Grove Park is to be an exemplary, well-preserved and well-presented, wooded Victorian park of international significance that provides important recreational, educational and cultural opportunities for the public in a way that is compatible with its unique and historic character.

Tower Grove Park's landscape of grassy meadows, trees and varied flowerbeds are an important urban green space for the region. As a premier urban and historical destination, the Park is maintained through an annual park maintenance program, an urban forest renewal program, and an array of free and low-cost educational, recreational, cultural and social opportunities.

Free and educational programs include the Summer Children's Concert Series, Tower Grove Farmers' Market, lecture series, band concerts and cultural festivals. The iconic Victorian pavilions are a favorite site for family, school, and community events and celebrations. Well-maintained trails, tennis courts and athletic fields are busy year-round.

Tower Grove Park is open every day, every season. In the middle of a heavy snowfall, you'll find families with sleds, snow angels throughout, and footprints on pathways. Just like in the heat of summer, visitors attend public festivals and private celebrations. We hope you enjoy reading about the Park's 2019 accomplishments in community, conservation, membership, education, and more. Thank you for your continued support.

that joins **conservation with community.**



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# Community

As part of our initiative to join conservation with community, we have numerous opportunities for individuals to enjoy the tranquility of nature while engaging in recreation or events. Year after year, the historic pavilions provide a place of gathering. The ornate and iconic spaces are consistently affordable to all visitors.

We partner with many neighborhood organizations to host annual festivals, like the Tower Grove Farmers' Market, Pagan Picnic, the International Institute's Festival of Nations, 4 Hand Brewing and Grace Meat + Three's Grace City Wide Fair, Tower Grove Pride, Compton Heights Concert Band, and the St. Louis Classic. We also present signature events like Terror at Tower Grove Park, the Summer Children's Concert Series, and senior program field trips. The Operation Food Search van parked weekly during the summer to offer Food and Fun Club. The program provides a daily dose of nutrition, along with activities and STEM projects for children that may not have access to traditional day camps.

After the restoration of the Director's Residence front entryway, we now offer the villa as the exclusive bridal suite for Piper Palm House weddings. In addition, we expanded our list of preferred caterers—Hendri's Events, Hollyberry Catering, Salt + Smoke, Seed Sprout Spoon, and The Social Affair—so guests have an array of affordable options for catered events.

A new partnership with Vetta Sports helps offer programs and classes at the Henry Shaw Memorial Tennis Courts. Established in 1952, the courts welcome racquet sport players of all ages and abilities. The facility includes nine hard-surface and three grass tennis courts, and eight pickleball courts. Vetta offers programming throughout the season to children and adults interested in lessons or games.

Finally, the city of St. Louis completed the Neighborhood Access Improvement Project to improve 21 intersections around the Park. The project brings the intersections to ADA code while making them safer for all users entering and exiting the Park. The exciting \$1+ million project was made possible through a combination of City, MODOT, federal, and Transportation Alternative Program grant funds.

2.5 million+

annual visitors  
from St. Louis and  
around the world

2,858

rentals of  
pavilions, picnic  
sites, recreation  
fields and venues

55,000+

social network  
followers



Left to right:  
Visitors browse the farmers' market  
A family enjoys free concert nights  
The Lily Pond Shelter overlooks the ponds  
A Latino woman sings at Festival of Nations



# Conservation

A leader in conservation, Tower Grove Park maintains thousands of diverse and mature trees, grasses, prairies, streams, and varied flower beds. With 289 acres, the rolling meadows and forest offer tranquility and peace in a bustling neighborhood. In addition, our independent staff conserves aging Victorian pavilions and structures, including the Director's Residence, Piper Palm House and Plant House, and stable complex, the oldest building in the Park.

In 2019, we expanded our interactive, digital map to include tree walks. Visitors can take self-guided tours through our arboretum and let the tree walk guide teach them about the most interesting tree specimens. From the Osage orange to the Austrian pine, users can learn about the history and arboriculture of Tower Grove Park. The educational walks are intended for solo expeditions or leisurely strolls with family, where everyone can learn about the beauty and importance of our urban forest.

In March, we hosted the Missouri Community Forestry Council annual conference with a tour led by Forestry Supervisor, Andy Berg. He discussed best management techniques, such as soil management, caring for aging trees, elm injection techniques to manage Dutch Elm Disease, specialized pruning, and support systems. Berg was also awarded the International Society of Arboriculture 2018 Award of Merit during the Midwestern Chapter luncheon. The award recognizes outstanding meritorious service in advancing the principles, ideals, and practices of arboriculture—a great honor for Berg and the Park!

In addition to conserving the plant life, we preserve a world-renowned collection of historic pavilions, buildings, and statues. In the spring, with a generous grant from Emerson, we restored the aging porch of the Director's Residence, a project that followed the National Park Service's guidelines for historic preservation. Finally, the Landmarks Association of St. Louis awarded the Park the Most Enhanced Award for the restoration of the historic stable complex.

15,000

bulbs planted—  
tulips, daffodils,  
and miscellaneous

315

tree taxa, or  
different species  
of trees

133

new trees  
planted, including  
12 new species



*Left to right:  
Tulips bloom by the fountain pond  
A girl overlooks a riparian corridor  
Visitors sit by the Ruins  
A sparrow perches on a lotus*



# Membership

Membership is more than an annual donation. At Tower Grove Park, membership is belonging to something special with other people who feel the same. Our members are special souls who have a deep relationship with the Park. We could not be prouder or more grateful of all the people who support the Park by making contributions, attending events, renting spaces, or volunteering.

The funds from membership are crucial to restoring, maintaining, and advancing the Park. Membership protects trees like the majestic Osage orange and keeps our rentable spaces affordable and pristine. In the spring, the Park launched a membership drive with a matching gift from long-time supporters, Steve and Nancy Kidwell. It raised over \$35,000 that immediately went to preserving the Park. In 2019, we reached our highest number of members ever. It proves that the community cares, and the space and services we offer are meaningful to the region.

Our annual fundraisers—Flower Power, Pavilion Party, Martinis at the Mansion and Tower Trot 5K—all raised needed funds as well as introduced us to new people who want to give back. Flower Power on May 15–16 sold out with record-high attendance with guest speakers, Michael and Darroch Putnam from New York. The free lecture series and statue wreath laying ceremonies (for Alexander von Humboldt and William Shakespeare) welcomed hundreds of members and new faces from the general public.

During the winter days when people often do not think of the Park, our members still give back for the year-end fundraising drive. It's the time of year when people support institutions that mean the most to them. A public park in freezing, wintry weather is no exception. Our December 2018 drive raised more than ever before, thanks to committed supporters. Thank you to all our members, from Young Friends to Society, who make our mission possible.

**\$35,000**

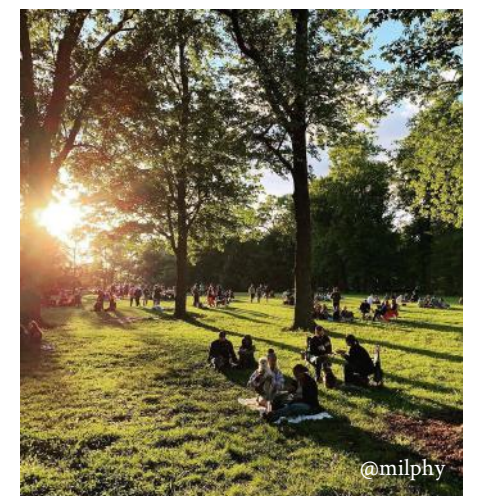
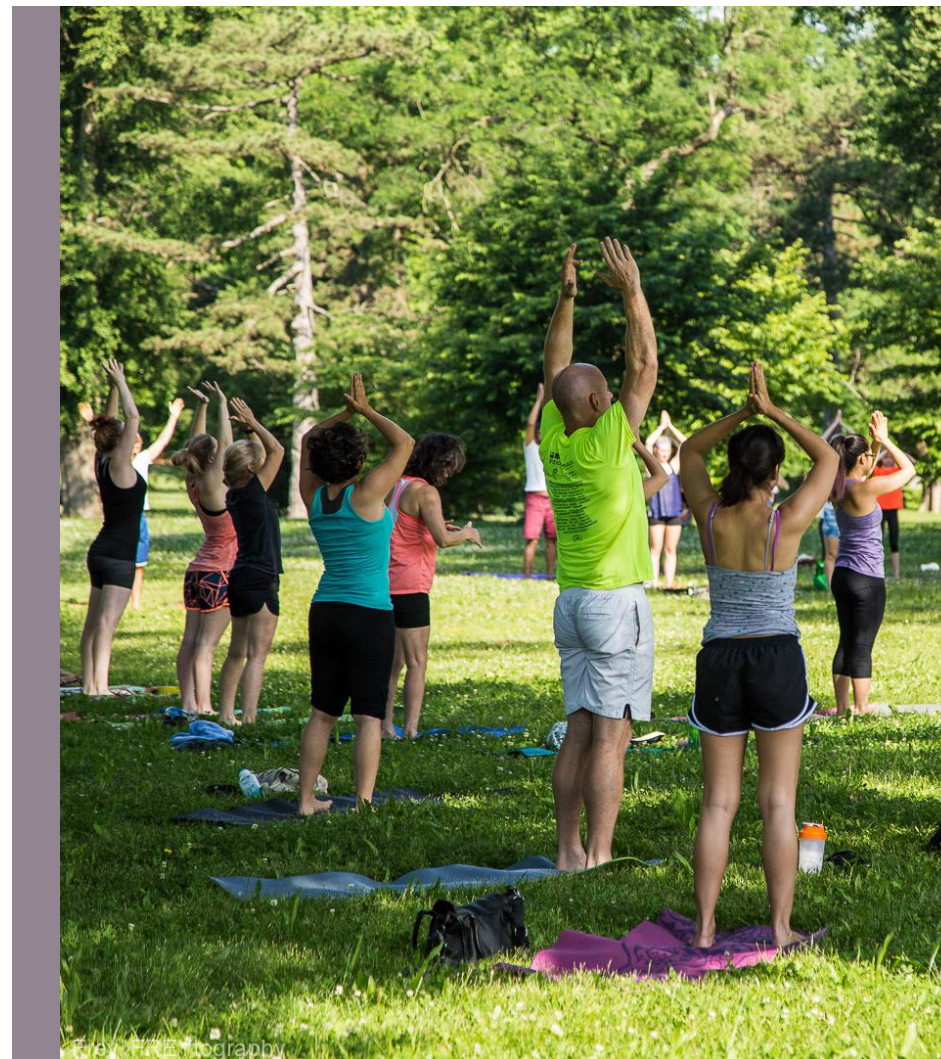
raised from the spring membership drive with matching gift

**1,200**

total members, the highest number ever reached for the Park

**200,000+**

visitors attend signature and featured events



*Left to right:  
Visitors enjoy free yoga at the farmers' market  
Friends play a card game at Festival of Nations  
Members attend summer fundraiser, Pavilion Party  
Visitors picnic at Sauce Food Truck Friday*



# Education

At Tower Grove Park, our staff believes in conservation, plant science and outdoor recreation. It's part of our mission to educate children and adults about the importance of the natural world in engaging ways. We launched Horticulture Programming and Education (HOPE), a series of science classes for students from Tower Grove Christian Academy. Every spring, the classes meet for hands-on, investigative learning hosted by our Horticulture Team. The series includes classroom lectures about plants, flower parts, water conservation, and pollinators; afterwards, students plant seeds in the greenhouse and garden and meet our backyard chickens.

We also hosted the Green House Venture, a local nonprofit which helps to educate, excite, and equip an inclusive population of elementary students to pursue a sustainable world through a hands-on program in bio-science and urban agriculture. Our Forestry Supervisor, Andy Berg, and Horticulture Supervisor, Steve Hogenmiller, gave presentations to the classes and tours of the Park's plant life.

This spring, we established a Monarch Waystation Garden to help teach students about pollinators and migration. Each fall, millions of monarch butterflies migrate from the U.S. and Canada to Mexico, where they wait out the winter until a return flight in the spring. The Tower Grove Park wayside garden, or waystation, ensures the butterflies have ample food and nectar sources to make their long journey. Our two beehives continue to thrive year to year and teach elementary classes about the importance of pollination.

Our Forestry Team established and maintains two prairies and transformed its two waterways into riparian corridors. The lush and wild fields of grass, flowers, and shrubs provide wealth to insects and animals and are vital to our educational programs. Wildlife and pollinators enjoy the variety of rich flowers, including little bluestem, milkweed, wild bergamot, purple coneflower, and black-eyed Susan.

Additionally, we have school groups and corporate partners join us for volunteer days. They have the opportunity to plant flower beds, rake leaves, spread mulch, plant or pull bulbs, and more hands-on activities in the Park. It is tremendously helpful and wonderful to meet new people, seeing everyone come together in the spirit of community and volunteerism.

650+

hours of volunteer  
and community  
service help

160+

students  
participating  
in educational  
programs

30

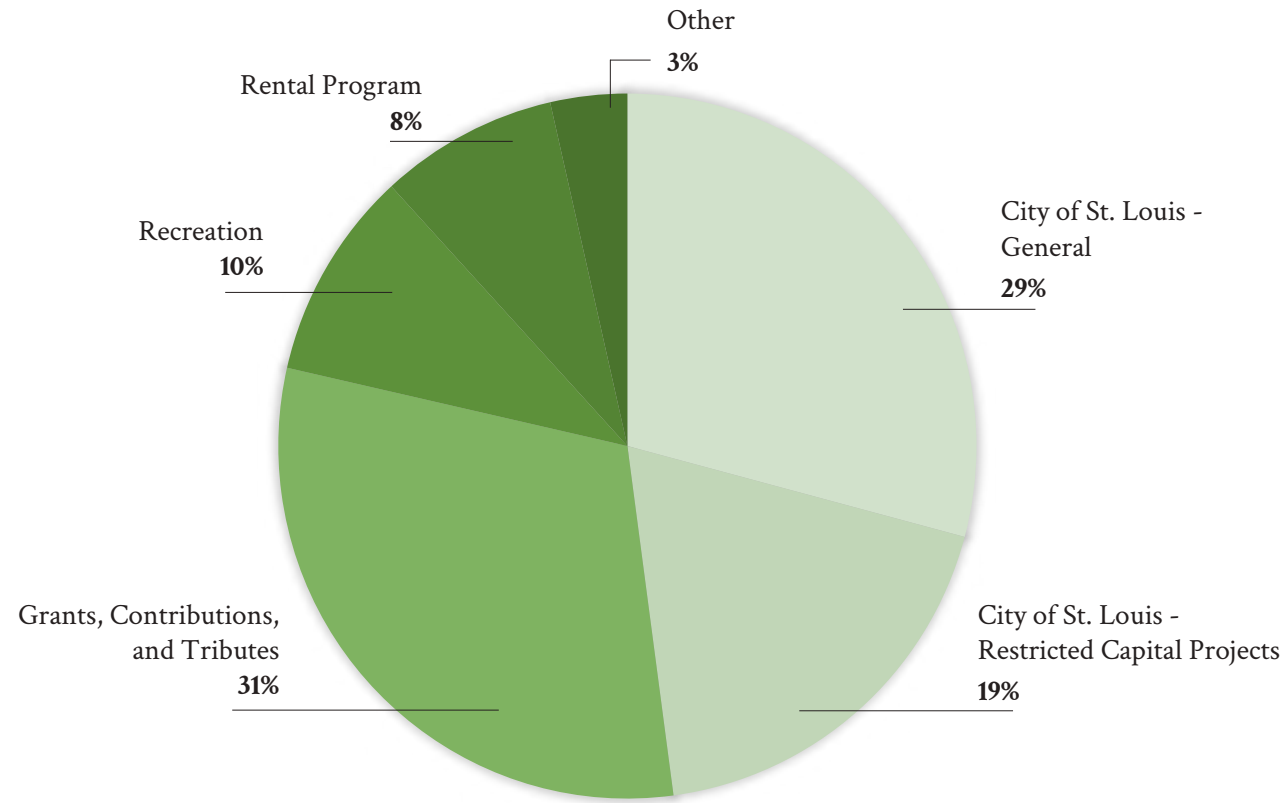
free birding  
kits available to  
school groups



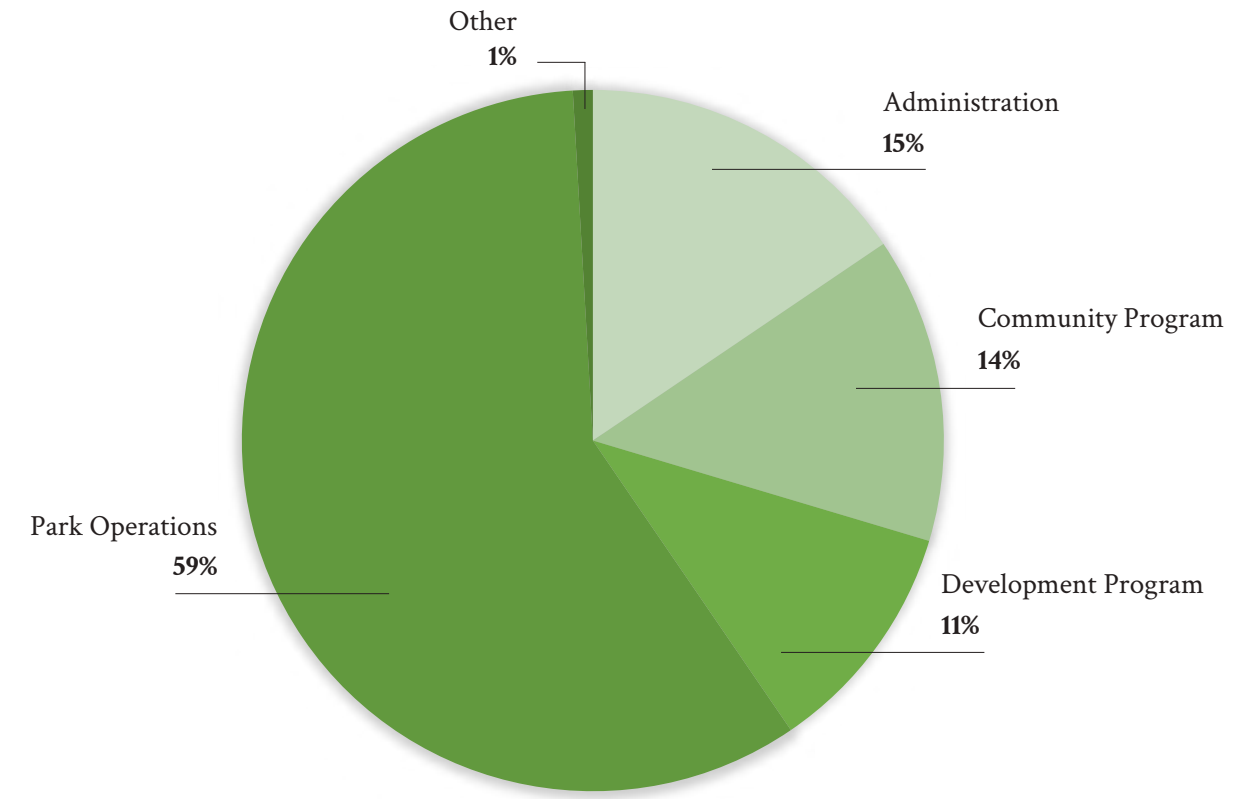
Left to right:  
Students tour the greenhouse  
Field trip explores with Park staff  
Students plant vegetable seeds to later harvest  
Class learns about germination



# Operating Revenue



# Operating Expense



## 2019 OPERATING REVENUE Fiscal Year: July 2018–June 2019

<b>PUBLIC SUPPORT</b>		
City of St. Louis - General	29%	\$725,000
City of St. Louis - Restricted Capital Projects	19%	\$465,962
<b>PRIVATE SUPPORT</b>		
Grants, Contributions, and Tributes	31%	\$762,872
<b>EARNED REVENUE</b>		
Recreation	10%	\$239,087
Rental Program	8%	\$205,590
Other	3%	\$88,368
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$2,486,879</b>

## 2019 OPERATING EXPENSE Fiscal Year: July 2018–June 2019

Administration	15%	\$394,515
Community Program	14%	\$358,316
Development Program	11%	\$275,463
Park Operations	59%	\$1,490,046
Other	1%	\$23,187
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$2,541,527</b>



# Thank you to our contributors

*Gifts made between  
July 2018–June 2019*

## TOWER GROVE PARK SOCIETY

*Members of the Tower Grove Park Society have made a special commitment to the sustainability of the Park through annual gifts of \$1,250 or more.*

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Mr. and Mrs. R. Philip Stupp, Jr.  
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### Tower Trot 5K November 4, 2018

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Morgan Ford Massage and Spa

### Flower Power May 15 and 16, 2019

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### Progressive Pavilion Party June 22, 2019

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## INDIVIDUAL, FOUNDATION AND CORPORATE GIVING

*The following individuals, foundations, or businesses generously supported Tower Grove Park with gifts of \$50 or more between July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.*

### \$125,000

Emerson

### \$25,000-\$99,999

Mr. and Mrs. James G. Berges  
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\*Deceased



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