

# City of Madison: Warner Park Community Recreation Center staff receive awards

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Staff of the Warner Park Community Recreation Center are North Star Award winners. At the 17th Annual North Star Award ceremony, Northside Planning Council recognized and honored individuals and organizations making a significant difference to the north side of Madison.

Of the winners, Chad Norquist, Maintenance Mechanic of the Warner Park Community Recreation Center (WPCRC) received an individual North Star Award and the staff of WPCRC received the High Impact Award, the ceremony's featured award.

Early in the pandemic, WPCRC was converted to a temporary men's shelter. Chad Norquist was instrumental in leading the conversion and its restoration for public use in 2020. Norquist provided daily support to the temporary men's shelter, serving as a point-of-contact for facility repairs, after-hours emergency maintenance, and custodial services while communicating with City Engineering, Dane County, Public Health Madison & Dane County, and contractors to ensure smooth operations of the shelter. Norquist's leadership, expertise, and commitment to centering racial equity, sustainability, and environmental justice led to significant savings for the City of Madison.

WPCRC staff received the High Impact Award in recognition of the important services and programs provided to teens and the community during the pandemic. As the Center reopened to the public in January 2021, after a 10-month closure to support the emergency men's shelter, WPCRC staff worked quickly to restore the facility for public use. In just one month, as one of the only public facilities in the

city offering in-person recreational opportunities, WPCRC offered a fitness center, open gym, facility rentals, and community programming. Most notably, WPCRC staff were instrumental in providing teen programs, which had been significantly impacted across the city by COVID-19. WPCRC staff made numerous adjustments and modifications to the programs and services offered as they continued to follow the evolving Forward Dane emergency orders, to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. WPCRC's role in keeping the community active, healthy, and safe during the pandemic was vital and without a single reported COVID-19 case.

WPCRC staff includes Carie Abarca, Alec Aikens Hill, Marilyn Grattan, Nimrod Hilliard, Wendy Moran, Lisa Holly, Pablo Jeffries, Kenny Jones, Kayla Malli, Chad Norquist, Jamie Pratt, Ann Sarnecki, Terrence Thompson, Zach Watson.

Northside Planning Council is a nonprofit community development organization located on the Northside of Madison, WI. With the goal of advancing racial and economic equity, NPC focuses include small business incubation, food security, regional food system coordination, vocational training, commercial district revitalization, community journalism, grassroots leadership development, and community organizing.