



A Park That Sparks STEAM Learning

It's possible, with your support

This was the moment, on a sunny morning in our courtyard, when three-year-old Lincoln suddenly crouched, his eyes wide with curiosity.

A praying mantis!

It was spontaneous, joyful learning — sparked by nature and unstructured.

But right now, outdoor learning moments like these are too fleeting. Our children — smart, imaginative, and full of questions — deserve more than patches of pavement.

They deserve a green, outdoor learning space designed for exploration in science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM). A space — on par with their suburban counterparts — that reflects their potential for careers in these fields.

Hartford's youngest children deserve the STEAM Explorers Park at the Women's League.

Will you help create it for them?



WOMEN'S LEAGUE
Child Development Center



Did you know that children today spend less time outdoors than any generation before them?

For children of color, the barriers to nature are even greater — limited access to green space, safety concerns in some urban areas, and systemic inequities in urban design (pollution, excess concrete, flooding risks) that disproportionately impact them.

Natural settings offer children limitless opportunities to explore and investigate — and build STEM skills that create a solid foundation for future learning.

The research is clear: Nature-based learning boosts children's brain development, emotional resilience, and academic readiness. And nature-based preschools have grown 25-fold in the last decade, reflecting a national shift toward outdoor learning.

Yet, in nature-based preschools, only three percent of students are Black and seven percent are Hispanic.

Women's League is uniquely positioned to close this gap.

But we need your help.

Together, we can create a **STEAM Explorers Park** on the grounds of the Women's League, so children can get the transformative benefits of nature-based learning right in Hartford.

Donors like you helped create our innovative, indoor STEAM Learning Lab. The Park will extend that STEAM focus *outdoors*, using carefully selected, age-appropriate materials and equipment, including a large greenhouse.

The new Park will replace, beautify and update the patches of pavement and underused areas that surround our building. And new pergolas (already built!) will shade child-sized tables and chairs for open-air "classrooms" — an imperative learned from the pandemic.



Our STEAM Explorers Park Can Look Like This:

Farm to Classroom

- A large greenhouse, pollinator and vegetable gardens, and a butterfly garden for caring for living things, watching growth and harvesting vegetables
- Mud kitchens with water features and sensory tables for messy, immersive exploring

Discovery Zones

- Themed areas for exploring water, light, and sound in hands-on ways
- Loose components for building ramps, digging for insects, and sensory play

Greenery

New plantings for natural beauty, shade, privacy, and discovery

Art “Studios”

- Outdoor, weatherproof easels and paints for artistic expression in any season
- Musical instruments and storytelling spaces for nurturing creativity

Inspiring Community Art

A vibrant, colorful wall mural—created by one of Greater Hartford’s celebrated muralists (with some help from our young artists!) — will greet children and visitors.

Engineering Corners

Materials for constructing ramps, bridges, and towers for developing fine motor skills

The Park will be a Community Hub, too!

We will:

- Host STEAM nights and weekend workshops for our families
- Co-host educational events with local preschools, libraries, and museums
- Offer professional development for local early childhood educators

It's More Than a Park. It's a Promise.

A promise that every child, regardless of their family's zip code or background, will have access to the countless, lasting benefits of an outstanding early education.

A promise that every child will be given the opportunity to reach their full potential, starting with readiness for kindergarten.



*Two-year-old
Xavier is ready
to plant!*

Will You Partner With Us to Deliver on that Promise?

Founded in 1917 by African American ministers' wives, Women's League has always been ahead of its time, innovating to meet the evolving needs of Hartford's children and families.

Every step of the way, people like you have lifted us up.

Now, we're the largest early education center in Greater Hartford— and nationally accredited! More than 200 infants, toddlers and preschoolers— primarily from working families in communities of color— count on us every day for quality education. Our college-educated, highly trained teachers and state-of-the-art classrooms are sources of tremendous pride.

Did you know: Our STEAM Learning Lab earned us a STEM Achievement Award from the Connecticut Science Center. A cover story followed in "Teaching Young Children," a national magazine for early educators.

We're not done.

Because wealth and racial disparities persist. And Black and Latino people will continue to be under-represented in science, technology, engineering and math fields unless we act— and build foundational STEM skills *early*.

CONTACT US for a conversation about Leadership Giving or a tour!

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Womensleaguecdc.org/Park



With your support, we can raise \$200,000 to create a STEAM Explorers Park on our grounds, and build the next generation of scientists, data whizzes, creators, and engineers.

Will You Lead the Way to a STEAM Explorers Park at the Women's League?

Leadership Circle: Giving Levels

Trailblazers
\$20,000+

Engineers
\$10,000

Builders
\$5,000

Inventors
\$2,500

Creators
\$1,000

MY GIFT

\$ _____

Gifts of all amounts are appreciated! We are proud to acknowledge Leadership Circle donors publicly and on our website, with our deepest gratitude to the visionaries whose generosity moves us forward.

Name(s) _____

(As it should appear on publicity materials)

I'd like my gift to be anonymous

Email _____ Phone _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

(optional) My gift is in Honor of in Memory of _____

(Please include address or email if you would like the person or family to be notified)

Enclosed is my check made payable to: **Women's League Child Development Center**

My employer will match my gift

Kindly return this form with your check to:

Women's League Child Development Center
1695 Main St., Hartford, CT 06120

OR please give online at womensleaguecdc.org/donate *(Check the box for the STEAM Park!)*

Women's League Child Development Center is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Gifts are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Federal Tax ID: 06-0646969

We gratefully welcome gifts from donor-advised funds.



WOMEN'S LEAGUE
Child Development Center



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