



Issue 19 / Q1 / 2023



A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

“The design work for the Detroit RiverWalk is well under way, but it is not an easy task.”

With these words, the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy began our first newsletter, published in September 2003.

During the past 20 years, we have tackled many things that turned out to not be “an easy task,” and our team is hard at work managing the busiest year of construction in the history of the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy.

The tasks today are not any easier, but our team has become stronger every year. We see how much this city loves the Riverwalk and the parks that we have built along it. We see the joy on the faces of children who come to the riverfront. We see the strength in the eyes of the seniors who spend hours each week with their friends here. We see the pride in Detroiters who feel at home on the riverfront and the awe in the faces of our out-of-town visitors when they see our riverfront.

This is work that’s worth doing. And – for the past 20 years – we have never stopped working to achieve our goals.

We have a lot to celebrate in 2023. This year marks our 20th anniversary as an organization and we’ll be celebrating this milestone all year long. We’ll have a historical display along the riverfront, the premiere of a riverfront documentary and a book about our history and development over the last 20 years. We’re also offering free Diamond Jack boat tours the second Tuesday of June, July and August and the Cullen Family Carousel will be free to ride all summer.

This spring, we will open the Southwest Greenway, making it easy and fun for families from Corktown, Mexicantown, and Southwest Detroit to go from their homes to the Detroit Riverfront.

This summer, we will keep making progress on the construction at Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park, one of the most important parks in the country.

And this fall, we will open the final piece of the East Riverwalk, and people will be able to walk all the way from East Grand Boulevard to Hart Plaza without ever having to leave the riverfront.

It’s going to be a great year and we are looking forward to celebrating it with all of you. I hope to see you soon along the beautiful Detroit Riverfront.

President & CEO



JOIN THE CONSERVANCY TO CELEBRATE ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

THE DETROIT RIVERFRONT CONSERVANCY TEAM WAS THRILLED TO LEARN EARLIER THIS YEAR THAT THE DETROIT RIVERWALK WAS NAMED BEST IN THE COUNTRY BY USA TODAY FOR THE THIRD YEAR IN A ROW.

The announcement kicked off a milestone year for the Conservancy as it celebrates two decades of transforming the Detroit Riverfront into beautiful public spaces, including more than 3.5 miles of Riverwalk, world-class parks and greenways and major new projects underway.

The Conservancy is building on its mission to “bring everybody” by inviting the entire community to participate in a year-long celebration of its 20th anniversary through free programs, grand openings and special events.

“This is a big year for the Detroit Riverfront,” said Mark Wallace, President & CEO of the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy. “People from throughout the community have helped shape this riverfront from the very beginning, and now 20 years into the project we can all celebrate our many successes. We have a lot of fun plans for this year and are looking forward to celebrating this milestone all year long.”



“We are thrilled to be named America’s Best Riverwalk once again. The transformation of our riverfront over these past two decades has been tremendous. To go from a blighted and underused riverfront to one that is recognized as the best in the country three years in a row is a testament to how much people love the riverfront and to what our community can achieve when we all work together.”

Matt Cullen, Chairman of the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy





DETROIT RIVERFRONT CONSERVANCY
FOR EVERYONE. FOR 20 YEARS.



20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS INCLUDE:

- A historical exhibition located in picturesque locations along the riverfront.
- The grand opening of two new public spaces—the Southwest Greenway in May and Uniroyal Promenade this fall.
- Free summertime Diamond Jack boat cruises on the stunning Detroit River on June 13, July 11 and August 8.
- The premiere of a new riverfront documentary in collaboration with DPTV that tells the story of the riverfront revitalization and the visionaries behind it.
- A book highlighting the history of the Detroit Riverfront's transformation.
- All annual special events, such as the Riverfront Run, Shimmer on the River, Detroit Harvest Fest & Food Truck Rally, Soiree on the Greenway and others will feature special celebrations of the 20th anniversary.

SPRING PROGRAMMING ALONG THE DETROIT RIVERFRONT

Riverfront Run

Date: June 10

Time: 8:40 a.m. and 9 a.m. starts

Celebrate the Conservancy's 20th anniversary with the Riverfront Run. This year's event features a 5k and 10k run/walk that will take participants along the Detroit Riverwalk and Dequindre Cut. Everyone will receive a medal, post-race snacks, and commemorative t-shirt. Visit detroitriverfrontrun.com for more information and registration.

Kids Fishing Fest

Date: June 11

Time: Noon to 4 p.m.

Location: Milliken State Park

Families and children of all ages are welcome at Milliken State Park for an afternoon of fishing fun. Kids Fishing Fest is an opportunity to learn about the wildlife of the Detroit River and learn a new skill. There will be free pole rental, snacks, prizes, and education stations.

Detroit Riverwalkers

Dates and Time: Every Tuesday, 8 to 10 a.m.

and Thursday, 9 to 10 a.m.

beginning June 13 through August 24

Location: Cullen Plaza

The Detroit Riverwalkers program is returning to the riverfront this year, inspiring older adults to gather with their community and care for their mental and physical wellness. Sponsored by AARP, adults 50+ are invited to meet at Cullen Plaza for a wellness walk on the Detroit Riverwalk, free blood pressure screenings, and fitness classes and information.

Visit detroitriverfront.org/things-to-do for a full list of programs and events.





MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and the Conservancy is hosting a range of programming focused on mental health and mindfulness.

Tone Matters: Sound Bowls 101

Date: Thursday, May 11

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Gabriel Richard Park
Explore the important benefits of sound awareness.

Detroit Food Academy Dequindre Cut Takeover

Date: Saturday, May 13

Time: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Location: Dequindre Cut
Visit the Dequindre Cut for a day of food, fitness, and fun for all ages.

Labyrinth Walk

Date: Saturday, May 20

Time: 1 to 2 p.m.

Location: Gabriel Richard Park
Experience a guided meditation through the Labyrinth at Gabriel Richard Park.

Working Well: Mental Health at Work

Dates: Wednesday, May 31

Location: Valade Park

Mindful Mondays at Gabriel Richard Park

Dates: Weekly from July 10 - August 28

Time: 7 to 8 p.m.

Join the Conservancy for a series of classes that will explore collaborative mindfulness practices to engage both the body and the mind.



SHIMMER ON THE RIVER 2023

The Detroit Riverfront Conservancy's largest and most-anticipated annual fundraiser, Shimmer on the River, returns this year on June 22nd at Robert C. Valade Park. Presented by the Kresge Foundation and Friends of Robert C. Valade Park, this year's Shimmer will be bigger than ever, as the Conservancy commemorates its 20-year anniversary and celebrates the individuals and organizations that have supported the vision of transforming 5.5 miles of riverfront.

Shimmer will be an unforgettable event with show-stopping music from the world-famous Prince tribute band, Purple Xperience. Shimmer guests will also have the chance to partake in many fun, festive activities. The Delta Dental Adventure Park will be filled with games, inflatables, and obstacle courses for children of all ages, and the Riverfront Boardwalk will be lined with summer activities and giveaways. In addition, guests can enjoy a strolling dinner featuring delicious eats from some of Detroit's favorite food trucks.

During the evening, the Conservancy will present the 2023 Shimmer Award, sponsored by Walker-Miller Energy Services. The Shimmer Award is the highest honor that the Conservancy can bestow, and it is presented to those who have had a significant impact on the Conservancy's mission and work. This year's honorees are **James B. and Ann V. Nicholson and Mariam C. Noland and James A. Kelly.**

Jim and Ann Nicholson have been strong advocates of corporate citizenship, community leadership, and philanthropy in Metro Detroit for decades, as well as leading supporters of the Conservancy since 2008. Their generosity has helped to transform the riverfront into a world-class gathering place for all. Mariam Noland served as an inaugural board member, and her vision for connecting greenways to the riverfront helped to inspire the Dequindre Cut. Jim Kelly has also been involved with the Conservancy since its inception and is known as a national leader in education with a passion for volunteer advocacy.

Join us as we kick-off summer and celebrate 20 years of the Detroit Riverfront at Shimmer on the River!

Purchase tickets and learn more at [Detroitriverfront.org/Shimmer](https://detroitriverfront.org/Shimmer)



SHIMMER ON THE RIVER

THURSDAY
JUNE 22

Celebrating 20 Years

ROBERT C.
VALADE PARK

5-6 PM VIP RECEPTION | 6-9 PM MAIN EVENT

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

All Sponsors Receive

Recognition on DRFC website, in press release,
and on promotional material

Inclusion in eblasts (16k+ subscribers)

Social media recognition (135k+ followers)

Listing on Sponsor Board at Shimmer

VIP tickets, which include exclusive VIP benefits

Champions of the Conservancy

\$10,000 12 VIP tickets and a private chalet

Riverwalk Partners

\$5,000 8 VIP tickets

Shimmer Partners

\$2,500 6 VIP tickets

TICKETS

VIP Ticket | \$250

Includes access to the exclusive VIP Reception
plus all Main Event benefits

Main Event Ticket | \$150

Includes strolling dinner & refreshments, live entertainment, prizes,
games, and free admission for up to two children 12-and-under

Visit Detroitriverfront.org/Shimmer to support this event and learn more!

THANK YOU TO OUR SHIMMER SPONSORS

PRESENTED BY

As of 4/24/2023

THE
KRESGE
FOUNDATION

FRIENDS OF
ROBERT C. VALADE
PARK

SHIMMER AWARD SPONSOR

walker·miller
Energy Services, L.L.C.

ADVENTURE PARK SPONSOR

 DELTA DENTAL®

CHAMPIONS OF THE CONSERVANCY

Bedrock Detroit, Matt & Karen Cullen, MGM Grand Detroit,
Piston Group, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, Visit Detroit

RIVERWALK PARTNERS

A Kid Again, Sarah & Charles McClure, Wolverine Packing Company

SHIMMER PARTNERS

Diamond Jack's River Tours, Erica & Ralph Gerson, GJC CPA'S & Advisors, Goyert-Treadwell Family,
Hollywood Casino at Greektown, JLL, MI Building & Construction Trades, The Parade Company,
Jill & Scott Riddle, Sachse Construction, William and Martha Ford Fund

IN-KIND PARTNERS

Epiphany Studios, EXP PHOTO

CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

CONSTRUCTION CREWS ARE MAKING TREMENDOUS PROGRESS ON THE PROJECTS THAT ARE TRANSFORMING THE DETROIT RIVERFRONT.

Uniroyal

Construction along the Uniroyal Promenade is nearing the final stages. Currently crews are working on building a retaining wall to hold earth back on the far eastern side of the property. The last section of the concrete walkway will be poured as soon as the retaining wall is finished, followed by the installation of final sections of the marine railing.

Electricians are currently completing the wiring for light poles, and the irrigation system is also being placed in preparation for landscaping. The installation of site furnishings and landscaping will take place this summer and early fall.

The Uniroyal Promenade will not only complete the Conservancy's vision for the East Riverfront, but it will also provide a link between Mt. Elliott Park and Gabriel Richard Park and provide a pathway to the MacArthur Bridge to Belle Isle.

The Conservancy looks forward to celebrating the grand opening of the Uniroyal Promenade this fall.

DDA Parcel

Last year, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) completed repairs along the seawall of this property, which is located between Riverfront Towers and Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park on the West Riverfront.

In the coming weeks, contracts will be awarded to the successful bidder, with on-site work beginning in June. This section of Riverwalk will include a spacious concrete plaza with tiered seating, three peaceful rain gardens, the familiar riverfront marine railing, lighting, security cameras, and beautiful landscaping.

The Conservancy anticipates completion of this project later this year.

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park

Since construction began last June, tremendous progress has been made transforming the former West Riverfront Park into Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park. Crews have poured walls for the William Davidson Sport House and are currently erecting structural steel columns and roof trusses, which will also include a custom skylight.

In the coming weeks, mass grading of the site will occur, which will allow for installation of underground utilities. Construction along the river is also progressing with the placement of steel supports to stabilize the river's edge on the west end of the site. Stone placement in the river has started and will continue throughout summer. Excavation of the Water Garden will occur later this summer.

Ralph Wilson Park will feature the William Davidson Sport House, the Huron-Clinton Metroparks Water Garden, the Delta Dental Play Garden, and the expansive DTE Foundation Hill. The park will be complete in 2024.





Southwest Greenway

Crews are currently putting the finishing touches on the Southwest Greenway, which is a little more than a half-mile in length. When the greenway is complete, it will link the West Riverfront with Michigan Central, Ford's Mobility Hub, and the Corktown, Hubbard-Richard and Southwest Detroit neighborhoods. The greenway will not only be a beautiful space to walk, run and bike, but will also include places of respite and a designated play area for children.

Contractors are completing final punch list items and moving toward a spring grand opening.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT:

GAIL WILLIAMS

Gail Williams loves Detroit, loves her community, and loves volunteering. A life-long Detroit resident, as a child she would visit the riverfront with her parents to fish and watch the boats go by. Today, she enjoys heading down to the riverfront to volunteer with the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy.

Gail has been a volunteer with the Conservancy since 2013 and has donated 260 hours of her time so far. As a riverfront ambassador, she often meets people who aren't aware of the many free and low-cost events that are available to the community, and so she enjoys talking to visitors and sharing information about riverfront programming and happenings around the city.

"This is our city and that's our Riverwalk," she said. "It's for everyone."

While Gail enjoys volunteering, it is also a role that she takes very seriously, and one that she would encourage others to consider if they have the time and love the city of Detroit.

"Being a volunteer is a respectful job. You're representing not only the Conservancy, you're representing the city, and so you need to put your best foot forward," she said.

For Gail, spending time on the riverfront isn't just about volunteering and giving back to the city she loves – it's also a place where she feels safe, can unwind, connect with her community, and be completely herself.

"The riverfront is my place to escape to. I could sit down there all day. On the riverfront, people don't see color; they don't see religion – people can come together regardless of their background."

"This is our city and that's our Riverwalk. It's for everyone."

Gail Williams

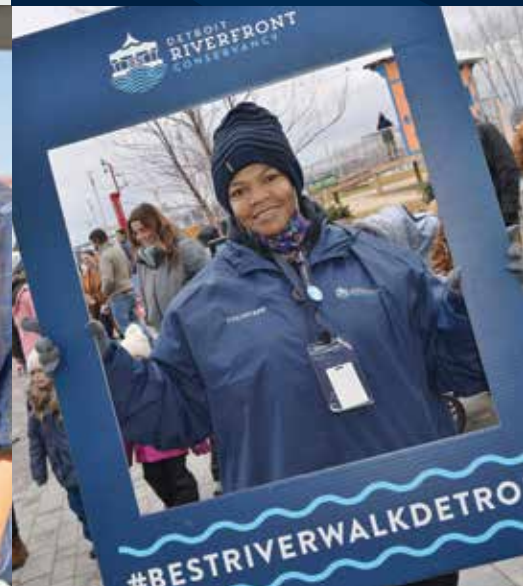


WAYS TO VOLUNTEER

The Detroit Riverfront Conservancy welcomes millions of visitors each year through its various events and programs. Our dedicated volunteer corps is the force that makes it all possible.

Become a Detroit Riverfront Volunteer Today! Make new friends while helping make the riverfront a safe, clean, beautiful, and accessible gathering place for all.

To learn more and apply, visit www.detroitriverfront.org/volunteers or call (313) 566-8207.





BEST IN THE U.S.A. THREE YEARS IN A ROW

It's a Three-Peat, Trifecta and Hat Trick! The Detroit Riverwalk was named Best in the U.S. for the third year in a row. Thank you to everyone who voted for us!

In addition to being a four-season destination for over three million visitors each year, our upcoming calendar is filled with excitement with our popular special events and variety of programs along the riverfront. With our 20th anniversary celebrations underway, 2023 might be the biggest year ever for the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy.

Our fundraising efforts are essential to our mission of keeping the riverfront clean, safe and beautiful for everyone to enjoy. We are most fortunate to live in a community as generous as Metro Detroit making it possible for us to continue this mission for generations to come.

Thank you to everyone who so selflessly supports our efforts. We couldn't do what we do without each of you.

If you're looking to wear your love of the Detroit Riverfront on your sleeve, please check out detroitriverfront.org/RiverfrontMerch for some cool swag, like Dequindre Cut hoodies and Best Riverwalk items like T shirts, baby onseies, totes and baseball hats. You can also visit the All Things Marketplace storefront in Corktown at 1620 Michigan Ave., Suite 123.



As we look forward to the next 20 years of transformation, we do so knowing that the key to our success is generous community support. In honor of this milestone year, we invite you to consider an increased gift of support by visiting https://detroitriverfront.org/give/2023_NLI.



ADDITIONAL WAYS TO GIVE

In addition to visiting our online store, here are some ways you can help out:

- Make a one-time donation or become a Monthly Sustainer
- Learn about your employer's matching gift program
- Become a member and receive exclusive benefits
- Underwrite a commemorative bench or make an honorary gift for a loved one
- Support the Conservancy at its fundraising events

Visit detroitriverfront.org/waystohelp

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL:

 twitter.com/DetroitRvrfrnt

 instagram.com/detroitriverfront

 facebook.com/detroitriverfrontconservancy

 detroitriverfront.org/waystohelp



600 Renaissance Center Suite 1720 Detroit, MI 48243-1805
313.566.8200 | DETROITRIVERFRONT.ORG

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 | A Message from Leadership
- 2 | Join The Conservancy To Celebrate Its 20th Anniversary
- 4 | Spring Programming Along the Detroit Riverfront
- 6 | Shimmer on The River 2023
- 8 | Construction Updates
- 10 | Volunteer Spotlight: Gail Williams
- 11 | Best in the U.S.A. Three Years in a Row

Non Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 730
Southfield, MI

