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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Orion Township awarded the 2023 Great Lakes Park, Facility, or Program Award for the Miracle League Field of North Oakland**

**Orion Township, MI (January 11, 2023)** Orion Township has been recognized by the Great Lakes Park Training Institute for the Miracle League Field located at Friendship Park with the Great Lakes Park, Facility, or Program Award for projects that represent the cutting edge of the park and recreation profession in the United States.

The Miracle League Field provides children with physical and cognitive challenges an opportunity to play baseball as a team member in an organized league. The Miracle League is hope, determination, and a display of human spirit that is unequalled. It's about making new friends in an inclusive atmosphere, building self-esteem, and being treated like everyone else.

The field is no ordinary field; the firm rubber surface allows children in walkers and wheelchairs to move with ease. There are no trip hazards as the bases are built into the field as part of the rubber surfacing. The game is more than just a game though. Something extra special happens as each child takes to home plate with their "walk-up" music playing – it's like they're at the World Series, and everyone is cheering for them.

Each player has a "buddy" that assists them each game. This can be fellow classmates, family members, business leaders, students, or anyone who wishes to volunteer their time to give a child the gift of baseball, whether it's for one day, or the entire season. Buddies assist players with hitting the ball and "running" the bases. If you're interested in becoming a buddy, visit **MichiganMiracle.org** for more information.

"We are honored that we were chosen for this award; it's a testament to the hard work and dedication of the Orion Township team. The Miracle League Field is one of the most exciting projects I've been a part of since I became Supervisor." Orion Township Supervisor Chris Barnett said. "The idea of inclusivity was in our minds for years; we were determined to make it happen. As soon as we brought this project to the community's attention, everyone came together, and supporters rallied and raised over one million dollars to make this field a reality."

Orion Township will be formally presented with the Great Lakes Park, Facility, or Program Award on February 28, 2023, during an Awards Reception. The Great Lakes Park Training Institute annually presents this award in recognition of park facilities and programs completed within the last five years that represent the cutting edge of the leisure movement throughout the United States. These projects represent innovative, cost-effective design, demonstrate the utilization of community input and resources, and make a significant impact on their community.

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