

Massachusetts's Gov. Baker celebrates 2022 kick-off of popular 'Summer Nights' program

Second kickoff event of the 8th annual Summer Nights Program at the DCR's Roxbury Heritage State Park in the City of Boston.

The Baker-Polito Administration today celebrated the second kickoff event of the 8th annual Summer Nights Program at the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Roxbury Heritage Park in the City of Boston. This year, the Administration increased funding for the program to \$2.5 million from \$1 million, after beginning the program with \$213,000 in 2015 after taking office. Additionally, the Administration is partnering with over 70 organizations this summer to offer free programming in the following communities: Boston (Dorchester, East Boston, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, Roxbury, and South Boston), Beverly, Brockton, Cambridge, Chelsea, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Methuen, Milton, New Bedford, Quincy, Randolph, Stoughton, Springfield, Taunton, and Worcester.

"Since 2015, the Summer Nights Program has ensured many teens and young adults have had the opportunity to participate in free, active programming offered in their community in a safe and social environment," said Governor Charlie Baker. "Our Administration has worked hard to partner with organizations, municipalities, and public safety agencies to provide Massachusetts youth with enriching programming that will impact teens beyond the summer months."

"We started the Summer Nights Program with just a handful of

partners and locations, and now through our collaboration with organizations, we have successfully expanded it to include over 1,000 events throughout six weeks during the summer season,” said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. “Importantly, the program engages youth by building their confidence and introducing them to educational resources and recreational activities to become successful, well-rounded adults.”

The Summer Nights Program will run through August 20, 2022, and offer activities such as basketball skills, drills and tournaments, volleyball, yoga, dance, martial arts, flag football, corn-hole, fishing, ping-pong, cardio boxing, swimming, cooking, painting, zumba, dodgeball, tennis and nature exploration. Programming also includes sessions on leadership skill building, health and wellness, poetry, academic tutoring, storytelling, animation, music, media production, and career and college readiness programs. For a full list of programming, please visit the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s (DCR) Summer Nights Program webpage.

“The Baker-Polito Administration has committed to expand the Summer Nights Program each year, and with our many partners have continued to provide more diverse and inclusive opportunities for young people throughout the Commonwealth every year,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Beth Card. “It is fantastic how much Summer Nights has grown since 2015, and we are proud to support the collective effort in order to give teens safe and fun spaces to learn and grow at through such a wide variety of programs.”

“DCR is excited for another year of the Summer Nights Program, because we can see the impact it has on the young people that participate each summer,” said Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner Doug Rice. “This program not only provides a fun and safe environment for kids in urban areas to get outside, it offers the opportunity to socialize and learn new things, demonstrating the Baker-Polito Administration’s

commitment to urban youth and community building.”

DCR partners with municipalities, organizations, public safety agencies, and others through grants to established urban youth engagement programs that are both free and safe in urban areas during the summer season. Additionally, DCR’s popular Movies in the Parks Series returns and will be offered as part of the Summer Nights Program with family friendly movies being offered at the agency’s Hatch Memorial Shell in Boston, Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park in Uxbridge, Lowell Heritage State Park, Pope John Paul II Park in Dorchester, and Sylvester Baxter Park in Somerville. This year’s featured movies will include Encanto; Frozen 2; Onward; Trolls: World Tour; Uncharted; Sing 2; and Cruella.

The Summer Nights Program was created to provide young people ages 13-21 in urban areas with the opportunity to participate in recreational and educational activities during the evening hours in a safe environment. During the last eight years, the program has expanded from just four partners when it launched in 2015 to 74 partners today.