

# Green Awards

ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY COMMISSION

PRESENTS

Village of Oak Park

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# Green Awards 2021



- First United Church of Oak Park Rain Garden Project – Buildings and Grounds Team & Environmental Justice Team
- Judy Klem – Dedicated community sustainability steward
- We Clean Green, Inc. – Woman-owned local green business
- Rare Bird Preserves, Inc. – RBP Mini Farmers’ Market by Elizabeth Madden
- McLouie Robinet – Dedicated community champion and sustainability steward
- Oak Park Farmers’ Market – Farmers’ Market Citizen Commission & VOP staff
- Collaboration for Early Childhood Growing Gardeners Program – John Borrero, Executive Director. Community Team Cohorts & Albrecht Poss Family Foundation
- Chris Lindgren – Park District of Oak Park sustainability steward

# First United Church of Oak Park Rain Garden

Buildings and  
Grounds Team  
&  
Environmental  
Justice Team.



In June 2021, First United Church of Oak Park built a rain garden with a capacity to collect 1,100 gallons of rain water diversion from the southwest church roof downspout, originally connected to the sewer drain. The water flowing off the church roof into the sewer is now going into an onsite native rain garden. This project was funded by several congregational mission teams. Local nurseries provided native grasses, hedges, and wildflowers. Two Boy Scout Troops (#16 and #308) provided service work days to build the structure of the basin, plant the native plants, and spread mulch. Continued maintenance of the garden will be provided by members of the Building and Grounds Team and Environmental Justice Team.

# Judy Klem

## Sustainability Steward



Judy has lived in Oak Park for 18 years and is passionate about environmental stewardship and awareness. She is leading by example by incrementally replacing her residential turf grass with native plants. This reduces water and lawncare needs while beautifying the community. Her parkway pollinator garden has an immersive footpath that shows other residents the green possibilities at their own homes. She is involved in community organizations such as Interfaith Green Network, West Cook Wild Ones, and Oak Park Temple where her campaign to recycle plastic bags just earned a recycled plastic bench. She also took advantage of the Better Homes, Better Planet energy efficiency program to install solar panels on her roof.

# We Clean Green, Inc.

Lee Latham,  
Founder



Lee got involved in sustainability by volunteering with an organization that assigned the task of creating a green project. She noticed a gap in the market of environmentally conscious cleaning companies, so she bought a commercial steam cleaner and founded We Clean Green in 2013. Using steam cleaners reduces their environmental footprint by eliminating packaging and harsh chemicals. She can get an entire house sparkling clean with less than a gallon of water! Her team also uses reusable micro-fiber cloths instead of wasteful paper products. Keeping it local allows them to reduce emissions from transportation. Coming from a background in corporate America, Lee finds this work to be extremely rewarding and encourages people to follow their passions.

[wecleangreen.us](http://wecleangreen.us)

# Rare Bird Preserves, Inc.

Elizabeth  
Madden



Rare Bird Preserves began in 2007 as a small batch artisan jam producer using French and English techniques. The company grew to its current location at 211 Harrison St. and now includes pastries, housewares, and gifts.

Elizabeth's background in Farmers' Markets and collaborative kitchens inspired her to get creative during the pandemic and support other small businesses. In a plan to enrich the neighborhood and utilize the alley space next to their building, she formed the RBP Mini Market. This pop-up has grown to support many outside and local vendors such as Mick Klug Farms, Star Farms, Publican Quality Bread, Petals Farm, Masa Madre and much more! The RBP Mini Market runs April – October on Thursdays from 8am-10am.

[rarebirdpreserves.com](http://rarebirdpreserves.com)

# McLouie Robinet

## Sustainability Steward



McLouie or “Mac” has lived in Oak Park since 1965 and is a lifelong advocate of sustainability. His interest in the topic was originally sparked after attending a powerful 1970s seminar featuring Jim Hanson who warned the public of the imminent warming of the planet. Mac quickly took on the role of environmental advocate. In 2011, he and his wife Harriette installed a geothermal heat pump in their backyard for clean heating and cooling of their home. He also actively educates the community on the enabling technology for electrification. He has served on multiple citizen advisory commissions over the years with the Village of Oak Park and the Park District. These include: The Environment and Energy Commission, the Green Advisory Commission, Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee, and the Interfaith Green Network.

# Oak Park Farmers' Market

Famers'  
Market  
Citizen  
Commission  
& VOP Staff



Its no secret that the past few years have been difficult, but the Oak Park Farmers' Market was up for the challenge. The hard work of the Farmers' Market Commission along with Village staff allowed the market to remain a safe, fun, and sustainable event while continuing to support local growers and makers when they needed it most. The market has played an essential role in creating a healthy and thriving community for decades. Its support of Go Green Days and Zero Waste initiatives has provided important environmental education on a variety of topics and been a shining example of environmental stewardship in Oak Park.

[oak-park.us/our-community/oak-park-farmers-market](http://oak-park.us/our-community/oak-park-farmers-market)

# Collaboration for Early Childhood Growing Gardeners Program

John Borrero,  
Executive  
Director

Community  
Team  
Cohorts

Albrecht  
Poss Family  
Foundation

In Fall of 2020, Collaboration for Early Childhood proposed establishing early learning gardens as a way to enhance STEM concepts to our young children in a hands-on, outdoor setting. Thanks to a grant from the Albrecht-Poss Family Foundation, this program became a reality and launched in Spring of 2021. 11 programs made up the inaugural cohort and represent a diverse mix of schools, centers, and home day cares.

Participants received the following as part of the program:

- Raised garden bed custom built for each site's unique space and filled with soil.
- Subpod compost container, along with a separate delivery of worms
- Gardening tools
- Gift card to purchase plants and seeds
- 12 garden lessons



[Collab4kids.org/growing-gardeners-program](https://collab4kids.org/growing-gardeners-program)

# Chris Lindgren

Superintendent  
of Parks and  
Planning for  
the Park  
District of Oak  
Park



Chris has been with the Park District since 2013. His major responsibilities are the maintenance and upkeep of all 18 parks, 22 facilities, capital project management, and ADA Coordinator.

## Chris' Sustainability Accomplishments:

- Installed rain water harvesting systems saving over 1.25 million gallons of water annually.
- Installed 1250 solar pv panels totaling 365 kW over 9 facilities.
- Lowered fleet fuel usage by through no idling and routing changes.
- Installed green infrastructure to reduce storm water.
- Built an all-electric near net zero LEED Platinum Environmental Education Center & an all-electric Passive House Certified Net Zero Verified Center.
- Created the PDOP Sustainability Plan to lay out a roadmap for the future.
- PDOP Greenhouse Gas Inventory
- Outreach, education, advocacy, and much more!