



City of New Bedford  
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## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

### **Officials, family break ground on Noah's Place Playground**

**New Bedford, Massachusetts-** Mayor Jon Mitchell and city officials joined Victor and Christine Fernandes and members of the Team Noah Foundation to officially break ground today on Noah's Place Playground, a space dedicated and accessible to children with physical disabilities. The playground at Marine Park on Popes Island is a longtime goal of the Team Noah Foundation and has been made possible through their fundraising efforts and the generosity of numerous donors.

The Team Noah Foundation approached the City in 2015 to propose the playground, which will be the largest fully accessible and inclusive play space in a 50-mile radius, meeting a need for many local families to recreate, socialize, and exercise with the added bonus of enjoying the harbor views. Noah's Place Playground will be a fully accessible, all-abilities play space. There will be several levels of play intended to attract children and encourage exploration and discovery. This inclusive playground allows children of all abilities the opportunity to play together, as well as bringing children together with parents and grandparents with disabilities. The playground is a collaboration between the Team Noah, a local nonprofit dedicated to making a difference to children and families with special needs and medical conditions, and the City of New Bedford. It has been designed by Jorge Figueiredo, Associate Principal of Mount Vernon Group Architects, Inc.

#### **About the Team Noah Foundation:**

The Team Noah Foundation was founded in honor of Noah Fernandes. In 2006, Noah was diagnosed with M.E.L.A.S. – a progressive and degenerative mitochondrial disease. One of its goals is funding research for The United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation (UMDF) in hopes of one day finding a cure. Only one year after his diagnosis, Noah began attending The Schwartz Center for Children, where he received physical, occupational, speech and aquatic therapies. The foundation aims to help fill in the gaps where insurances and government funds fail. The foundation works to ensure that no child is left without the proper equipment they need – be it audio/visual, wheelchairs, walkers, or more.

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