



Adam J. Bello
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

News from the Office of

ADAM BELLO

MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Jack's Place Playground Now Open

County Executive Adam Bello joined Anne Marie and AJ Heiligman and their family to cut the ribbon on the 10,000 square foot playground in Monroe County's Webster Park

ROCHESTER, NY – Monroe County Executive Adam Bello joined Anne Marie and AJ Heiligman, parents of Jack Heiligman, and their family today to celebrate the grand opening of Jack's Place playground in Monroe County-owned Webster Park.

The dinosaur-themed playground honors the memory of 3-year-old Jack Heiligman of Webster, who died in October 2016. This is the second Jack's Place playground constructed by the Just Acts of Caring and Kindness (JACK) Foundation, established by Jack's parents after their son's death to help inspire the community to perform random acts of kindness and to raise funds for community playgrounds. The first Jack's Place opened in Penfield's Rothfuss Park in August 2017.

"I'm humbled to stand with the Heiligman family to celebrate the bittersweet opening of the second Jack's Place playground," said Bello. "The Heiligmans suffered an unimaginable loss but have found the strength to transform their grief into a force that helps make our community better for everyone. I hope we can all honor Jack's memory by enjoying these playgrounds and by always remembering to be kind to one another."

Jack's Place, in the 550-acre Webster Park, is located on the south side of Holt and Lake Roads. At 10,000 square feet, or nearly a quarter-acre, it is the larger of the two Jack's Place playgrounds. Three things Jack loved are incorporated into its design: dinosaurs, climbing and the color blue. The playground features a wooden playground with slides, climbing walls, monkey bars, swings, balancing bridges, two O'Tannenbaum spinners and a "dinosaur dig" where children can unearth faux dinosaur bones hidden in blue rubber mulch. It also has a Little Library where families can borrow and donate new and used books.

"We are beyond thankful for the continued community support of our family for the past 3 years," said Jack's parents, Anne Marie and AJ Heiligman. "The JACK Foundation and Jack's Place Playgrounds help us cope everyday with our loss and brings us some peace. We are grateful we can keep Jack's memory alive with these playgrounds, we don't want anyone to ever forget about our Jack."

The approximate cost for the playground was \$200,000 with all funds raised by the JACK Foundation. Construction was led and completed by AJ Heiligman and a group of skilled craftsmen. Jack's brother and sister Joey and Allie Heiligman assisted.

"I'm proud to be part of a community that's shown so much support for the Heiligman family and stepped up to help build these amazing playgrounds that pay homage to Jack's memory," said Bello. "Jack's Place is an excellent example of the power this community has when we stand up for one another, support each other and when we all work together. This is a fantastic place for kids and families to come and play while they enjoy Webster Park, and I invite families to come and check it out."

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