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Mission Statement

We create a shared passion for year-round outdoor adventure in the Minneapolis area, focusing on underserved youth and families.

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LOPPET NORDIC

RACING: See links below for LNR Coaches and bios:

[TRAIL KIDS Juniors](#)
[Adults](#)

ADVENTURES

Loppet Ski Club Head Coaches
Tom Anderson
Mike Bash
Steve Casey

Junior Loppet Coaches
Ryan Atwell
Mary Bolla
Mollie Gillberg
Dave Mott
Sandra Peterson
Mark Raderstorf
Allie Rykken
Ben Sonquist
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Run Club Coaches

David Bitner
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NOTES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SPRING 2018 JOHN MUNGER

What a whirlwind of a winter... From Super Bowl LIVE to the Masters World Cup to the Loppet Festival, from fundraising to new buildings, from snowmaking to trail grooming, from LNR to Adventures, and from goodbyes to hellos, this was a HUGE winter for the Foundation.

- **Capital Campaign.** A year ago we were sitting at about \$4 Million raised - with almost \$1 Million to go. We had a new Development Director just starting... We needed to raise \$250K just to get to the point where we could start construction. I'll admit we were a little worried... But our community stepped up. Led by our Campaign Co-Chairs David Dayton and Dick Howard, this past winter, we exceeded our campaign goals - meaning less financing and a healthier Loppet Foundation.
- **The Trailhead.** This winter has seen the building rise from the mud. For those of you who have not yet been inside, you are in for a treat! Even for those of us who were involved in the planning from day one, the actual



building exceeds our expectations. Thanks to HGA and Kalcon Construction for helping us get there. And don't forget that we finalized our partnership with Cajun Twist. Real food. Great people. Beer and wine. We can't wait! Look for The Trailhead to open this summer...

- **Financing.** With a lot of blood, sweat, and tears (okay, mostly tears) we were able to wrap up our various financing ends, leaving the organization in a much stronger and better position. New Market Tax Credit financing (incredibly complicated if you must ask). Guaranties backing our otherwise unsecured loans (thank you Minneapolis Parks Foundation, the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, and another very important but more anonymous guarantor). Sunrise Bank, Bremer Bank, the Otto Bremer Foundation, Old National Bank, the Local Improvement Support Corporation (LISC), the Community Reinvestment Fund (CRF), the City, the Webber-Camden Neighborhood Association, and individuals - like our wonderful Treasurer, Judd Larson, LISC's Kate Speed, and CPED's Jim Terrell.

Point is that it was a herculean effort to get us over the finish line. Thank you finance community!

- **Events.** I guess we did a few things this year... The Masters World Cup was a train stopper! Super Bowl LIVE on Nicollet Mall was incredible - thank you to Craig Jarvinen who did an amazing job leading that effort. The Finn Sisu Sprints were maybe our best single event ever - with giant crowds, a fun course (thank you American Birkebeiner Foundation for loaning Minneapolis your bridge!), rock-n-roll lights, and beautiful big snowflakes topping it all off... Oh, and we ran a nine-day Loppet Festival as well - complete with an on-the-fly change in plans for the Hoigaard's Classic Marathon events, the biggest and best Luminary Loppet ever, and a perfect Columbia Skate Marathon Sunday to finish off the festivities... WOW!
- **Loppet Nordic Racing.** Our Olympic-level coaches once again set a high bar for the whole organization - stepping in to help keep the whole organization at a high level. They ran the Sprints downtown. They set up the course for the Loppet. They sent athletes to international events. They grew TRAIL KIDS to record levels. And they won the overall title as the best club in the country at Junior Nationals in Soldier Hollow, Utah. Not a bad winter...
- **Adventures.** A record ten Minne-Loppet programs. Hundreds of kids participating in the Minne-Loppet. Hundreds more experiencing skiing on Nicollet Mall as part of Super Bowl LIVE. Three Junior Loppet Teams. And Adventures is now moved into its new headquarters building in North Minneapolis!
- **Trails and Recreation.** Under the steady hand of Isaac Kasper we grew our snowmaking loop from 3.3 kilometers last year to 7.5 kilometers this year. Wow! Despite ongoing construction issues we managed to keep the lights on, the grooming was world class, we added 4.5 miles of new mountain bike event trails, and we did it all without our new permanent home...
- **Saying Goodbye to Old Employees and Welcoming New Employees.** More than once this winter I have heard the term inflection point. Wasn't quite sure what it meant. But I guess it has something to do with the day you say goodbye to old friends like Margaret Adelsman, Mike Erickson, Nancy Nelson, Lindsey Johnson, and Allie Rykken. Bittersweet days for the Foundation. These are people who gave their blood, sweat and tears to help the Foundation get where it is today; they will always be part of our community. Fortunately, we have seen great new faces arrive... people like Jackie Baker, Alora Jones, Paul Johnson, and Nicole Cueno - with others, like Marybeth Liebsch, stepping into larger roles.

So I guess you could say it has been a busy winter... We hope you enjoyed it.

Two things that I would ask of you... First, don't hesitate to express your appreciation to the Loppet staff and volunteers who worked so hard to make our community

better this year. We were really ambitious (don't know whose fault that was...). If The Trailhead had been done it might have been a bit easier. But the reality is that we were not yet to sustainability. The staff and volunteers made this winter happen by sheer force of will. And they all deserve a big pat on the back.

Second, remember that we need you more than ever right now. We need you to volunteer. It is the human connections with people like you who make the Loppet so powerful. And we need you to continue to donate. We are at an inflection point - that point between force of will and sustainability. We need you to help us get there because if we do get there we will establish a new model and, with the combination of our community and the infrastructure around The Trailhead, we can change the world together.

As always, I look forward to seeing you on the trails (and, this summer, at The Trailhead!)



LOPPET ADVENTURES



MINNE-LOPPET RECAP

ALORA JONES, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

This has been a big year for Minne-Loppet participants! The 2017-2018 season of the Minne-Loppet program brought with it lots of good times, great snow, and new opportunities for our kids.

This youth development program reached more than a thousand elementary school students this year, leading them through a curriculum that uses ski lessons and nutrition-based education as vehicles to help build healthy habits that will last a lifetime. Minne-Loppet students were instructed by Loppet coaches in the ABCs of cross-country skiing, including weight transfer, balance, rhythm, and efficiency of movement.

The program culminates each year with the Minne-Loppet 'race' as part of the City of Lakes Loppet Festival. Minne-Loppet students participated in a 1-kilometer race to show off the skills they'd learned over the course of the winter. Thanks to a healthy snowfall the week prior, kids were thrilled to be able to hold their race at Bde Maka Ska in Uptown.

While several Minne-Loppet participants had reservations about taking on the last hill of the course, they all made it to the finish line with some help from coaches and lots of encouraging cheers from our community! The race was started by Minneapolis' Mayor Jacob Frey, who showed up to cheer on Minne-Loppet racers and hand out medals to racers at the finish line!

In addition to the Minne-Loppet race, many students had the opportunity to show off their skills at Super Bowl LIVE, a ten-day festival in downtown Minneapolis where the Loppet Foundation created a two-block snow trail and a lineup of programming for locals and visiting football fans. Students from Nellie Stone Johnson and City View elementary schools were even interviewed by Jason DeRusha for [WCCO](http://WCCO.com)!

All in all it was a great year for the program, and we couldn't be more grateful for our supporters, volunteers, and community members (like you!) who help us bring it all together!





LOPPET HIGH SCHOOLERS — RIGHT IN THE PACK

ANDY HARRIS, HIGH SCHOOL LIASON & ADVENTURE CAMP DIRECTOR

For those who are...let's say inexperienced, in the racing world, there is a significant learning curve in terms of jargon you need to know in order to sound, let's say, experienced. Stuff like: yellow jersey, peloton, wave, drafting, the list goes on...

But there's one that I want to talk about a little bit here, that applies to what the Loppet Foundation is doing in Minneapolis high schools — the idea of the pack. When you hear that word — at least, when I hear that word — it conjures images of wolves trekking across frozen landscapes, wind whipping at their fur.

Pack is an interesting word. Going back to racing, you usually use it to describe a group of racers chasing down a leader. There are a bunch of intra-pack tactics, some of which, get this, are more cooperative than competitive.

This is strange because the laws of competition dictate that it is in your best interest that you go as fast as you can, and leave the slowpokes to eat your dust, dirt, or snow. But sometimes, you need your pack.

The Loppet has partnered with Patrick Henry, North, and Edison High Schools to bring this kind of pack-mentality to their schools, using the vehicle of outdoor activity. We had racers from each school compete or volunteer at Loppet events in the winter, seeded mountain biking as an activity for outdoor clubs, and helped the Patrick Henry ski team to a successful season.

We have created our own pack with some extraordinary kids who — in case this needs some reiteration — have been leading the pack on some incredible things on their own.

And, for some of these kids, this is the beginning of their Loppet journey. We taught a student from Bangladesh — who had never seen snow before — how to ski well enough that he competed in a Minneapolis conference ski race.

We took fifteen mountain bikers and showed them that there is no trail that they cannot handle. They were scooped right up into the pack, no questions asked, and brought up to speed.

This is the kind of generosity and cooperation that can exist in the world of outdoor adventure. Even when the goal is to cross the finish line in the fastest time possible, to race at all is a victory for the pack.

So, what's next? Well, right now, we are looking forward to the summer season so we can run, bike and canoe — not to mention waiting to welcome five hundred youth to our Adventure Camps! But you can bet that the pack is still on the move, climbing the next mountain on the horizon.





ADVENTURE CAMP GETS READY FOR A NEW ADVENTURE

ANDY HARRIS,
HIGH SCHOOL LIASON &
ADVENTURE CAMP DIRECTOR

In a year full of adventures, this camp director is looking forward to perhaps the most exciting one of all: getting kids outside and active through Summer Adventure Camp! After a large construction project led to a short hiatus over the winter, Adventure Camps are coming back with a bang in Summer 2018!

While final touches are being put on The Trailhead, we are looking forward to returning to shores of Wirth Lake for perhaps the last time. Adventure Camps are now nearly full, and our latest cohort of camp counselors are ready to brave whatever storms and sunny days lie ahead.

Spending their days in weeklong camps learning orienteering, paddling, mountain biking, and so much more, the kids in this summer's Adventure Camps will be making memories to last a lifetime. They'll also be building grit and earn bragging rights for when they grow up to become camp counselors themselves.

Ah, I can hear it now: "When I was your age, we didn't have a fancy newfangled Trailhead building! When we had morning thunderstorms, we hiked a mile up-hill, both ways, to the old Chalet using wild rhubarb as makeshift umbrellas." But I digress...

From humble beginnings, we've seen Adventure Camp grow over the years into what it is today! Serving more than 450 kids this summer, this is where the adventurers of tomorrow are born.

We can't wait to see what's next for these campers and this camp but for now, our old-school digs will have to do!



LOPPET EVENTS



A SUPER WINTER FOR LOPPET WORLD ALORA JONES, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

The 2017-18 winter season was a record-year in many ways. The Twin Cities received its largest dumping of snowfall in seven years just in time for the Loppet Festival, hosted its first Super Bowl in over 25 years, and the Loppet Foundation had its biggest and most visible winter event season ever!

Things kicked off with the 2018 Masters World Cup, an annual international cross-country ski competition hosted in a different country each year. This was the first time the event was held in the U.S. since 2008, and the first time ever that it was hosted in a major city.

The last day of the Masters World Cup was also the first day of Super Bowl LIVE, a 10-day festival in downtown Minneapolis which provided free concerts and winter activities on a snow-covered trail right on Nicollet Mall using the Birkie Bridge. Locals and visitors alike enjoyed ski demos, snow tubing, fat biking, and more thanks to staff, volunteers, and sponsors from the Loppet Foundation who made it all happen.



At the same time, the City of Lakes Loppet Festival was well underway. Expanded from one weekend to nine days of events, the 2018 Loppet Festival was one of the best we've ever seen. Thanks to a great year for natural snow, we were able to host point-to-point races for the first time in years. Plus thanks to a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Luminary Loppet shined brighter with new installations by local artists from around town.

We may have a hard time topping such an epic year in 2019, but watch us try anyway!

LUMINARY LOPPET SHINES A SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL ARTISTS

ALI TOWLE,
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

The 2018 Loppet Festival was one for the books, and the Luminary Loppet was no exception! Over 9,000 people converged on Lake of the Isles on the evening of February 3, making this the largest Luminary Loppet to date. In addition to annual favorites like the Enchanted Forest, Ice Henge and the Luminary Pyramid, a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board enabled us to present a new ice spire forest; larger-than-life penguin puppets; and an ice music ensemble! We engaged 19 talented artists to present these exciting new features. Among them were lead artists Hal Galvin, Marc Anderson, Trevor Pearson, and Kim Ford.

Long-time Luminary Loppet extraordinaire, Hal Galvin, worked with Wenonah Canoes to create 10 custom molds for the 8-foot tall, 160-pound ice spires. More than 100 candlelit spires lined the Luminary Loppet course on the north side of the lake, giving people the feeling of passing through a glowing ice forest.

Local artist and puppeteer Kim Ford captivated the crowds with six larger-than-life penguin puppets. The illuminated puppets, each with a puppeteer inside, traveled the course, interacting with kids and posing for countless selfies with eager attendees!

Marc Anderson, ice music director, immediately saw the possibilities and potential of making music with frozen water, the most iconic element in a Minnesota winter (other than road salt). He wrote beautiful original compositions for the performance, inspired by the Sami people from northern Scandinavia.

Trevor Pearson of Metro Ice Sculptures created the ice instruments, as well as a beautiful ice stage backdrop. While Pearson is a decorated ice sculptor, this was his first time creating ice instruments. "It was a really challenging, fun, and rewarding project," he said. Ice instruments



included xylophones, tubaphones, drums, udus, ice horns and whistles.

We were incredibly proud to work with these artists to captivate attendees at the 2018 Luminary Loppet!

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

LOPPET'S MASTER VOLUNTEERS

MARYBETH LIEBSCH,
EVENTS & VOLUNTEER
COORDINATOR

On Friday January 19th, 2018 the Masters World Cup kicked off in Minneapolis with an opening ceremony. Over the next seven days there would be: six races (including a team relay where athletes were nominated by their National Directors), two parties, a nightly marketplace, award ceremonies, and a closing ceremony. It was a phenomenal event that had never been in an urban setting until arriving at Theodore Wirth Park.

An event of this magnitude brought together devoted volunteers; many of whom had spent the entire last year planning this event, and then draining their vacation time at their day jobs! It would be impossible to recognize





every volunteer, as it takes so many helping hands to achieve this kind of success. Carla Pardue, who was the event secretary for Masters World Cup, summed it up best when she said:

"There is a camaraderie that happens when you work together as a team - a camaraderie that you don't realize until it is over. When you look back and can marvel at what you did - hard to believe you did it - but know that you couldn't have done it without each other."

When you go through an event like this, every one bands together and becomes friends. Many volunteers would show up at 6 am every morning and stay until the last piece of V-board was stored for the night; and then would make their way over to the Hyatt, where the nightly activities were held, repeating this process day after day. Mike Bono was the Event Director and Nels Dyste was the Chief of Competition. They are two outstanding volunteers who put hundreds of hours into this competition and were great leaders in monumental circumstances. They assembled an organizing committee that started meeting monthly last spring. Every month the organizing committee would get together and discuss everything from start grids to off-day activities for participants. Craig Rudd, Mindy Benton, Mark Raderstorf, Mary McKelvey, Rick Budde and Mike Bono were organizing committee members who, in addition to volunteering, also managed to put on race bibs and get to the start line!

After every International Ski Federation (FIS) race, the organizing committee is given a document where they are given feedback on the event. That brings me to the next special mention on my list: David Scott and his start line crew! They did an unbelievable job and were given great accolade and praise by our FIS delegation. I am proud to call them all Loppet volunteers!

Finally, I want to say thank you to the medical team, course marshals, hotel crew, finish line, awards team, course crew, operations and every volunteer who came out to World Masters week. I am so excited to be your new events and volunteer coordinator, and so many of you already have big places in my heart after our World Masters "extravaganza!"

Volunteer and I am sure you will walk away with some new friends!



LOPPET NORDIC RACING



TRAIL KIDS: KEEPING YOUTH ACTIVE AND OUTDOORS ALL WINTER LONG!

KIM RUDD

TRAIL KIDS COORDINATOR

Ninety youth ages 7-14 were active outdoors this past winter in the Loppet TRAIL KIDS Nordic Ski Program at both the Hyland Lake Park and Wirth Park locations. The season was filled with many exciting events and adventures. Below are ten top picks from the 2017-18 ski season.

1. This past November, youth and parents came out to Montana for the annual West Yellowstone TRAIL KIDS Ski Camp. The youth enjoyed many kilometers of skiing throughout the week that included the annual Thanksgiving Day relays and games event held with the Park City Youth Ski Club.
2. Many Loppet TRAIL KIDS participated in the Finn Sisu Classic and Skate Sprints at Super Bowl LIVE downtown on the Birkie Bridge! To be able to ski downtown under lights with thousands of fans cheering you on is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The first night of races included a classic relay event followed by an individual skate sprint on the second night.
3. Valentines Treasure Hunt Ski is always a favorite practice session for both coaches and youth as they ski around to different clues hidden

along the ski course at both Hyland and Wirth locations until they find a sweet and tasty treasure!

4. Adventure distance ski on Presidents Day from Wirth Chalet to Bde Maka Ska was enjoyed by around 40 youth and parents from TRAIL KIDS Team Hyland, Wirth and Anwatin!
5. "Skiing with the stars" MYSL Relay event was enjoyed by many TRAIL KIDS. Youth were paired with an older LNR Junior or local skiing "star" for a fun skate relay race at Wirth. The LNR Juniors warmed up with the TRAIL KIDS before the race and enjoyed hot chocolate following the event.
6. Midwest Junior Championships and Festival Event. Over sixty TRAIL KIDS along with youth from around the Midwest enjoyed a weekend filled with competitions in both classic and skate technique at Wirth Park on March 2-4. The event started Friday evening with the Age Gap Relay where youth and parents skied a short relay together. On Saturday TRAIL KIDS raced in individual classic race followed by a two person relay race. Sunday brought some warmer weather mixed with some rain but it did not stop the TRAIL KIDS from enjoying the skate ski events including the mass start race followed by a four person youth relay event and the skicross event. Festival events include the Fish Scale Frenzy, Paintball Biathlon, Skier Tug-of-War and Scooter Soccer.
7. CXC Youth Cup Series Age Group winners! TRAIL KIDS participants Josh Frett placed 1st overall for U12 boys in the CXC Youth Cup Standings followed by

Teague Jackson in 3rd place finish. Olympia Sparks placed 5th overall for the U12 girls standings. In the U14 age category Lauren Munger and Jonathan Clarke placed 4th in the overall standings. The CXC Youth Cup is sanctioned and scored by the Central Cross Country Ski Association (CXC), and features a series of eleven events in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. The series creates a festive environment that motivates junior athletes ages 10-13 (U12 and U14 age divisions) to succeed in attaining their performance goals. Athletes will meet many new Nordic friends, and learn how to successfully progress through the competitive skiing pipeline with the support of friends, families, and race organizers.



8. Skiwerx Series Overall age group winners of Loppet TRAIL KIDS for U10 boys were Eyob Yore 1st, Ethan Albrecht 2nd and Kobun Lien 4th. For the U10 girls category Linnea Ousdigan was 1st place overall.
9. End of season LNR/TRAIL KIDS Celebration. Around 180 TRAIL KIDS, LNR Juniors, parents and coaches gathered to celebrate the end of the Nordic season with tubing, a grill out, and an awards presentation at the Wirth Chalet.
10. The TRAIL KIDS Program is built on incredible coaches (around 20 coaches are on staff) and parent involvement. Hats off to all the great coaching staff along with all the parent volunteer coaches!



LOPPET TRAILS & REC

THE TRAILHEAD — OPEN SOON FOR SUMMER ADVENTURES! BERT JACKSON, TRAILHEAD DIRECTOR

It's been a long time coming, and there were times we doubted if we'd ever make it here, but the moment has finally (almost) arrived! Come July, we're thrilled to be officially opening our doors to the public, welcoming folks from all walks of life into their new community space at The Trailhead. Located in the heart of Theodore Wirth Regional Park, The Trailhead was intentionally designed to accommodate anyone and everyone seeking outdoor adventures in the Minneapolis area.

Upon walking through the front door, you'll immediately see a service counter staffed with knowledgeable and friendly staff who can get you started. Next you'll find yourself in front of The Trailhead's locker rooms, furnished with showers and storage lockers available for daily use and by subscription for members of Club Trailhead.

Beyond the new locker rooms, you'll be greeted by staff from our bike and ski shop — made possible through our partnership with Venture North (of Redeemer Center for Life). Here you'll be able to rent bikes, snowshoes, ski equipment, and more. You can also purchase Trailhead swag, and grab those oft forgotten items, like sunscreen and toe-warmers, that you'll need for your next adventure at Wirth. Plus be sure to take advantage of the shop's bike and ski concierge service, complimentary if you're a member of Club Trailhead!

On the far west side of the building, you'll see an indoor fitness studio which provides a great space for new and existing Loppet Nordic Racing (LNR) programs, yoga, strength and conditioning. The studio also features a large garage door which opens up to a covered outdoor area facing the new mountain bike learning area — a perfect place for your last-minute warm-up before heading out into the newly configured trail system.

When you come back, you can head back inside or straight to the outdoor patio and dining area, complete with an outdoor service counter for The Trailhead's new restaurant. Cajun Twist will serve up delicious meals daily, including fried catfish, crawfish by the pound, and other tasty seafood and vegan offerings. The restaurant will also offer a selection of wines and tap beers, so The Trailhead might just become your new favorite spot for outdoor happy hours!

But arguably the best part about The Trailhead's design is how it will operate as a point of connection to the Twin Cities, and to the great outdoors broadly. Located right off the Grand Rounds and Luce Line, directly on the Metro Transit 7 line, and of course in the heart of North Minneapolis, we at the Loppet are most excited for the opportunity this facility will create to connect more of our neighbors and community members with active outdoor lifestyles.

Our partnership with the Minnesota DNR means that folks with a wanderlust for Minnesota's great outdoors can find all the information they need to explore our state's wild spaces right here in The Trailhead. Our partnership with Venture North means people will be provided with expert advice on equipment from folks who are part of the Northside community.

Finally our partnership with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) will help us to ensure that we can provide a variety of programs and activities and realize the vision that Theodore Wirth had for this great park — providing world-class outdoor adventures in the heart of a major city.

Meet us at The Trailhead this summer — we can't wait for you to experience all it has to offer!





TRAILS FOR DAYS ISAAC KASPER, TRAILS SUPERINTENDENT

We are coming out of an amazing winter filled with epic events and lifelong memories for staff, volunteers and park patrons. It is one in which we were able to guarantee more kilometers of skiable trails than ever before! As we move out of this epic winter, we are looking forward to a season where we will continue to improve snowmaking infrastructure and open up our new mountain bike trails!

Last summer we moved earth, bored water lines and power to expand our snowmaking trail from 3.5k to 6k (for Masters World Cup we made 7.5k of machine made snow trails, but who's counting?). We sized the electrical system so that we can add lights on the Twin Lake and Green Meadow loops as funds become available in the future. And with hard work, perfect weather, and a bit of luck we were able to make enough snow before January 10th that was fit to host an international competition. We are now sitting on a world-class nordic trail system!

Soon the soil will dry enough that we will open the completed 4.25 miles of new mountain bike/multi-use trails! We also plan to construct another 1.25 miles of trails along the east bank of Bassett Creek this summer. Along with starting to host races, we will see the trails filled with riders of all skill levels daily. We are also constructing a learning and skills development area just outside of The Trailhead, where beginner and advanced riders will be able to work on their skills and instructional classes will take place.



This summer we will be adding more hydrants and snowmaking receptacles to the Twin Lake area of the snowmaking trails. This will help us be even quicker with our snowmaking efforts in early winter so that we can open up more kilometers of trails earlier. We are also working to improve our ski trail lighting system by fixing lights and installing more timers which will fully automate processes that previously required staff to physically be there and manually perform.

Our mission to get people outdoors continues to fuel our team to continually improve park users' experience. This summer will be no different. We hope the added infrastructure will continue to improve your experience in Wirth Park and help create and sustain a passion in you for the outdoors. See you on the trails!

A HOME FOR CAJUN TWIST TEÓNA WASHINGTON, OWNER AND OPERATOR, CAJUN TWIST

As a Minnesota native I've always had an appreciation for our wonderful parks and natural spaces, which is why I'm especially excited that Cajun Twist will establish its home base in an iconic public space like Theodore Wirth Regional Park.

When I was a teenager, I had the pleasure of living in New Orleans with my father. Immediately following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, my family and I relocated to the historic city in efforts to help people rebuild their homes and lives. My sacrifices did not go unrewarded.

During my time in Louisiana I had the opportunity to work on Bourbon Street, where I learned how to cook authentic Nawlins cuisine from local chefs who mentored me in the craft. I moved back home to Minnesota after my father lost his life in a tragic accident. Upon returning back to my home state, I began pairing some of the local flavor I picked up on Bourbon Street with many of my own family recipes. What came of that was the foundation for a menu that I am excited to share with you starting this summer!

What started as a small side-project of feeding gumbo and cornbread to family and friends grew into a full-service catering business which will now find its first restaurant-home inside the walls of The Trailhead. Through this partnership with the Loppet Foundation and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, I'm able to see the culmination of all my training and hard work over the last dozen years. This opportunity means that Cajun Twist will have the ability to hire from within the neighborhood, and serve delicious meals made with love to all types of people in this community. Come on down this summer for your post-workout meals, my staff will be ready and happy to feed you!

Join the

LOPPET



Adventure

ATTEND AN EVENT



May 20, 2018



July 22, 2018



Sept 22, 2018



Feb 1-3, 2019

BECOME A MEMBER

Invest in adventure by becoming a member of the Loppet Foundation. We work to make sure that everyone, regardless of circumstance, can have an outdoor adventure right here in Minneapolis. Help make it possible by making a donation, becoming a member. Plus enjoy exclusive perks like free access to member events, discounts for Adventures programs and meals at Cajun Twist, and voting rights at the annual member meeting. [Learn more and become a member today!](#)

MEET US AT THE TRAILHEAD



Your new home for outdoor adventure in Minneapolis —coming soon to Wirth Park!