

A Very Special Playground



Park Chooses Rosetta Walls to Create Accessible Area for All Kids

The CHALLENGE

In 2011, design plans were completed for a special playground in St. Charles, MO, a playground that would allow children of all abilities—and disabilities—play together and have fun.

“Discovery Playground” at Jaycee Park is just one of the parks that the non-profit organization Unlimited Play has helped design and build since 2003. The organization was formed when the mother of a special needs child saw how frustrating it was for her son to play and interact with other kids at traditional playgrounds. Wanting to make a difference, founder Natalie Blakemore set to work. Discovery Playground is the newest of 7 playgrounds the organization has been involved with to date.

“The concept of Discovery Playground is a play space of adventure around every corner for everyone of all abilities, whether age 1 or 101,” explained Maralee Britton, Director of Parks and Recreation Department for the City of St. Charles. She further explained the challenge of this particular site and choosing a design: “It was important we use specific landscaping materials to create a feeling of the Missouri River Bluffs and the rolling hills found throughout St. Charles,” she said.

To keep with this theme, the project was actually designed to **make use of the hillside** and include natural stone boulders to outline the playground. But since the Parks and Rec Department was originally considering installing this portion of the project, they wanted a solution that would be more dimensionally consistent and easy to install.

PROJECT NAME: Jaycee Park Discovery Playground

BLOCK MANUFACTURER: Midwest Block & Brick, Jefferson City, Missouri

CUSTOMER: Unlimited Play, Developmental Disabilities Resource Board, and the St. Charles Parks and Recreation Department

WALL INSTALLER: Landesign LLC

DESIGN: SWT Design and All Inclusive Rec

PROJECT LOCATION: St. Charles, Missouri

YEAR BUILT: 2012

(continued on reverse)



The SOLUTION

The choice was clear, Britton said: “Blending the play structures within the hillside using the Rosetta stone for appearance and functionality created a unique play space for many years to come.”

Officials chose Rosetta’s Outcropping Collection to line the playground, retain parts of the hillside, and create a water play area with a natural look reminiscent of the Missouri Bluffs. The project included the Rosetta Outcropping Collection and the Irregular Step Collection, as well as several Freestanding Outcropping units.

“What really resonated with the team is that Rosetta eliminates a lot of the question marks that come with using natural stone,” explained David Mudd of Midwest Block and Brick. “A lot of the variables with natural stone are hard to pin down, but with Rosetta, a lot of those are eliminated. It makes it easy to know what you are going to need and how it will go together.”



Landesign LLC handled the installation of the Rosetta walls on site. Neil Trautmann, who supervised the construction for the Saint Charles Parks & Recreation Department, added “During the playground project we had to make several site adjustments to the Rosetta walls around the playground and water play area. **The contractor was still able to get the Rosetta material installed quickly. Our department is now using Rosetta to improve several other city parks. We are also doing the installation work using our own parks department staff.**”

The official opening and ribbon cutting ceremony took place on October 5, 2012. Bridget Ohmes, Council Member Ward 10 said, “This playground project exemplified a great collaborative community response to a much desired need within our city parks.”

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