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MUELLER CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING OF BRANCH PARK

Latest Outdoor Space Honors Former Tillotson President Mary Elizabeth Branch

Austin, Texas – May 17, 2019 – The Mueller community today celebrated the grand opening of its newest green space, Mary Elizabeth Branch Park. The new park, named for noted former president of Tillotson College (later Huston-Tillotson University), was commemorated with a ceremony featuring a release of 100 butterflies and remarks from Austin City Council Member Kathie Tovo, current Huston-Tillotson President Dr. Colette Pierce Burnette and Catellus Senior Vice President Ken Blaker.

Branch Park marks the seventh signature park in the Northeast Austin community, which currently has more than 90 acres of parkland. Now 15 years in, Mueller is one of the largest green communities in Texas, delivering on the vision to create a sustainable, mixed-use, mixed-income urban village in the heart of Austin.

“Parkland is vital to the health of our city, and we’re excited Branch Park now offers a vibrant space for our children and families to enjoy the outdoors,” said Council Member Kathie Tovo. “I’m honored to help dedicate this park to a great Austin legend and to officially open this beautiful space that will serve Austinites for years to come.”

As President of Tillotson College, from 1930 to 1944, Mary Elizabeth Branch was responsible for returning the college to its status as a senior, co-educational institution renowned for departments of education, music and academic excellence for students of African ancestry. Throughout her tenure, she led the physical re-creation of Tillotson through the addition of new buildings, doubled the number of faculty with more rigorous hiring credentials and enabled the university to offer scholarships to worthy applicants. This work helped successfully transform the women’s junior college into a four-year, co-educational senior school.

“Mary Elizabeth Branch was an incredible pioneer, who blazed trails others only dreamed of. It is a true privilege to be a part of the commemoration of this park in her honor,” said current Huston-Tillotson President and CEO Dr. Colette Pierce Burnette. “I am so pleased Mueller is dedicating this park to an incredibly important person who worked to bring equity and opportunity to the black community and to pave the way for tens of thousands of people she would never know.”

Branch Park is located at 2101 Aldrich Street and features amenities, including sand volleyball courts, a custom play airplane for kids and a dog run. The playscape is constructed from recycled materials and native or adaptive landscaping is incorporated throughout the park. Branch Park also features an interactive waterscape that emulates the way water flows in Central Texas. With a push of a button, park goers can operate bubblers and jets that represent rain. The water then channels through an area that resembles a Hill Country stream before it spills out of limestone cliff blocks onto a stone surface to offer an interactive experience for people of all ages.

“Since the planning and inception of Mueller, parks have always been a priority for our community, which is only fitting in a city where people are passionate about being outside and enjoying green space,” said Catellus Senior Vice President Ken Blaker. “We’re proud to offer this new park to not only those living and working at Mueller, but the entire greater Austin community as a place for recreation or relaxation.”

Mueller will continue its celebration of the new green space this evening with the entire community. Activities include musical performances, a bubble magician, games such as volleyball and bocce ball and more. Community members are invited to explore the park and enjoy the festivities in Branch Park from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

ABOUT MUELLER: Mueller is one of the nation’s most notable mixed-income, mixed-use communities located in the heart of Austin. The 700-acre site of Austin’s former airport is being transformed into a diverse, sustainable, compatible, revitalizing and fiscally responsible master-planned community. Mueller is a joint project between the City of Austin [Economic Development](#) department and [Catellus Development](#). Upon completion, Mueller will feature at least 6,200 single-family and multi-family homes, a mixed-use town center district known as [Aldrich Street](#), 4.5 million square feet of prime commercial space, including 750,000 square feet of local and regional retail space, 140 acres of public parks and open space, plus Dell Children’s Medical Center, the Austin Film Studios, The Thinkery children’s museum, H-E-B grocer and the Austin ISD Performing Arts Center. For more information, visit www.MuellerAustin.com, find us on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/MuellerAustin and follow us on Twitter [@MuellerAustin](https://twitter.com/MuellerAustin).

ABOUT CATELLUS: Catellus is a national leader in mixed-use development, solving some of America’s most complex land challenges. With nearly 30 years of experience as a master developer, Catellus has transformed former airports, military bases and urban industrial sites into thriving retail, residential and commercial communities. These projects, which often include substantial public amenities, add economic, social and environmental value to the communities they serve. Catellus has both the financial strength and development expertise to turn vision into reality at even the most demanding development sites. For more information, visit www.catellus.com.

ABOUT THE CITY OF AUSTIN, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT: The City’s Economic Development Department, formed in 2002, has led redevelopment, small business development, business recruitment, international economic development, and the cultural arts, music, and film programs for the City. With a focus on regenerating key assets of the city, the Redevelopment Division has implemented catalyst redevelopment projects, including the Seaholm District, Second Street Retail District, and the Mueller Redevelopment, an award-winning national model for responsible urban planning and development. Visit www.austintexas.gov/ecodev.

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