

Warman, Mara

From: Leto, Charles
Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 8:22 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Douglass Park Pool

[REDACTED] -

Thank you for sending this email to Rosa; I could not have said it any better. After [REDACTED] threatened to kick [REDACTED] a**, she should not ever return to Douglass. I agree it is just not safe for her. This "family unit" is totally unhinged.

Danny Amador wants to remain at Douglass, and so do I. Ms. Angela Sallis, the Park Director, is very sympathetic to our cause. I am going to ask for the pool to be closed on Sundays as well as Mondays. Of course, we do need more seasoned lifeguards. They pulled a senior beach lifeguard to Columbus Park after the problems there, and they will probably have to do that with us as well.

I'm sure [REDACTED] will be in touch with Danny for updates. Feel free to reach out to me as well to see how things unfold. I feel the worst for [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] that they were treated like this. But I also feel badly for the community of North Lawndale that a few bad apples could potentially close such a beautiful pool and resource for them.

Best regards,
Chuck

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2024 12:43 PM
To: Leto, Charles <Charles.Leto@ChicagoParkDistrict.com>
Subject: Fwd: Douglass Park Pool

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----- Forwarded message -----
From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Date: Mon, Jul 15, 2024 at 10:56 AM
Subject: Douglass Park Pool
To: <Rosa.Escareno@chicagoparkdistrict.com>

Dear Ms. Escareno,

My name is [REDACTED] and I'm a resident of North Lawndale and also the parent of [REDACTED] current lifeguards. My daughter, [REDACTED], a first time lifeguard, was assigned to Douglass Park pool this year. This is a pool that [REDACTED] worked at during the past 2 summers. Our family also swims there at least once per week. We have lived on the west side for 20 years, first in East Garfield Park and then moved to North Lawndale.

I'm writing to tell you that the situation at the Douglass Park pool has steadily deteriorated this year. There have been several incidents at the pool this year already, mostly stemming from this one family unit that is composed of a young woman who is probably around 20 years old and her boyfriend and about 10 siblings/cousins under the age of 15. They have shot off fireworks on the pool deck, shot fireworks at the lifeguards, started fights on the pool deck, and have shown increasing amounts of disrespect, racism, and hostility towards lifeguards and other patrons (including myself).

My husband, [REDACTED] and I were swimming at the pool yesterday afternoon and witnessed the abuse that this family was spewing towards the other lifeguards, and they seemed to be specifically targeting my daughter, calling her an ugly a** b****, insulting her every move, asking me why she was a snitch, and finally as we were leaving they were threatening to kick her a** and also verbally abusing me when I stepped in to stop them from harassing my daughter. One of the children in this family has been banned from the pool but he insisted on coming into the pool and swimming, in spite of being told he was not allowed to do so. He started jumping off of the lifeguard towers into the water, and his siblings/cousins joined in and ignored repeated calls for them to stop. The lifeguards have no recourse in these situations except to tell them to stop, which they do not respect. The police were called, but that seemed to enrage this family even more and the verbal abuse escalated. It has created an unpleasant and unsafe environment for everyone.

My recommendations are as follows:

1. My [REDACTED] needs to be transferred to another pool or beach, preferably [REDACTED]. This is non-negotiable. We will not send her back into that toxic environment, especially as I believe they are specifically targeting her.
2. The pool should be shut down for a week or two in order to let tensions dissipate and then be reopened with seasoned lifeguards.
3. The pool should be open from 9 am - 5 pm every day, not just on the weekends. The late afternoon/early evening is when the bad behavior has spiked.
4. There needs to be an increased security presence after day camp.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. My understanding is that safety of staff and patrons is the Park District's primary responsibility. If you would like additional information, please feel free to contact me directly through email or by phone at [REDACTED].