

GreenBeat

The National Park Service and GroundworkUSA® have teamed up to engage urban youth with their local National Parks, as part of their participation in the GW Green Team Program. Here's what's happening...



Teaming Up to Green Up

Green Teams from GW Concord, GW Lawrence, and GW Somerville recently participated in a Partnership Service Day to start Phase I of an Extreme Block Makeover in Concord. Partnership Service Days give Green Teams the chance to meet other groups and combine their strengths to undertake bigger projects. The three groups spent time at Concord's Terrill Park and Healy Park to meet and walk trails before starting their work. Green Teams and local volunteers began to transform a 150' x 60' vacant lot by weeding,

clearing invasive plants, and removing debris. Groundwork Concord is also running a "community use space" design contest so residents will truly be able to call the site their own. Groundwork Concord Green Team member Michelle Levesque gives GreenBeat service day highlights and an update on her Green Team's summer projects...

Partnership Service Day Makes a Greener Concord

Story By: Michelle Levesque
Groundwork Concord Green Team

After a few short weeks together the Groundwork Concord Green Team has worked on several projects to help beautify the city. On their first day the team helped clean up a public square downtown by weeding, mulching, and planting flowers. The very next day they got out their gloves and shovels to dig holes so that trees could be planted in front of a local store and in neighborhoods. The next week was spent building a garden to provide a wall of privacy for a community pool and park.

The group's major project now is the Extreme Block Makeover in which they will reconstruct a downtown eyesore. This project is especially important to Concord's Green Team because they are responsible for planning it and making sure it happens. The first phase of the project was a community service day in which Green Teams from Lawrence and Somerville, Massachusetts traveled to Concord to help in the clean-up of the lot. To put on this community service day a lot of work was done to get food donations from local businesses and put out a press release to the media. Future plans for

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The NPS - GroundworkUSA® Greenteam Partnership news



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the lot include putting out a design contest to the newspaper and local landscape architects, and constructing the winning design. Later in the summer the group will add trail work at local parks to their experiences.

With each project, the team learns

how to work better with one another and appreciate what the environment gives them. While working at a park, many people stopped by to express their gratitude for the work the Green Team was doing. Instances like these really make the team realize how much their work is appreciated by the community. **G**



Bear Mountain



Story By: Shanee Brown
Groundwork Bridgeport Green Team

Before we went on our trip to Bear Mountain I was nervous because I had never been on a hike before, better yet a mountain. But looking back, I realize that it was a great experience. On the hike I saw many trees, plants, and animals that I have never seen before. In a way we worked together and overcame a great obstacle.

I am from the inner-city which means all you see when you look outside are basically cars, buildings, and buses. If I'm lucky I might see a frog, but that's about it. So actually going on a mountain where animals live was an eye-opening experience. I saw some creatures that I never saw up close before like chipmunks and colossal

size trees. I basically learned about all of the different rocks, trees, and animals around me from our boss Mr. Lanier who acted as our nature tour guide.

We helped each other out a lot during the trip by sharing snacks and stopping for others. The guys really experienced a sense of brotherhood because they were ahead as they went up and down the mountain and led the way for others. And the girls (me and my sister) helped each other too by waiting for one another and encouraging each other on the hike. Sure enough, even though we arrived late and were the last ones there, we made it up and down the mountain first. This just proved how strong and diligent we really were.

Before I knew it, I saw the tower at the top of the mountain and we were at the summit. I looked at the forest cascading down before me. I could not believe that I just went up this gigantic looking mountain. It felt like I was on top of the world and the view was just as nice. The hazy New York skyline set up a dreamlike scene that made you feel like you were looking into a cloud.

We learned a lot about ourselves. And I think the hike up the mountain proved to be a metaphor for that. I realized that overcoming this mountain was not just a Kodak moment, but symbolic of all that we have done and all that lay before us. I was satisfied and in a small way amazed bearing witness to the feats that we have attained. It displayed that there is no feat that we cannot overcome, especially when we are working together and it showed that we also have the will to be the best in a situation that we are put in even if it is new to us. But more importantly we had a lot of fun. **G**

Where Doubt Subsides

Poem By: Risha Brown

Groundwork Bridgeport Green Team

**A place where feet lay upon
And God's eyes show down on
Where the fearless set to conquer
And the weak minded only defer**

**The rocks allude those who climb
Sweat beads off glistening foreheads
Feels like eternity is waiting for you at the top
You keep your head from chasing the silence
Silence of resilience, and qualm
Separated by those who demonstrate**

