



Groundwork Lawrence's Green Team 2011-12 School Year Newsletter

Sept 2011-June 2012

Green Team has had an exciting school year filled with educational environmental improvement projects, professional development opportunities, service, and fun! Please read on to hear about some of the many projects we participated in this year...

TogetherGreen

This project was one of our major initiatives this year, supported by a TogetherGreen Audubon & Toyota partnership grant received by our partner, Mass Audubon. Our work was broken up into three small projects that focused on various green spaces along the Spicket River, each run by one Groundwork staff member and one senior Green Team member. The three projects included building a butterfly garden to attract Monarch



Artwork by Oscar Bogran

Butterflies at Immigrant Place Park, a clean-up and community

outreach event at Dr. Nina Scarito Park, and a Green Team-lead invasive species removal training. For Immigrant Place Park Green Team members worked labor-intensive hours hauling soil, creating barriers, and planting the plants necessary to attract the Lepidoptera. We also worked with Oscar Bogran, a local artist, to brainstorm ideas for interpretive signage that will be installed near the garden. Green Team members hosted a workshop to train other youth about invasive species removal and lead a crew on Earth Day. Finally, we attended a door-knocking workshop with members from Lawrence CommunityWorks in order to prepare us for the community outreach needed for the Dr. Nina Scarito Park clean-up, which was a great success with help from members of the community cleaning the park as well as Union and Brook Streets.



Green Team members working on installing and planting the Immigrant Place butterfly garden.

THE GREEN TEAM
Keepin' it fresh

Bioneers by the Bay Conference

Being a part of the Groundwork Lawrence Green Team has created opportunities for members to attend and learn from multiple educational programs. Bioneers by the Bay, for example, was an event held in New Bedford, MA where the Green Team got together with Groundwork Somerville's Green Team members and other kids from New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and other locations to discuss positive change. We first arrived and spent the night at the Boys and Girls Club of New Bedford, and woke up to a healthy breakfast of fruits, granola and orange juice - all naturally processed. The first half of the day was spent at a conference listening to the previous troubling experiences of others and the positive breakthroughs they worked for. The afternoon was spent attending other speeches and interactive workshops to enhance the impact of the main message: hard work and a positive attitude can lead to a brighter future. Listening to the powerful stories that were shared throughout the day was humbling, eye-opening, and made me grateful for what I have and the life I live.



Green Team, GWL staff, and Farm School building a tool shed and hoop house at Giuffrida Community Garden

The Farm School at Giuffrida Community Garden

Green Team and the Farm School of Athol, MA worked together on improving the Giuffrida Place community garden. The Farm School is an alternative school where students learn the ins and outs of how to farm. In fact, the first meeting with the Farm School back in November 2010 is what sparked our "Keepin' It Fresh" business venture idea. The partnership with the Farm School continued into spring 2011, when Groundwork staff, Green Team, and Farm School staff worked together to clear out the lot where the Giuffrida garden was built. Throughout a workday this fall, the Green Team helped build a tool shed, a hoop-house for season extension, and garden beds for the entrance, in addition to raking the leaves that had fallen on the pre-existing garden beds. This project was especially important to the Green Team due to the fact that they have been involved with this project since the very beginning, and each member contributed to the success of the project. Thank you to Mass Audubon for making this introduction!

Park Cleanup with GLFHC

A main priority of the Green Team is to encourage local youth to pursue physical fitness and to make wise food choices in order to live a healthier lifestyle. Recently, we have been meeting weekly with a group of middle school girls at risk of becoming overweight who belong to the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center's (GLFHC) program for youth. These meetings allowed the Green Team to share factual information, as well as personal stories of encouragement on living healthier lifestyles. We also encouraged the girls to live healthier by contributing to the environmental sustainability of the community. After the last meeting, the Green Team engaged the girls in participating in a park clean-up. Green Team and GLFHC youth gathered at the North Common to beautify the park on December 3, 2011. When it was over, the girls said it was fun, rewarding and said they hoped to do something similar in the future. We found this experience to be rewarding due to the fact that we were able to mentor these girls on living healthier, in addition to instilling within them a sense of environmental responsibility.



Green Team with volunteers from GLFHC



Glow Gala

Glow Gala is an annual fundraiser and social event held by Groundwork Lawrence. Its purpose is to reflect and embrace the positive impacts that Groundwork has made on the community of Lawrence throughout the past year. This year's Glow Gala was particularly special because it celebrated GWL's 10-year anniversary of "changing places and changing lives." Highlights included the Eco-Art silent auction, where local artists use recyclable items as the base of their art, a raffle consisting of prizes donated by local businesses, live music from the local band Los Sugar Kings and speeches given by two Green Team members, Jannelvy and Migueyli. Additionally, Green Team members had their own table to talk to community members about the work they do throughout the year.

Migueyli delivering her speech to the crowd.

North Canal Visioning

This April, Lawrence residents and local non-profit organizations worked with Project for Public Spaces to discuss how to make use of under-used spaces along the north canal. Groups walked through the city, rating the condition of spaces using a color system and taking notes on the sites. While doing so, Green Team members shared their thoughts and experience. "People should follow our example of re-inventing the parks. People don't seem to realize that littering not only hurts the environment but hurts the reputation of Lawrence as well." After visiting the different spots along the canal, certain areas were prioritized over others. Each table then brainstormed different ways to use and activate the spaces, and after much discussion, the tables brought their ideas to the larger group. Everyone left enthusiastic and motivated.



Green Team, GWL and Mass Audubon Staff, and community members learning about the Former Ferrous Site as part of the North Canal Visioning.



10th Annual Spicket River Cleanup

The Spicket River Cleanup was amazing! 380 volunteers gathered early in the morning on Saturday, September 24th at Manchester Street Park with lots of excitement and energy for cleaning the river and beautifying the city. Though some parts of the city required more work than others, everyone's help was greatly appreciated and the effort put into cleaning all areas was outstanding. This was the first year we expanded into Methuen, with a total of ten sites across Lawrence and Methuen and our results were great. Together we pulled 5 tons of trash, 6,000 lbs of metal, 4,500 lbs of plastic recyclables and 115 lbs of aluminum cans out of the river and surrounding areas! We look forward to the next cleanup on September 22, 2012!

Earth Day/Comcast Cares Day

Earth Day was another big event put on by Groundwork Lawrence in partnership with Comcast. 680 volunteers worked together in groups to clean 25 different areas of Lawrence. Many Green Team members went to Den Rock Park, where they wrapped the base of select trees with chicken wire to protect them from the local beavers' over-grazing. Other Green Team members lead a crew in invasive species removal at Jacques Pond. Collectively we removed 23 tons of trash and created and/or maintained 6 schoolyard and community garden beds. It was a great success and everyone had fun. We are looking forward to next year's event on April 27, 2013!



Volunteers wrapping trees at Den Rock Park



Green Team prepping and planting their garden plots in Giuffrida Community Garden

Keepin' It Fresh

The Green Team's "Keepin' it Fresh" business venture is well underway for its second summer! Last year we received a seed grant from Ashoka's Youth Venture program to start a business growing and selling fresh produce in and to our community. This year, the team began working during the school year, planning what produce to grow and planting seedlings in the Groundwork kitchen and the Hoop House at Giuffrida Place. This summer, the produce will be sold at two Farmer's Markets run by GWL and will be planted in two garden beds in the Giuffrida community garden. We will also help maintain and harvest from school-

yard gardens at the Leonard and South Lawrence East Middle Schools and the Lawrence High School. By running this venture, the team hopes to make locally grown produce more accessible to the residents of Lawrence and expand our business skills by continuing this social venture. The Green Team is excited to see the produce flourish and hopes to be successful selling at the Farmer's Market.

**For more information on the Green Team please visit: www.groundworklawrence.org/greenteam
Or call our office at (987) 974-0770.**

THE GREEN TEAM
Keepin' it fresh

GROUNDWORK
CHANGING PLACES
CHANGING LIVES