



GROUNDWORK USA WINS DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR'S PRESTIGIOUS PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION AWARD

Lawrence, MA– Groundwork USA is greatly honored to have been chosen by the National Park Service for the Department of Interior's 2013 *Partners in Conservation* award, which recognizes Groundwork USA's outstanding contribution to conservation nationwide through community engagement and cooperation with local, state and federal partners.

"We are truly honored to have been selected by the National Park Service for the work we have done over the last decade to transform the lives of young people in their own communities and on public lands," said Rick Magder, Executive Director of Groundwork USA, accepting the award from the Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell on behalf of the 19 Groundwork Trusts in the network. "We are incredibly proud of our staff at Groundwork Trusts across the country, the partners we have in the National Park Service and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the young people we reach and mentor to become the conservation leaders of tomorrow."

Groundwork USA believes that providing young people with compelling points of entry into the conservation arena is key to ensuring their lasting engagement with the environment, whether as a practitioner or an engaged citizen. Groundwork Trusts engage young people in age-appropriate, hands-on work to transform the built environment, expose them to our public lands and national parks, raise awareness about the critical environmental, economic, and social issues our communities face, nurture civic engagement, and improve quality of life in some of our country's most challenged neighborhoods.

"Before I became a member of Groundwork Lawrence's Green Team, I stayed to myself. I would go home after school. Because of Groundwork, I became involved in my community." says Wilkins Lugo, a former Green Team member at Groundwork Lawrence.

In 2012 alone, the Groundwork Trusts in our network worked with 12,694 young people (98% of whom are of minority descent) to restore environmental conditions in 19 low-income and under-served communities. That same year, our Trusts trained and provided paid conservation jobs to over 300 youth from these communities, and established and carried out job training partnerships with National Park units including the Appalachian Trail, Shenandoah National Park, Rocky Mountain National Park, Minute Man National Park, and National Capital Parks, among others. Building on the success of those partnerships, a special ongoing youth conservation partnership was established between Groundwork USA and Yellowstone National Park in 2012 (so successful that it was

expanded and carried out again in 2013), as well as with six National Forest Service Wilderness Areas in Tennessee and North Carolina. Groundwork USA's annual conference in 2012 was held at the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge.

Groundwork USA was among 30 organizations nationwide invited to the White House last September to participate in President Obama's Youth Jobs+ Champions of Change Initiative, which recognizes remarkable individuals who have taken the President's call to action to help develop the discipline and skills associated with employment for our youth, as well as the youth who have been impacted by these local programs.

Collectively, the Groundwork network leverages its federal investment by 11:1, engages thousands of community volunteers of all ages, conserves miles of water bodies, creates and improves acres of parks and green spaces, transforms brownfields and vacant lots, and produces and distributes tons of healthy foods in communities across the country.

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Groundwork Trusts in the Groundwork USA network:

- GW Anacostia DC (www.groundworkdc.org)
- GW Bridgeport CT (www.groundworkbridgeport.org)
- GW Buffalo NY (www.groundworkbuffalo.org)
- GW Cincinnati OH (www.groundworkcincinnati.org)
- GW Dallas TX (www.groundworkdallas.org)
- GW Denver CO (www.groundworkdenver.org)
- GW Doña Ana County NM (www.groundworkda.org)
- GW Elizabeth NJ (www.groundworkelizabeth.com)
- GW Hudson Valley NY (www.groundworkhv.org)
- GW Lawrence MA (www.groundworklawrence.org)
- GW Milwaukee WI (www.groundworkmke.org)
- GW New Orleans LA (www.groundworkNOLA.org)
- GW Portland OR (www.groundworkportland.org)
- GW Providence RI (www.groundworkprovidence.org)
- GW Richmond CA (www.groundworkrichmond.org)
- GW Richmond VA (www.groundworkRVA.org)
- GW San Diego CA (www.groundworksandiego.org)
- GW Somerville MA (www.groundworksomerville.org)
- GW Guyandotte SWV (www.groundworkwc.org)
- GW Atlanta Steering Committee GA (new)
- GW Indianapolis Steering Committee IN (new)
- GW Jacksonville Steering Committee FL (new)