

Ignore the mission statement. The real role of Groundwork is this: supplying the spark that makes things happen.

GROUNDWORK IS A NATIONWIDE NETWORK OF NONPROFITS SUPPORTED BY THE Environmental Protection Agency and the National Park Service. By creating meaningful ways for people to create positive change, Groundwork Lawrence and Groundwork Somerville inspire hope, connect residents with their neighbors, and cultivate collective ownership of their cities' past, present, and future.

"Lawrence is an old mill-town with a legacy of industrial pollution," says Groundwork Lawrence Executive Director Kate O'Brien, "but that doesn't mean that we shouldn't expect more."

Groundwork Lawrence has inspired a lot of local residents – including hundreds of high school students – to roll up their sleeves and rebuild their city into something better. Since 2002, Groundwork has organized residents, community groups and businesses who have pulled 77 tons of illegally

dumped debris out of the Spicket River. Creating a sense of stewardship like this is a remarkable achievement, especially in one of the state's poorest cities, traditionally a first stop for waves of recent immigrants.

While Groundwork Lawrence helps its residents create parks, trails, and gardens, Groundwork Somerville is redefining environmental education. "Some of our young people are learning about the impacts of eating locally, while others in our Green Team program are learning hands-on how to build green roofs – and to lead the way in the new green economy," says Executive Director Jennifer Lawrence. "At the same time, our projects continue to catalyze Somerville's sustainable redevelopment trend."

"Our densely-developed cities are efficient," says Kate O'Brien. "But more green space will help them become the sustainable cities of the future."

Changing places and changing lives.

Groundwork Lawrence and Groundwork Somerville are recipients of our 2008 Conservationist of the Year Award. Groundwork Lawrence's Green Team (ABOVE); the Ayer Mill on the Merrimack River, Lawrence (BELOW).

