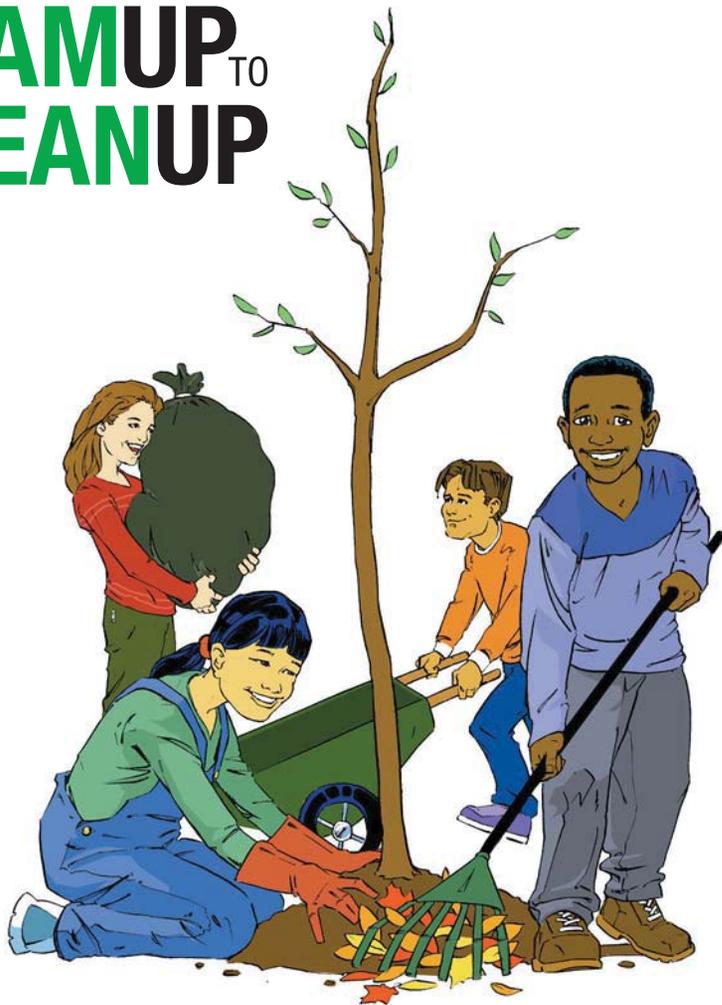


**TEAMUP**<sup>TO</sup>  
**CLEANUP**



Brooklyn Borough  
Runner-Up  
Intermediate Division

**New Voices**  
School for Academic  
& Creative Arts

# 2015 GOLDEN APPLE AWARDS

This certificate is awarded with the sincere appreciation and esteem of a grateful Department and City in recognition of your school's efforts to help make New York City shine.



City of New York  
Department of Sanitation  
Bureau of Recycling and Sustainability  
[nyc.gov/recycle](http://nyc.gov/recycle)

**NYC**  
Recycles

# 2015 Golden Apple Awards Contest Entry Judging Info

(This sheet prepared for judges' use by DSNY BRS)



**ID Info:** 15022  
**School:** New Voices School of Academic & Creative Arts  
**Grade Division:** IS  
**Borough:** K  
**Affiliation:** DOE

(for borough Master School Composter)

**Cash Prize:** \$2,500  
**Team Up to Clean Up Award:** Borough Runner-Up

**Golden Shovel Award**

## Team Up to Clean Up

### New Voices Beautification

This school started a small but effective beautification and greening program that has had an impact on the school and its surrounding community. Through gardening on school grounds, tree care on the block, and a newly implemented recycling program, New Voices is "greening up" and building student engagement in creating a healthier environment. The school secured outstanding outside support, including: "Love Your Block" grant from the Citizens Committee for NYC, MillionTrees NY, compost and soil from Parks Dept, GrowToLearn grant from GrowNYC, Greening Forward Earth Savers Club Grant, Partnership for Parks Capacity Fund Grant, NYC DOE Service in Schools grant, Brooklyn Botanic Garden Brooklyn Urban Gardener Program, local elected officials, and private donations of services and goods from local businesses and the community.

### Weblink final

[http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/downloads/pdf/golden-apple-awards/GA15\\_TU\\_IS\\_K\\_K443\\_New-Voices\\_entry.pdf](http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/downloads/pdf/golden-apple-awards/GA15_TU_IS_K_K443_New-Voices_entry.pdf)

**School Population: total #** 529

**Core Group:**   
**Total Participating:**

### Prior Year Entries:

first entry

### Current Entries

15:TU-ru

### Collaborations

- NYC Organics Collection
- NYC Compost Project
- GrowNYC RCP
- GrowNYC Grow To Learn
- MFTA
- NWF Eco-Schools
- NYRP MillionTreesNY
- NYRP Rose
- Citizens Comm for NYC

### School Contact Information:

**Phone:** 718-965-0390

**Address:** 330 18 STREET  
BROOKLYN

**Block&Lot:** 3008800001

**DOE Location:** K443

**DOE Bldg:** K845

11215

**Contest Coordinator:**

Amy Musick

**Principal:**

FRANK GIORDANO

**Sustainability Coord:**

Kelly Hayes

**Custodian:**

ADEL ALMATHI

MS443 & PS295  
**LET'S CELEBRATE  
EARTH DAY**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25<sup>TH</sup>**

**1 PM**



With support from the Partnership for  
Parks Capacity Fund Grant, made possible  
by the City Parks Foundation,  
thanks to the Parks Equity Initiative  
of the New York City Council under the leadership of  
Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito

**MEET IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING ON 18TH STREET.  
COME DRESSED FOR GARDENING AND PAINTING.**

**NEW VOICES  
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**GOLDEN APPLE  
AWARDS  
APPLICATION**

**NEW VOICES  
BEAUTIFICATION**

*"It's been my belief that learning how to do something in your hometown is the most important thing. If there's a world here in a hundred years, it's going to be saved by tens of millions of little things."*

Pete Seeger



## School Overview

New Voices was established to provide 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders with a challenging educational environment in which instruction in core academic subjects is infused with and enhanced by the integration of the visual and performing arts. The school's philosophy centers on the arts as a mechanism for the enhancement of students' artistic passions and talents, intellect, creative innovation, and self-discipline. Thus, since its inception, New Voices has offered electives and concentrated instruction in the arts disciplines of visual arts, dance, instrumental music, chorus, theater, and graphic arts. All of the school's arts programming is aligned with the NYC DOE *Blueprint for Teaching and Learning*, and supports the *Common Core Learning Standards* in ELA and Math.

Most noteworthy is that unlike other selective middle schools, where students are admitted based on an existing talent, New Voices accepts students who want to develop an artistic specialty. This alone is a feat as training middle school students, for example, how to play an instrument **for the first time**, is challenging...but New Voices – now one of the most highly desired middle schools in the borough of Brooklyn – does this with flair and much success. As a result, graduating 8<sup>th</sup> graders gravitate to arts-specialized high schools: Popular choices are LaGuardia, Professional Performing Arts School, Telecommunications, Murrow, Bard, Beacon, Frank McCourt, and Frank Sinatra School of the Arts.

Sixth graders have classes in all six arts subjects in order to develop their understanding of the unique qualities of each art form, and experience and appreciate the elements that unite the arts across disciplines. In the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students select one arts discipline as their “major” that they will continue through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, then delving with much depth into their choice. A typical 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grader studies his or her art form three to four times a week, an hour and a half each time. Students also prepare and document work in portfolios that are integral to the high school admissions process.

New Voices also engages students in a rigorous academic program that encourages students at all levels to move beyond basic proficiency across subject areas. The following details each core curricular component:

- **Mathematics:** New Voices balances basic skills and conceptual understanding as students build new mathematical ideas and then practically apply skills and knowledge. Students have 90 minutes of math instruction daily, taught via “the workshop model,” which invites students to explore and make discoveries. The school offers Regents math classes.
- **Humanities:** The school uses an interdisciplinary, understanding-based approach to the teaching of ELA and social studies. Students meet for three periods each day. Reading, writing, and the study of history, geography, and current events are blended together.
- **Science:** Students participate in hands-on lab activities, as well as in an integration of literacy and mathematics. Students have five periods of science per week. The school offers a Regent science class.

- **Technology:** New Voices employs a range of technology to supports graphic arts, math, and music, along with tools for teachers. We are currently seeking to upgrade and add to our technological equipment.
- **Foreign Language:** Eighth graders have four periods a week of Latin.

New Voices serves 529 students. Demographically, the student body breaks down as follows: 40%-Hispanic; 27%-White; 15%-African American; 18%-mix of multi-racial, Asian, American Indian, and others not identified. Currently, 40% of the student body is eligible for free or reduced lunch. The federal Department of Education lists New Voices as an official low-income school. New Voices is inclusive, catering to students at varied academic levels and those with special learning needs. Thus, each academic class involves collaborative team teaching, with two teachers on every grade level who address students' specific different learning needs and styles.

New Voices has much to boast about; the following points to key achievements:

- In 2014, New Voices School Of Academic And Creative Arts ranked better than 87.4% of middle schools in New York. It also ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> among 7 ranked middle schools in the New York City Geographic District #15; and placed number 11 among the top 20 middle schools across Brooklyn.
- New Voices, along with P.S. 295, has partnered with the Trust for Public Land that will be developing a play space in our underused and blacktop side yard!!! Inside Schools has selected New Voices as an Insideschools Pick.
- The DOE Office of Arts and Special Projects named New Voices as one of ten Exemplar Sites for Arts Education.
- *Schoolboards.com* placed New Voices among the Top 20 Brooklyn Middle Schools based on the 2013 NY State Math & ELA tests.
- New Voices received an A on its 2011-2012 and 2012-13 DOE Progress Reports.
- In the 2011 *NY Times* article "As Best Schools Compete for Best Performers, Students May Be Left Behind," New Voices is featured as among the more desired Brooklyn District 15 middle schools.
- In the 2012 *WNYC* piece "Middle School Grades Reflect High School Prep," New Voices is cited as a school that excels in preparing middle school students for high school.
- *Inside Schools.org*, in its October 2012 piece "Noteworthy special education: middle schools," places New Voices among five Brooklyn schools noted for its special education services.
- In 2010, *The Blackboard Awards: Honoring Excellence in Education* recognized New Voices as a Rising Star Middle School.
- In 2008, the *Daily News* cited New Voices as one of the Brooklyn schools considered to be one of NYC's best public schools.
- The New York State Dance Education Association gave New Voices dance instructor Michael Kerr a "thumbs up" acknowledgement because of his contributions to dance education.

New Voices' main goal is to continue providing a quality education. More specific goals center on strengthening students' core academic skills, building the arts programming, and enhancing services, from technology, to professional development that ensures student success. Built into our goals is the desire to heighten student civic engagement; the school and community-based greening we have undertaken moves us in that direction.

**STEP 1. Describe and document each cleanup, beautification, reclamation, or gardening project your school initiated.**

**1. Explain why you chose this project.**

What New Voices was missing (up until recently) was green space and awareness. There were (and still are) are varied contributing factors to this state: middle school students are challenged to focus on more difficult coursework and are thus tackling schoolwork, topping their activity list; they are caught up in the tween/teen social existence that often involves not really paying attention to the external world and how what is happening in that world affects their long-term well being; and, unfortunately, the school does not promote or engage students in environmental stewardship or any type of civic engagement. Even though community service is something young people should be doing...especially at New Voices where, for example, acceptance into the National Junior Honor Society depends on several factors that include civic engagement.

The school and the surrounding community provided great greening opportunities: The school courtyard was absolutely bereft of any green elements (all concrete, iron gates); and on the block where the school resides, are many street trees that were begging for attention. Creating a small garden in our school courtyard as a beautification effort, and engaging the students in important street tree-bed care as a critical environmental action, seemed the ideal way to "start small" but make a significant impact. Something students could easily do but with the recognition that the impact on their community was substantial. And, actually, it was the best way to bring together the entire school community (parents, teachers, administrators) and the immediate neighborhood into the mix. This effort also demonstrated the school's commitment to its neighbors, city greening efforts, and environmental education, even at an "entry level" so to speak.

Thus the establishment of New Voices Beautification!

**What did you do?** Our initial efforts, rolling out in the fall of 2013, led to a series of beautification/environmental events and significant student engagement, described below.

**PHASE I (fall 2013-spring 2014):** Thanks to a Love Your Block grant from the Citizens Committee for New York City, we jumpstarted our efforts. With this funding, we were able to purchase self-watering window boxes to mount on the fence surrounding the school's veranda (a pro-bono carpenter secured them so they would remain permanently attached), and also purchased several smaller planters to rest on the veranda floor. The grant included partnerships with key

city agencies; thus the NYC Park Department provided the school with mulch and compost for the event.

This project was coupled with a tree bed-stewardship event, in which a total of 50 members of the school and local community addressed the well being of 15 trees (loosened compacted soil, planted flowers, added compost and mulch) on the block where the school resides. This work involved a tree-care training, led by the school's very own Million Trees Tree Captain, Dr. Amy Musick, our chorus teacher. Joining us were a variety of external partners: a volunteer from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden Brooklyn Urban Gardener Certificate Program; Team Depot volunteers from Home Depot; and a representative from the office NYC City Council Member Carlos Menchaca (D38).

In May, thanks to a grant from GROW to Learn of GROW NYC, we expanded our veranda beautification. We purchased several large and small self-watering planters – four small ones in front of the main door, and then two L-shaped planters on either side of the veranda facing the street. We also purchased picnic benches for students and teachers to use. And, thanks to the New York Restoration Project, we received two small trees to stand on either side of the stairs leading to the school.

This beautification and tree work had substantial initial benefits. The school became a more “welcoming” place because of the flowers and trees, and the entire school community praised its beauty regularly. The trees flourished during the hot summer and were beautiful to see. But, most important is that people in the community were more mindful of how they treated them. For example, one highly notable difference was that there was much less “trash” thrown into the pits. New Voices also became “known” as a true “community school” doing “good.”

**PHASE II (fall 2014- spring 2015):** Two of our 8<sup>th</sup> graders and chorus majors, Munisa Akhmedova and Jessica Hernandez, with the support of Dr. Musick, submitted a grant to Greening Forward Earth Savers Club Grant to jumpstart a recycling program at the school. **THEY WERE AWARDED \$500!** Since there is no established community service program at the school, these two ambitious students challenged themselves to jumpstart an important school effort that, at that point, not been in place at the school (no full-fledged recycling program).

Thus, Munisa and Jessica headed up the greening second event on November 15<sup>th</sup>, which was smaller (about 20 people), but primarily student led. It involved cleaning out the tree beds, lining with mulch to “winterize,” and cleaning out the planters on the veranda, along with mulching to prepare for the winter. The students recognized that they were now student leaders and took that role quite seriously. They recruited their peers; they worked on signage; they helped to organize the event.

During this time and moving forward to the present, Jessica and Munisa began meeting regularly with Dr. Musick to further plan the school's recycling efforts. This involved mapping out strategies to introduce to the principal and creating goals with action steps with the green team members. We were encouraged to apply for the GROW NYC Recycling Champions program...and as a result, are now a part of this great citywide reduce, reuse, and recycle initiative. Thanks to the support of Jackie Junttonen, Recycling Champions Program Outreach Coordinator, Jessica and Munisa mapped out strategies

**PHASE III (spring 2015):** A \$2,000 grant from the Partnership for Parks Capacity Fund Grant and a \$1,000 grant from the NYC DOE Service in Schools program, along with the \$500 Greening Forward grant, underwrote expenses for our current greening and recycling efforts.

On Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, we had our second community-wide greening event. But this one was even more special because it involved several partnerships with organizations in the immediate community. These partners were: P.S. 295 (with which New Voices shares a building); Slope Park, and Butterfly Garden. We also had volunteers and contributors representing various organizations and merchants readily amenable to participating in this event.

The thoughtfully structured day involved the following tasks:

- Tree care (loosening compacted soil, planting flowers, composting, mulching on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets)
- Caring for each school's respective gardens (295 has an amazing vegetable garden and New Voices, as noted earlier, has a decorative garden)
- Assembling picnic benches (NYC Council Member Carlos Menchaca helped to assemble one!)
- Sprucing up the Butterfly Garden
- Mulching in Slope Park
- Removing cobblestones around tree beds (yes, with a city permit) across from the Slope Dog Park
- Painting recycling bins for the school grounds
- Recycling training and information sharing

**PHASE IV (spring-fall 2015):** Our final event for the year will be building tree guards (permit already granted!!!) for seven newly planted trees on 18<sup>th</sup> Street. We have a great design (thanks to a volunteer from the Gowanus Canal Conservancy, who designed and built these guards for trees on his residential block). This will occur early June. **VERY EXCITING!!** Along with assembling the remaining two picnic tables.

We are about to unroll a major recycling campaign. Jessica and Munisa, leading the green team, will be presenting to each homeroom, explaining why recycling is important, where bins will be located (paper in all classrooms, larger plastic/metal recycling bins in the hallways, per the principal, two bins on the veranda, and two bins in the auditorium, where there is significant waste after our myriad performances, shows, and meetings). This recycling campaign is a

SIGNIFICANT step for the school, where there had previously been no recycling culture. To come this far, albeit small steps, is a major success...thanks to our students.

We will continue this work moving forward. Dr. Musick is committed to make this happen each year. And while Jessica and Munisa are graduating, there are younger members of the green team who will take the helm next year.

**Project planning** The primary goal was to create among our 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders environmental and beautification awareness starting at the school and in the immediate community. To that end, the objectives were (and remain):

- Establish a student-led green team to address school- and community-based beautification and environmental issues
- Design a beautification and environmental initiative to green up the school and immediate community
- Implement straightforward steps and activities toward meaningful, visible, and immediately obvious (and gratifying) beautification and environmental action to readily engage middle school students
- Construct critical community partnerships to support this work and provide tools, resources, and guidance to students
- Build awareness among students and the school and local community about the power of collective action in environmental remediation
- Introduce additional greening and environmental initiatives, such as recycling, to the school community

As noted earlier, planning for the greening work began, with discussions between Dr. Musick and the PA, and then pitching ideas to the principal for agreement and approval. The following provides essential planning steps:

- In the fall of 2013, a parent, with a history of school gardening, took a look at the courtyard and saw “green.” She approached Dr. Musick, who was already engaging her chorus majors in small community-service projects, and asked whether she would be interested in partnering on school beautification. This initial discussion led to fleshing out more green-related tasks students could undertake beyond the school community...and tree care came up because of the many trees, in need of TLC, on the block where the school resides. And voila, an action plan!
- The parent approached the principal and custodian to discuss and share ideas, especially for the school beautification. Creating this partnership was critical to our efforts!
- The parent also recognized the importance of making the work doable, so the garden could only be decorative. And, there had to be minimal maintenance, which parents, students, and a teacher or two could undertake. The parent kept the planters to a minimum...and they are all self-watering. The custodian agreed to install a spigot for a hose, and also gave his approval to keep a storage bin on the veranda. In essence, the physical aspects were carefully explored and sanctioned before moving forward.

- The parent began writing grant proposals to underwrite initial material costs. And also soliciting donations (from plants to pro-bono carpentry assistance). Two grants received allowed for the first event in April 2014.
- Dr. Musick and the parent worked together to market the program, create signage with students in the graphic arts class, acquire materials, etc. In other words, event planning at its best (which included principal and custodial buy in). This event centered on the school garden (beautification) and tree care.
- Post event, Dr. Musick and the parent continued to discuss future events and efforts, and it was during this time that they discussed empowering students to take the lead on this greening work. That is when the Greening Forward grant was announced (in the fall of 2014), an opportunity to build student civic engagement.
- The students discussed ideas and recognized that the recycling gap in the school needed to be addressed, thus focusing their proposal on this cause. Once receiving the grant, they also saw themselves as the green stewards of their school, and partnered with Dr. Musick and the parent to frame out the November event, while meeting regularly with Dr. Musick to flesh out their recycling ideas and plans. They also planned for the second greening event in November, with effort centered on recruiting peers to become members of a Green Team.
- After the November event, the Green Team focused its energy on constructing a plan for the implementation of school recycling. In the process, the school applied for membership with (and was ultimately accepted into) the Recycling Champions in order to receive the guidance, materials, and strategy to support a school wide recycling initiative, much needed in New Voices where such an effort has never existed.
- Dr. Musick continued to meet with the Green Team once a week (and still does) along with our Recycling Champions outreach coordinator, building the campaign, from creating a slideshow to share with the principal to creating posters outlining the impact and usefulness of recycling. This work has led, as stated earlier, to a plan of action that introduces recycling to the school in May and then rolls out big time in all of the classrooms.
- Planning similar to the first spring 2014 event took place for our April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015 event, but this one had many more moving parts because of additional partnerships and tasks beyond garden and tree stewardship. Steps included reaching out to community groups, creating tasks that could happen at each site, acquiring resources, etc. It was event planning plus with the goal of bringing like-minded people and groups together to not only care for our natural surroundings, but also to continue this work over the long term with shared resources and energy toward doing good.

In short, this work has involved lots of discussions and planning, mapping out work strategies, gathering materials, setting schedules, marketing and outreach...and will likely occur for continued future greening events (like the building of the tree guards!)

**Student involvement** As noted, above, students have been involved in every aspect of the greening initiative. Specifically:

- 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade chorus and graphic arts majors have designed all of the messaging and signage (posters, tree guard signs, etc.).
- Munisa and Jessica recruited members for and head up the green team (about 10 members now), which has not only jumpstarted the recycling initiative, but which has also done the advertising for our greening events. Jessica and Munisa have met with Dr. Musick and the green team every week for three months to plan out the latest event. They have also been meeting with the Recycling Champions representative to plan out and implement the recycling effort, which included a pitch to the principal.
- At each event, student teams, once trained, are on the spot with tree care and gardening. It is a very exciting day for them, and they in turn, make sure to “educate” their peers about keeping tree beds free of trash, removing trash from tree beds, minding the school garden, etc.

It is important to recognize that all of this is happening in a school where there was no previous green awareness or culture (and, in fact, perhaps more resistance than support). To have three events in about a year, totaling over 100 people, with very visible impact...and to jumpstart recycling (when there was none) in less than a year is IMPRESSIVE. This suggests that this work can only grow. We are currently exploring bringing the Green Team to our extensive NIA-operated after-school program.

**Promotion** Where we excel is on the promotion side. Dr. Musick and the PA, recognizing that messaging is key to building momentum, have worked to promote the program in myriad ways, as follows (and all of which is provided as an attachment in a separate file):

- For all events, advertising takes many forms: on our relatively new and regularly updated website-[www.newvoicesbrooklyn.org](http://www.newvoicesbrooklyn.org); on our Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/NewVoicesMs443>; in our weekly newsblast that goes out to the parent body every week (this one with the actual announcement <http://us4.campaign-archive1.com/?u=eba8fdf2c0d4e1df975e586cf&id=d95df027e6&e=d31e982912>); on our in-house messaging system, Engrade, where announcements are sent to students, teachers, staff, and parents); student-made flyers that are posted in the school and in the neighborhood, featured on our social media sites and digital resources; and sent to organizations, local media, public officials, garden-related lists (i.e., NYC Youth and School Garden Network).
- The parent coordinator sends home announcements with all students shortly before the event.
- The general PA meetings are forums for announcements and volunteer recruitment.

- Jessica and Munisa, to jumpstart their recycling, composed a beautiful song and slogan to promote recycling, along with a slideshow to present to the principal. South Slope News ran a wonderful article on the girls after they won the Greening Forward grant.
- Dr. Musick is a MillionTrees NYC Tree Captain and thus promoted the event through this organization, and among the volunteers who participate in her annual block tree-care and clean-up event.

**Collaboration** As indicated earlier, our greening efforts would never unfold without partnerships. Here is a complete list of the organizations/merchants we have worked with since the program began (and who have provided volunteers, tools, food, and/or funding):

*Donations/Loans/Technical Assistance (TA)*

- Million Trees NYC (materials, gloves, tools, watering buckets)
- NYRP (planters, plants)
- GROW NYC (tool loan, Recycling Champions)
- NYC Parks Department (compost, mulch, permits, TA)
- Home Depot (materials plus volunteers through Team Depot)
- Build-it Green (compost)
- Spring Hill Nursery (plants)
- V-Spot Latin Vegan Restaurant (the best vegan empanadas ever!)
- Union Market (the best three platters of fruit, cheese, and cookies ever)
- PTO Today/Thom's of Maine (toothpaste for giveaways!)
- BBG Project GreenBridge Community Garden Alliance (plants)
- Dan O'Leary, carpenter

*Grants*

- GROW to Learn
- Citizens Committee for NYC Love Your Block
- Greening Forward (grant and youth development)
- Partnership for Parks Capacity Fund Grant
- NYC DOE Service in Schools

*Partners/Volunteers*

- Gowanus Canal Conservancy (volunteers)
- Butterfly Garden (work site and volunteers)
- BBG Brooklyn Urban Gardener Program (volunteers)
- NYC Council Member Carlos Menchaca (volunteers-Carlos himself came to our April 25<sup>th</sup> event)
- Assembly Member Felix Ortiz Community Liaison Rick Bowen (he came to our April 25<sup>th</sup> event)
- Community members (folks who live on the block)
- PS 295
- Slope Park

Our outreach efforts are relatively straightforward. Thus, for:

- *Grants:* The PA president located and wrote grant proposals to secure funding for the projects
- *Partnership Development:* Dr. Musick and the PA President actively reached out to community groups to build work relationships and to bring organizations together toward a shared goal. This involved e-mails, phone contacts, meetings. Also, because of existing partnerships, referrals and introductions went a long way toward additional partnership development.
- *Donations:* Asking for “stuff” is not hard for us to do. As a result, we were able to secure donations of plants and planters, mulch, compost, permits, etc. Typically, initial e-mails with a brief overview of needs gets us in the door; then we send more comprehensive letters that detail our school and greening efforts.

**Educational components** Our greening effort is strictly extracurricular, but within that, students and all participants are learning many valuable concepts and practices. Specifically:

- At each of the three tree-care events, Dr. Musick led a training, centered on Million Trees NYC materials and tree-care approach, that described the importance of street trees, why it is important to care for them, what happens to them when they are not tended to properly (e.g., impact of compacted soil, trash, and pollution; summer heat; value of compost and mulching), etc., in addition to modeling the proper care.
- Students in the garden learn how to properly plant seedlings, the difference between annuals and perennials (and what requires sun, what can function in shade, etc.), how to nourish the soil...and most important, how to respect the garden once planted.
- Students learn about the value of greening, not only in the way the community looks (beautiful, of course) but how it contributes to an overall healthier environment, especially for young people.
- Through Recycling Champions, in meetings with Jackie Juntonen, students have been delving into the importance of recycling and what happens to resources and the environment when reduce, reuse, recycling efforts are not put in place. Students are also learning about the origins of many of the materials that are made and purchased by consumers...and that end up in the landfill, but of which many can be recycled. They explore the energy usage in the creation and discarding of these materials, and how that energy as a resource is depleted, along with the depletion of other natural resources required to continually produce items.
- Students have learned to respect their natural surroundings...and, love working and doing outdoors!

## Project Analysis

**What worked?** Topping the list of what worked was the positive energy and thinking that jumpstarted the initiative, the resulting impact, and the continuity of the effort over a short period of time. In brief, the most successful project aspects are:

- *Starting “small” but with a big impact:* Pete Seeger really said it best: “It’s been my belief that learning how to do something in your hometown is the most important thing. If there’s a world here in a hundred years, it’s going to be saved by tens of millions of little things.” (Source: <http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/climate-solutions/pete-seeger-how-can-i-keep-from-singing>) For some, the small garden in our courtyard or the mulching and composting of trees may seem like a small effort in light of environmental needs in communities. But for a school that has never done this type of work, the impact right in our school and immediate community has been significant. It is also what allowed us to jumpstart the greening initiative. And it is those small steps that have grown the program and changed the way our students understand the various levels of “greening” and their role in it. Small but big...we are right there with Peter. And that will be our trajectory moving forward.
- *School buy in:* Getting the principal on board to not only “bless” the project but also to participate. Partnering with him during every planning and implementation phase was the winning step.
- *Empowering students:* Encouraging Jessica and Munisa to apply for the Greening Forward set off a level of student engagement that has been so empowering, encouraging, and productive. Their commitment and drive have given all of this greening work greater meaning as they develop into true civic agents.
- *Establishing partnerships:* Collaboration is the way to go when making a community better and beautiful. Working with organizations, merchants, volunteers, parents, students, teachers makes the effort more likely to be accomplished, gives it a broad scope feel and impact, and expands possibilities for more collective community work.
- *Greening as a community:* Having the school community come together for an event that had nothing to do with fundraising or voting for PA members or talking about standardized tests was a plus...this was a family (and community) event that was fun, educational, meaningful...with an immediate visible result. We realize that we need to do more of this type of activity...because in the end, it is about family and their engagement.

**What didn’t work?** To us, there were few deficits, but some aspects could benefit from some improvement:

- *Family involvement:* Getting middle school parents to meetings and events is tough. We did have a good turnout at all three events, but such a small percentage of parents came. We are not sure there is a fix for this. And it’s across the board. So, we are grateful for the involvement we had.

- Perhaps we can promote the event differently and offer a plant giveaway as incentive.
- *Location, location, location:* Our “garden” sits on our courtyard, which is the school entrance and also a play space. So, our plants take a beating at times, and some of the equipment (like the water tube for our self-watering planters) get abused or even removed. We don’t have a lot of planting space in light of these factors. This won’t change. We can be a bit more creative down the road, i.e., using the railing for trailing vines, for example.
- *Recycling participation:* While this is just beginning to roll out, we are not quite sure what the response will be and what it will take to make recycling second nature and routine. Part of the challenge might be with staff who are either not on board with the idea, or who don’t believe it can work. So, a recycling culture might take more time to develop.

**Applicability to other schools** There are just a few but VERY critical steps to take when thinking about any sort of school-based and/or initiated greening/beautification efforts:

- *Discuss first with the principal:* He or she decides what is best for the school. And must therefore approve anything that is planned. That said, if the principal wants to do something a bit different than what was envisioned, but it is still aligned with the project philosophy, GO WITH IT. This opens doors for additional work moving forward...and more than likely, that work will jive with your original plans. Check in with the principal at every project phase. BE PATIENT! Principals are busy and may not get back to you right away. AND BE DIPLOMATIC!
- *Reach to the custodial engineer:* He or she must not only be on board, but be able to guide you with regards to space, regulations, access, etc. He or she is likely to tell you to first touch base with the principal, but having insight into what is doable from a custodial perspective makes that conversation with the principal much more concise. And remember, the custodian is not the caretaker of your project. Don’t expect them to water plants, etc. They support you...and will always do that. But you need to find the people that will do this work over the long term.
- *Find a school partner; create a working team:* Find someone at the school with whom you can plan and roll out a project. An ideal team is a teacher and a parent, or two teachers.
- *Create a student action team:* Students should be involved in project planning and implementation. That said, while community service should be the draw, think of other ways to draw in students. Forward grant was an incredibly empowering tool for Jessica and Munisa. And the received recognition, etc. There are many youth-led service grant opportunities out there that could really get students moving.
- *Secure resources, funding, partners, visibility:* This is extra work, to be sure, but in the end, all worth it. With grants, you don’t have to rely on school or PA funds to undergird your project. With external organizational resources, you can secure free “stuff.” With community partners, you benefit from additional resources, human and material, publicity,

- outreach...and demonstrate the school's commitment to community building. Get local press coverage: A story about a student or your street tree project is powerful for all involved...and again, highlights school commitment to community.
- *Gear up for setbacks, but be prepared to move forward:* No project is without obstacles. In brief: "Suck it up." What is great about challenges is that they make you a better problem solver. Some things might not work out just as planned. That's OK.
  - *Acknowledge, acknowledge, acknowledge:* Thank everyone involved...and profusely. Letters to funders, donors, volunteers, etc. On letterhead. In school communications, thank the principal, teachers, custodians, etc. This is important: Not only is it courteous it builds relationships...and shows how appreciative you are.
  - *Spread the word:* Use your school website, social media, in-house communications, newsletters, local media to share your events, stories, student successes, etc. Visibility is such a plus. It not only puts the school on the map, but it also lets the community know that the school is civic minded...and CARES. This type of public relations is also useful for funding and donation purposes.

**Measuring success** The following factors guided the verification that project goals have been met (please remember that while this is all carefully planned, it is extracurricular, and therefore not "formally" evaluated):

- *The number and range of event participants:* Across the three events, we had 100+ participants. This definitely indicates interest and a willingness to beautify and care for the environment.
- *The level of engagement in all of the projects at events:* Everyone who participated was fully involved, learning and doing, sticking it out to the very end, with many dipping into the various tasks to get experience with them all.
- *The end physical/visual (tangible) results of the trees as a result of the stewardship:* This is the best indicator of the positive impact: The trees, grasses, and flowers blooming on the school veranda; the mulched trees, healthy through the summer with annuals growing at a steady rate; students sitting at picnic tables
- *The formation of the Green Team:* This is a clear measure of the impact of greening and the new recycling efforts: Students who willingly joined and then helped to organize the April 25<sup>th</sup> 2014 event. ALL ON THEIR AFTER-SCHOOL TIME. They will continue this work as the recycling effort unfolds. Voluntary student engagement in greening and beautification? That is one clear indicator of success and impact.
- *Photos and testimonials of the event:* (All attached – the stories therein)
- The return participants who assist in the creation and mounting of tree guards (and photos and testimonials of this round of tree care)
- *Feedback from the school and external community:* Volunteers, parents, teachers, students, visitors, etc. RAVE, especially those who knew the

veranda when it was empty, who knew when there was no greening at the school...it's all positive...people feel uplifted.

And, obviously, for Jessica and Munisa, their attitudes and action underscore the impact this work has had: They are empowered, ready to take charge, ready to change the world...and that is what environmental action is about. We can honestly say they began to lead the charge. Thus, for all of us, even more powerful than the physical transformation of our school and block, seeing students become young environmental leaders really is the biggest success of these efforts.

**Future plans** We have clear plans for funding, should it be rewarded:

- Construct additional tree guards for new trees on 19<sup>th</sup> Street and older trees on 18<sup>th</sup> Street that don't have proper tree guards
- Some sort of trellising for our veranda so that we can train vines or other climbing plants over our iron fencing
- Outdoor storage for our soil/compost (we have it in the school right now, thanks to the custodians' generosity, but it really needs to have separate storage)
- Additional larger recycling bins for the large side yard that will be an actual play space
- Small grants to encourage classroom recycling (classes that collect the most paper and come up with a creative environmentally-focused student-led project)
- Expanded recycling (creating a section in the school for items like printer cartridges, cell phones, etc.)

## **Greening Forward Grant: Jessica Hernandez and Munisa Akhmedova**

### **1. What environmental issues do you hope to solve with this grant? How have you worked with this issue in the past? \***

We have a serious trash issue outside of our school. Through this grant, we hope to start our project, STOP THE TRASH, START THE CARING. We hope to teach our school community how to care for our school and local environment – and about the negative consequences if we don't – and offer creative ways for every member to do his or her part.

Until now, we have worked on the STOP THE TRASH message through one on one discussions with friends and family, encouraging everyone close to us to stop and “just pick it up,” whether it be their Arizona bottle they just tossed or someone else's tin foil wrapper. We also recycle at home every day, because we understand how important recycling is for the environment and we would like to help it in our own little ways. We also believe in reducing and reusing things that we have in our household to further reduce the amount of trash. Although helpful in a small way, we hope to reach our entire community through expanded efforts to eradicate trash from our streets. We have worked on the START THE CARING by participating in school “greening” initiatives such as tree care and gardening out front of our school, but we want to expand this work to include more creative, student-driven initiatives.

We believe that as young people, we have a choice and a chance to make our community a whole lot brighter and better, so that we can all look at it with awe, pride, and a sense of achievement. As chorus majors, we keep thinking about the meaning of the songs we sing. The one song that we continue to refer to is “We Are The World” written by Lionel Richie and Michael Jackson. We especially connect to this line in the song: “We are the world, we are the children, we are the ones to make a brighter day, so let's start giving.” These lyrics remind us that it is up to us, the young people, to take care of our community, which is a part of the world. We are the ones who need to fix our trash problem. We are the ones who need to beautify our streets. We are the ones who need to recycle and inspire others to do so as well. There is power in all of the choices we make so we're starting now. There is not a moment to waste.

### **2. Why are you passionate about this particular environmental issue? \***

New Voices is a school for the arts with dedicated programs in chorus, dance, theater, instrumental music, graphic arts, and visual arts. Each day, students express themselves through these mediums and strive to create inspiring works together. It is hard, however, to create beauty when surrounded by trash and cement. The current state of the front of our school at times, and streets surrounding the school, can be discouraging as they reflect badly on the school and what we are about. New Voices is like our second home – a home away from home – and our second family: We should strive to care for it as we do our closest loved ones. Our school should be beautiful on the inside and outside.

In addition to our immediate environment looking more inspiring, by cleaning up our trash and beautifying streets, we are also contributing to larger global initiatives. The trash on our streets feeds into trash in our oceans and drinking water. People and animals are getting sick and dying because of contaminated drinking water and toxins that travel from animal to animal up the food chain. Many aquatic animals also get tangled in the trash we toss, cutting off their ability to swim, breath and/or otherwise

thrive. If we pick up our trash, we lesson this horrific cycle. By beautifying our streets with more trees and plants, we are helping to clean the air by ridding the air of harmful toxins and demonstrating our commitment to the environment.

Another song that inspires us is “One Day” written by Phil Lawrence, Matthew Miller, Peter Hernandez, Ari Levine and performed by Matisyahu (Matthew Miller’s stage name). The lyrics that we are really passionate about are: “One day, we’ll all be free and proud to be under the same sun, singing songs of freedom.” These lyrics give us an understanding about our future - if we do not stop this trash problem now, we won’t be able to live in a healthy world. That “one day” is NOW!

### **3. What impact do you hope to create? \***

Our vision for the STOP THE TRASH, START THE CARING campaign includes three elements.

- Create awareness among our 540 school peers about the trash issue in our community and train them on how to solve it by recycling and picking up after themselves.
- Purchase trash and recycling bins to post in our schoolyard and for the front of the school, and make these bins works of art with the help of our visual and graphic art students and if possible, in partnership with the Global Inheritance TRASHed: Art of Recycling campaign - <http://www.globalinheritance.org/trashed-art-of-recycling>). By making these bins “works of art,” we are also making the trash and recycling effort constantly visible.
- Beautify the streets around the school by planting flowers and caring for the street trees and other greenery that surround our school (this builds on work New Voices has already done with street trees on the block). We would do this in partnership with the school that shares our building, P.S.295, expanding the reach to an additional 500 elementary school students.

In summary, through our STOP THE TRASH, START THE CARING campaign, we hope to reach our entire school community-students, parents, teachers, administrators, and staff. In addition, we will extend an invitation to participate to our neighbors, which include P.S. 295, and M.S. 88, and the many residents from an estimated twenty apartment buildings on the block. We will plant and beautify over 20 tree beds and enlarge our school gardens: less blacktop and cement, more flowers and trees. We will pick up endless piles of trash so that our custodians and citywide street sweepers don't have to be on watch and endlessly picking up after us. Our “home away from home” will be a place of pride and creativity on the inside and outside.

### **4. Who are you partnering with? And who do you hope to partner with? \***

Inside our school we will partner with our principal and other administrators, our teachers – especially the teachers in the six art forms, all students across grade levels, the Parent Association, and the custodial staff.

Outside of our school, we hope to partner with MillionTreesNYC (tree care support - <http://www.milliontreesnyc.org/>), Grow To Learn (gardening tools and recycling resources - <http://www.growtolearn.org/>), NYC Sanitation (mulch and compost - <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycwasteless/>), and Global Inheritance (TRASHed: Art of Recycling campaign - <http://www.globalinheritance.org/trashed-art-of-recycling>), and several local organizations and merchants interested in the local environment.

We would also reach out to NYC school officials and local politicians to invite them to our STOP THE TRASH, START THE CARING events.

**5. Why do you want to work with Greening Forward? \* What resources do we have that would be helpful to your organization?**

Greening Forward is inspiring because it encourages students like us to follow our dreams to create a better future. Being awarded this grant would not only provide us with the monetary resources needed to get our STOP THE TRASH, START THE CARING campaign off the ground, but it would also enable us to participate in the International Young Environmentalists Youth Summit, surrounding us with like-minded students to share inspiration and visions for the future. Together, these opportunities will no doubt shape our future and encourage us to work towards a positive change in our immediate community and the world around us. This project will also allow us to leave a mark on New Voices that we can pass on to the next waves of students so they would continue to lead the school to a better future by continuing to make a difference in our community.

## Article on Greening Forward Grant Winners

### Two Inspiring New Voices 8th Graders Are Helping Locally, But Thinking Globally

By [Mary Bakija](#) on November 25, 2014 [Education](#), [Green](#), [Kids & Family](#), [Neighbors](#)

**SOURCE:** <http://southsloopenews.com/blog/education/two-inspiring-new-voices-8th-graders-are-helping-locally-but-thinking-globally#comments>

Jessica Hernandez and Munisa Akhmedova, both 8th grade chorus majors at [New Voices Middle School](#), are so enthusiastic about helping the environment that at one point during our conversation, they burst into song.

“We sing ‘We Are the World’ and the lyrics say, ‘We are the world, we are the children, we are the ones who make a brighter day so let’s start giving,’” Munisa explains, singing, with Jessica harmonizing. “So we’re going to start giving right now.”

The best friends, who met about a year ago when Jessica helped show Munisa around New Voices after she’d just moved to Brooklyn, are giving back to the school they love, located at 330 18th Street, by spearheading environmental projects using a \$500 [Earth Savers Club](#) grant they recently applied for and won. They decided to apply as soon as they heard they could, hoping they could help with a litter problem they’d noticed around the school. As their teacher Dr. Amy Musick explains, it’s a small step toward a larger good.

“One thing these ladies say time and time again is that New Voices is their home away from home,” Dr. Musick says, “and that maybe we can’t change the world, but we can look right in front of us, and this is where we can start, and hopefully that will ripple. If we get everyone here in our community and they go to their homes — it’s the idea of starting small and leading by example.”

And lead they have. The two recently held an event where about 20 volunteers helped clean up tree pits, planted daffodil bulbs, and more around the perimeter of the school. They say they learned how tough it is to rally help, especially early on a weekend morning, but that they were so pleased with the turnout.

“It was a great experience for both of us, and for the people who came,” says Munisa, who also lives in the neighborhood. “In a little way, we helped the environment already.”

“We’d like to plant more in the spring when things won’t be destroyed by the cold,” Jessica adds.

They are already planning a spring event, where they hope to get students from all disciplines involved. They’re looking at their arts-based school creatively, and hoping to get graphics designers to work on posters, dancers and singers to perform, and more. Plus, they’ll use the grant for recycling training and to purchase recycling bins for the front of the school, and they’d like to get students to help make those bins look amazing, too.

“We want to have more people so that it won’t just be us making a difference in our school — it will be the whole school,” Jessica says. “Because we’re one community, we’re all friends, it would be nice for all of us to participate. And it’s our last year here at New Voices, so it would be nice for us, for all eighth graders, and all of the school.”

“And to have some fun!” Munisa adds, having obviously already learned that an event where you’re asking people to do a little work is always easier when those people are having a good time.

Jessica and Munisa are clearly having a great time. Though the grant writing and project planning has been done in their free time, they’ve found it incredibly engaging, and both say they hope to continue working

on environmental issues in high school and beyond. But it's the everyday encounters, encouraging their friends and families that have had the greatest impact.

**“We want to have more people so that it won't just be us making a difference in our school — it will be the whole school.”– *Jessica Hernandez***

“Some of my friends litter a lot,” Jessica says. “I try to show them, but it feels like they never learn. It gets me very annoyed, but you have to keep trying.”

“This project is not only to save the world but to show examples for other people who think that they can't make any changes,” Munisa says. “Because the truth is, even if you're the only one who does the recycling, you are doing a big thing — you're being an example for your friends and your neighbors.”

If anyone's going to lead the way for their peers, it's these two. They say they hope to inspire younger students, both in New Voices and at PS 295, which shares the building, so that the work they begin continues once they're gone.

“It's one thing for parents or teachers to tell you to do something — it's another when it's coming from a fellow student,” Dr. Musick says. “They are making a difference just by being present, saying this isn't something adults are making us do, it's important because we authentically feel it in our hearts, this is what we need to do for ourselves. They're setting an example that we as their teachers can't, and it's so nice to see.”

*Munisa, Jessica, and Dr. Musick*

And while they've clearly caught the civic engagement bug, and want to keep working on projects that involve students as well as neighbors from the surrounding community, the work they've done so far has brought out strengths that resonate throughout their lives.

“I have seen them take on more leadership roles in classes as well,” says Dr. Musick, noting that their confidence and involvement in all areas of school have grown. And nobody could be more surprised about that than these two friends, who talk like they've known each other for a lifetime.

“This is so amazing, I can't believe we're participating in this,” Munisa says.

“I never thought we'd have done this this year,” Jessica adds, while Munisa exclaims: “I had no idea I could be so passionate about this!”

**Grant winner poem (this has the working music link)**

**STOP THE TRASH! START THE CARING!**

**by Munisa Akhmedova & Jessica Hernandez**

*MS 443 New Voices School of Academic & Creative Arts  
Brooklyn, NY*

Today and everyday, we will lend a hand  
for those in need and those left with nothing



As children and adults of this century,  
we should take action towards helping our community and planet

Every day people destroy our earth through pollution and global warming  
Because of this, innocent plants, animals, and people are getting sick or dying  
*We have to take action*

It's up to *us* to end the destruction  
It's up to *us* to make a change  
*We control the future*

At New Voices Middle School in Brooklyn, NY *we will do our part*  
Our campaign, **STOP THE TRASH! START THE CARING!** is *our* way of helping *our*  
planet

*We will clean up the trash around our school and neighborhood*  
*We will recycle inside and outside of our school building*  
*We will plant and care for new trees and flowers*  
*We will Green it Forward*

**STOP THE TRASH! START THE CARING!**

# NEW VOICES BEAUTIFICATION



# OUR GREENTING FORWARD GRANT WINNERS



Jessica Hernandez

Munisa Akhmedova

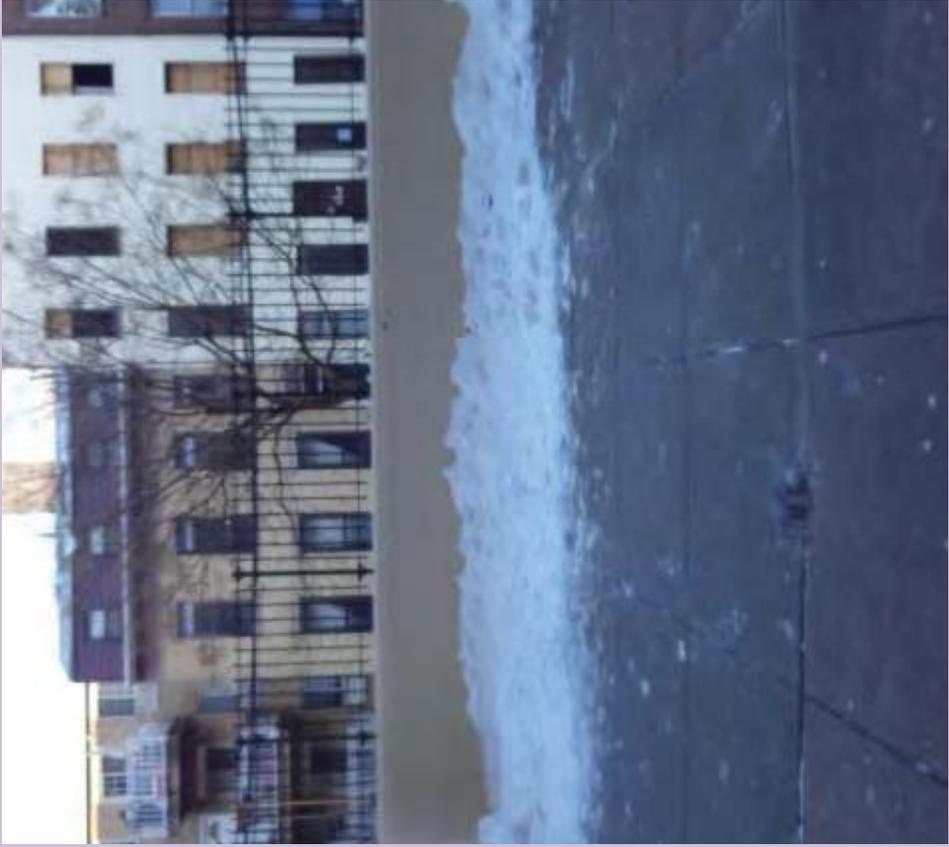
# GREEN TEAM AT WORK



# BEFORE: THE COURTYARD



# BEFORE: THE COURTYARD



# BEFORE: THE TREES



# APRIL 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2014 NEW VOICES BEAUTIFICATION EVENT I

- 50 volunteers
- Tree care (cleaning out trash, loosening up soil, planting flowers, composting mulching)
- Planting in the New Voices courtyard

FOLLOWING PHOTOS FEATURE STUDENT POSTERS,  
ENTHUSIASM, HARD WORK, AND POSITIVE RESULTS

# WE ♥ TREES

**We Are Beautifying  
New Voices...  
And The Block!  
April 26th, 1pm**

Meet at the 18th street entrance of our school  
and come dressed for gardening work!



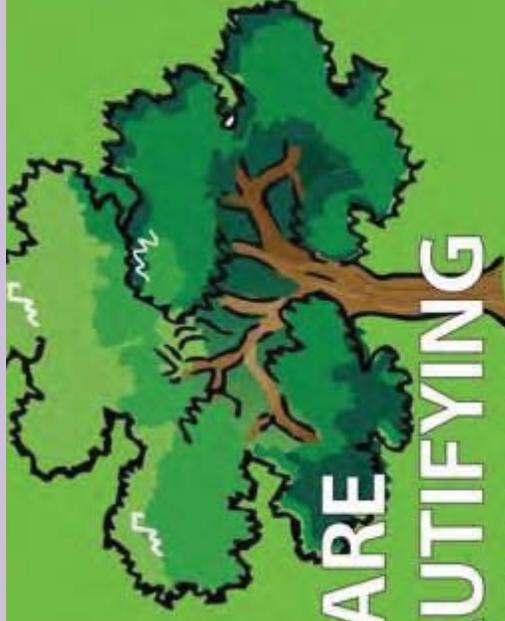
Join parents, students, teachers, administrators,

school staff and neighbors as we beautify our block!

- Participate in a tree care workshop.
- Spruce up the tree pits up and down 18th Street.
- Erect new planters to transform our school entrance.
- Plant flowers!

Help us transform our school community!

Contact [mi@micheleisrael.com](mailto:mi@micheleisrael.com) for details and to RSVP



**WE ARE  
BEAUTIFYING  
NEW VOICES...  
AND THE BLOCK!**

**April 26th, 1pm**

Meet at the 18th street entrance of our school  
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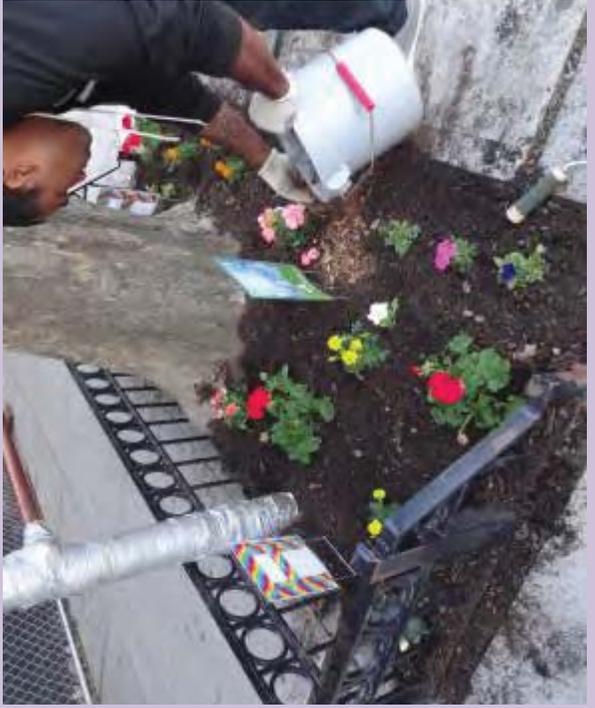
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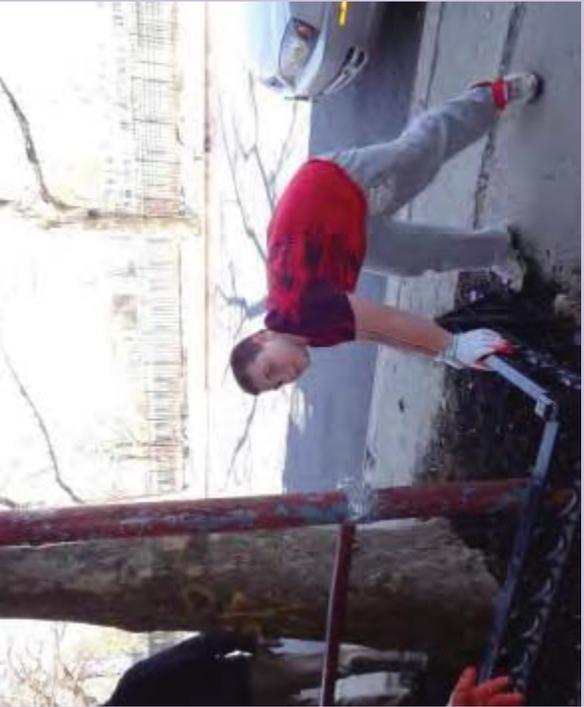
Contact [mi@micheleisrael.com](mailto:mi@micheleisrael.com) for details and to RSVP















# NOVEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2014 NEW VOICES BEAUTIFICATION EVENT II

- 20 volunteers
- Tree care ( “winterizing” with compost and mulch)
- Cleaning up and readying garden for the winter

FOLLOWING ARE EVENT PHOTOS

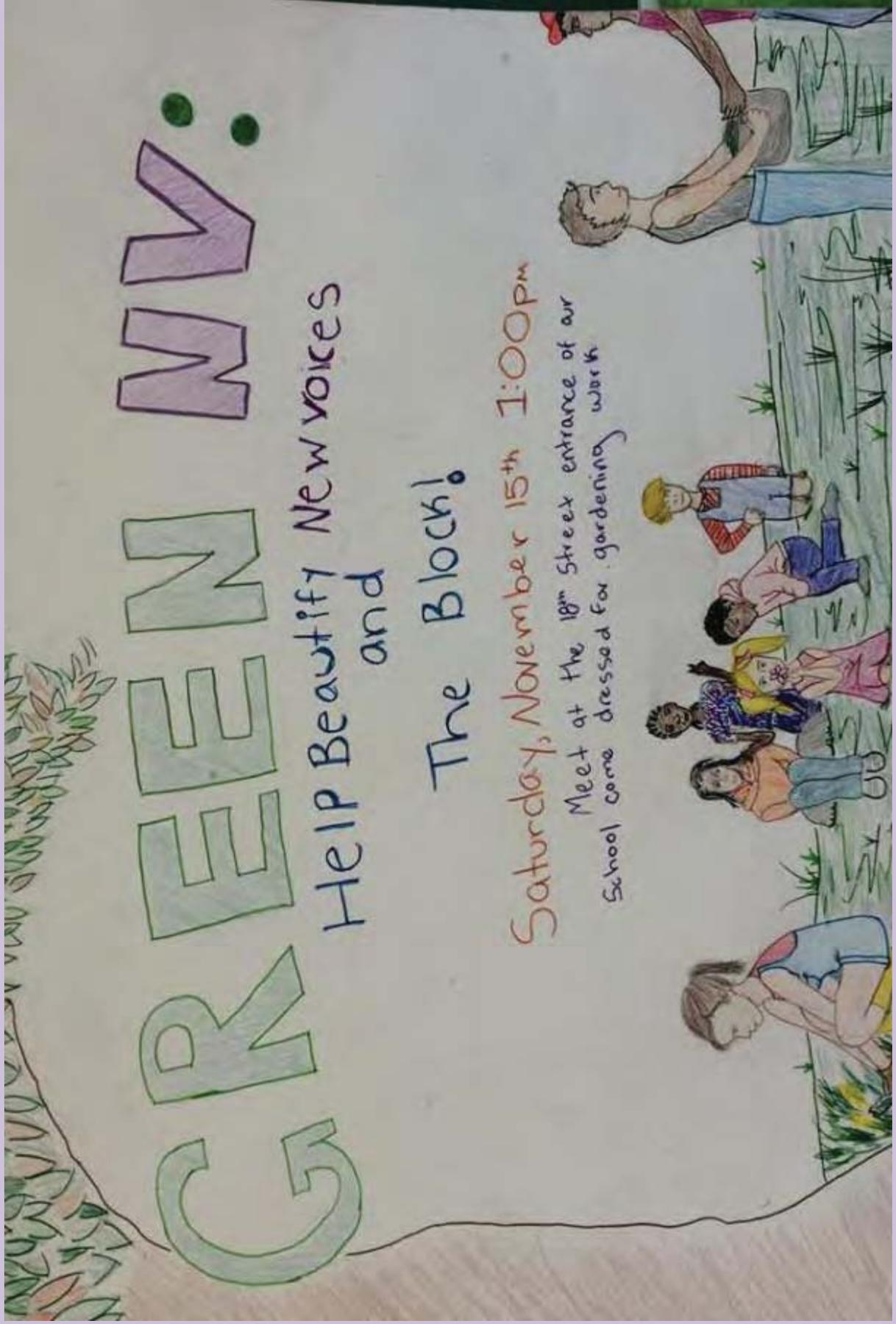
# GREEN WV:

Help Beautify New Voices  
and

The Block!

Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup> 1:00pm

Meet at the 18<sup>th</sup> Street entrance of our  
School come dressed for gardening work





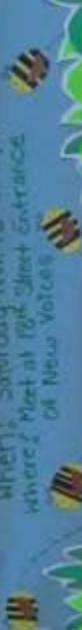
# GREEN NEW VOICES

HELP BEAUTIFY NV AND THE BLOCK!

When? Saturday Nov. 15 at 1pm

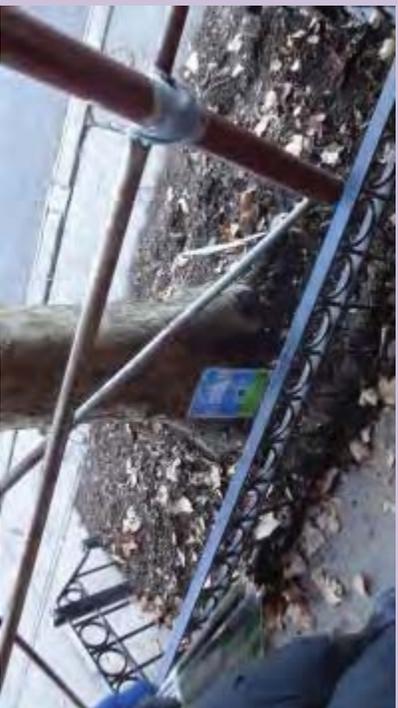
Where? Meet at 18th Street Entrance

Of New Voices









APRIL 25TH, 2015  
NEW VOICES BEAUTIFICATION  
EVENT III

- 50 volunteers
- Tree care
- Gardening
- Recycling education and bin painting

FOLLOWING ARE EVENT PHOTOS

MS443 & PS295

# LET'S CELEBRATE EARTH DAY

SATURDAY, APRIL 25<sup>TH</sup>  
1 PM

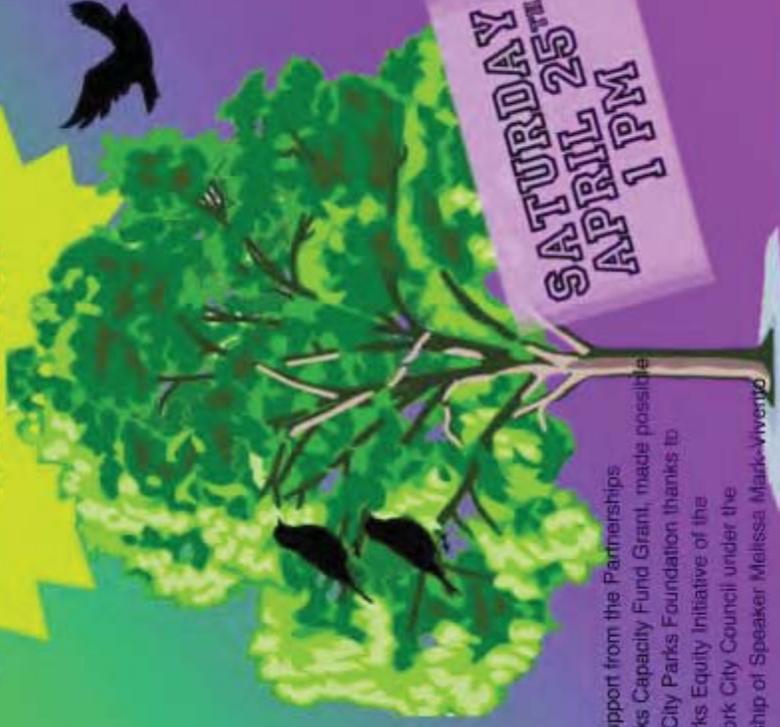


With support from the Partnerships for Parks Capacity Fund Grant, made possible by the City Parks Foundation thanks to the New York City Council under the leadership of Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito

**MEET IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING ON 18TH STREET.  
COME DRESSED FOR GARDENING AND PAINTING.**

# LET'S CELEBRATE EARTH DAY

MS443 & PS295



With support from the Partnerships for Parks Capacity Fund Grant, made possible by the City Parks Foundation thanks to the New York City Council under the leadership of Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito

**MEET IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING ON 18TH STREET.  
COME DRESSED FOR GARDENING AND PAINTING.**



**Slope Park**  
Find out What's Growing in the Garden

**New Voices Building Entrance**  
Learn about Recycling  
Paint Recycling Bins  
Put Together Picnic Benches  
Planting in the Garden

**Dog Park**  
Remove Curbside Cobblestones to Create Planting Areas

**Butterfly Garden Spring Clean-up**  
Learn about the Habitat & School Farm  
Stop & Smell (draw, take pictures of) the Flowers

**18th & 19th Streets**  
Street tree care  
Clear tree pits  
Plant flowers

**PS 295 Building Entrance**  
Plant in the Courtyard Garden  
Paint Recycling Bins  
Put Together Picnic Benches

**New Voices**  
330 18th Street  
Maps / Directions  
Refreshments  
Bathrooms

**Detective Mayrose Park**

**Butterfly Garden**

# Celebrate Earth Day 2015!

## Saturday, April 25 1:00-3:00 p.m.

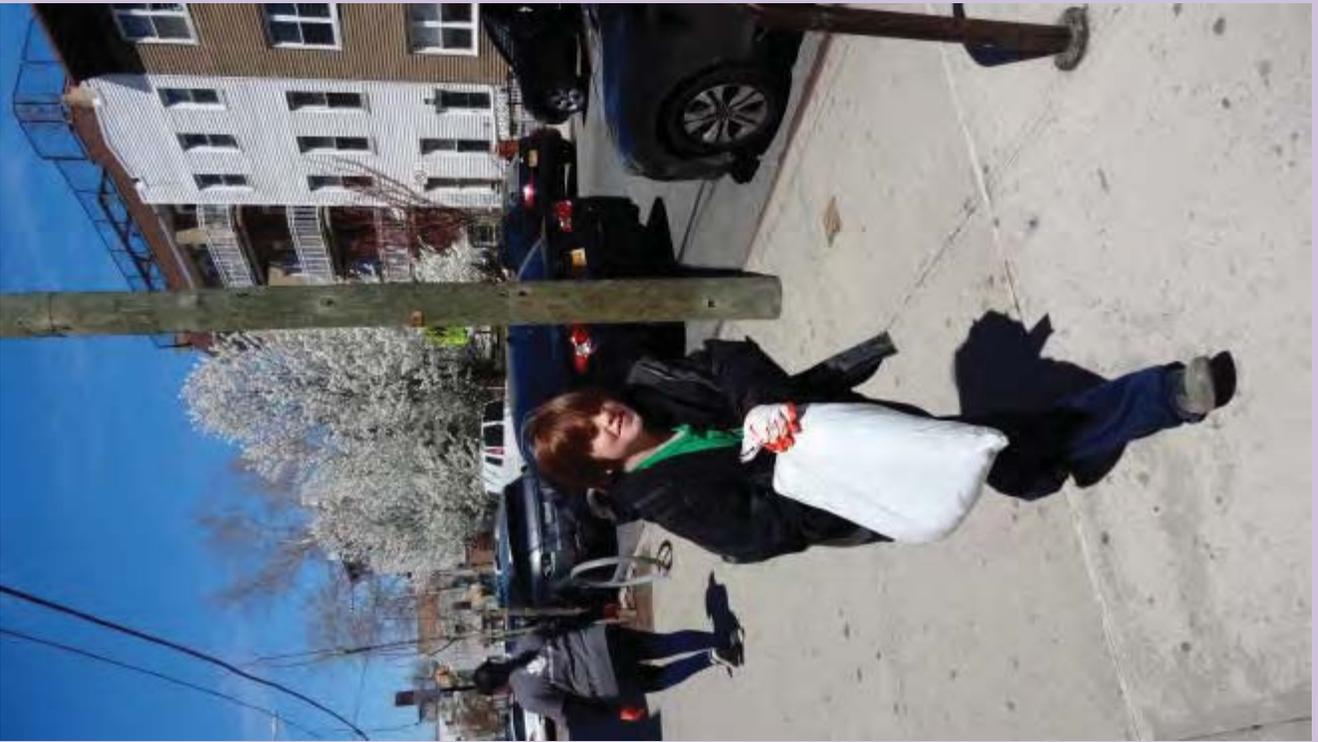
With support from the Partnerships for Parks Capacity Fund Grant, made possible by the City Parks Foundation thanks to the Parks Equity Initiative of the New York City Council under the leadership of Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito.

Thanks to our sponsors ...

Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Gowanus Canal Conservancy, Greening Forward, GrowNYC, HomeGrown Parks Volunteers, New York City Department of Service Learning, New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, New York Restoration Project, Thom's of Maine / PTP Today, Union Market, VSPOT Latin Vegan Restaurant

... and all the volunteers from the New Voices, PS 295, PS 53, & MS 88 school communities.













Assembly Member Felix Ortiz  
Community Liaison Rick Bowen



NYC Council Member  
Carlos Menchaca





