

SCA and ARAMARK 2010 Earth Day Report

SCA commemorated the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day by holding 9 Earth Day service events around the country. Events were located in Chicago, Boston, Detroit, Washington, DC, Pittsburgh, Houston, Dallas, Oakland/San Francisco and Seattle. Working with ARAMARK nationally as well as with community-based organizations in each city, SCA and our partners engaged 1,000 volunteers to complete nearly 5,000 hours of conservation service. 2010 Earth Day projects reflected the nation's growing interest in urban green spaces and community gardens. Coast to coast, volunteers removed invasive plants, built trails and maintained or developed community gardens and outdoor learning classrooms. These efforts are an ongoing piece of SCA's Community Programs which run year round to provide training and conservation service opportunities for youth in these ten cities. SCA high school-aged members in each city played an important role in the planning, implementation and leadership in each Earth Day event.

Chicago

Location: Little Village, Chicago

Partners: Enlace of Chicago and ARAMARK

Volunteers & Staff: 55

Highlight: Little Village Alderman Ricardo Munoz attended the event and joined the youth volunteers, later removing his jacket and tie to work all afternoon in the new community garden alongside them.

"Weather held out for the event, and we managed to have fun, eat good food and get plenty of projects done!" Earth Day volunteer

Nina R, age 16, building planter boxes



Brief description of Earth Day event & accomplishments:

Earth Day volunteers worked on three distinct projects aimed to improve green space and community gardens within the Little Village community of Southwest Chicago. After a hearty breakfast of tamales, volunteers from ARAMARK joined SCA high school members in a day of service for the community.

At the corner of Kildare & 27th St. (otherwise known as the Cookie Factory), volunteers sowed seeds and planted vegetables and flowers in an empty lot turned community garden. A few blocks away at 25th St. & Keeler Ave (also called 'the pumpkin patch'), volunteers began work on turning an empty lot into a new pocket

park for the neighborhood. A few days earlier, SCA members had flagged the garden paths which Earth Day volunteers cleared, laid gravel and stone and removed invasive plants and trees. Bricks from the demolished home at this site, along with other materials from the Cookie Factory, were salvaged and used to create the walkways. A fence along the front of the property was also rebuilt. A team of volunteers at the third site at Manuel Perez Plaza on 24th St. built planter boxes from salvaged materials.

Though the weather forecast called for rain, the day remained dry and cool and was the perfect day to get a lot of outdoor work completed.

Boston

Location: Allandale Woods Boston, MA

Partners: ARAMARK, Boston Parks & Recreation- Urban Wilds

Volunteers & Staff: 60

Brief description of Earth Day event & accomplishments:

With thanks to partners ARAMARK and Boston Parks & Recreation, SCA's first SCA Boston Earth Day event was a great success. Working at Allandale Woods, a naturalized park within the Boston park system, volunteers improved native habitat by removing invasive plants and trees. As a part of the day's work, many volunteers developed new plant identification skills and marked native species in order to clearly identify native vs. non-native plant species in the woodlands. This helped other volunteers to identify and remove the Glossy Buckthorn, eventually clearing an acre of parkland. Once the invasive plant species were removed, volunteers planted native plants in the open areas of the woods.

Boston Parks & Rec. provided space/ location, tools and a support person for the event. ARAMARK provided not only monetary funds for the event but in addition they provided volunteers, food donations and giveaways.

Washington DC

Location: Anacostia National Park

Partners: National Capital Parks-East; NPS, ARAMARK

Volunteers & Staff: 97

Brief description of Earth Day event & accomplishments:

Volunteers completed a variety of projects in and around the Urban Tree House outdoor learning classroom in Anacostia Park. During the summer, nearly 2,000 DC-area youth will come to the Urban Tree House to learn about the Anacostia Rive and the watershed. Work completed prepared the site for the summer as well as improving the park's natural habitat.



Volunteers mulched 35 trees and removed weeds and invasive plants from the Urban Tree House garden and along the parkway. Additionally, 2 crews removed invasive plants and destructive roots to help stabilize the eroding sea wall along a half mile section of the river.

ARAMARK employees weeding at the UTH Outdoor Classroom

Detroit

Location: Belle Isle Nature Zoo

Partners: Belle Isle Nature Zoo, Friends of Belle Isle, ARAMARK, Southwest Airlines

Volunteers & Staff: 32

Brief description of Earth Day event & accomplishments:

A successful Earth Day service event at the Belle Isle Nature Zoo in Detroit was measured by a number of indicators: (1) It didn't rain. (2) No one got hurt. (3) No tools were lost (4) Each project was completed. (5) SCA partners, the Belle Isle Nature Zoo and the Friends of Belle Isle, were immensely pleased with the job that we had done and (6) Each of the corporate sponsors was very satisfied with their experience and repeatedly and actively inquired about future volunteer opportunities w/SCA.

As a result of the day's work, volunteers:

- Created an outdoor classroom in a former wildflower garden
- Created another outdoor classroom for an existing bee garden
- Made and installed timber stools for seating
- Removed felled trees and invasive and non-native plants (e.g. phragmites) inside and around perimeter of the outdoor classrooms
- Assembled and installed a rain barrel irrigation system and provided general clean-up to the site

The day's closing reflection session ended with powerful testimonies that included a renewed appreciation for Detroit and its young leaders. More than a couple of the corporate volunteers commented on how impressed they were with the youth's leadership and work ethic. Another volunteer also expressed their renewed sense of responsibility to preserve our natural resources for future generations.

Houston

Location: Lanier Middle School

Partners: Lanier Middle School, Houston Public Schools, Houston Grand Opera, ARAMARK

Volunteers & Staff: 35

Brief description of Earth Day event & accomplishments:

SCA, ARAMARK employees and Lanier Middle School students and teachers created a butterfly habitat garden in the school's courtyard. This project was a part of the school's service learning program with the Houston Grand Opera with SCA as a service partner. The developed garden is a representation of the opera developed with the school to link Monarch butterfly migrations with immigrant stories.



Volunteers worked in 4 groups to design the layout, plant, mulch and water flowerbeds with over 250 native plants to create the garden. A Lanier teacher filmed events of the day and is creating a video. Media representing local FOX affiliate filmed activities briefly in morning.

Dallas

Location: Our Savior Community Garden

Partners: Gardeners in Community Development, ARAMARK, Episcopal Youth Commission, NBC-General Electric

Volunteers & Staff: 96

Highlights:

"I've never planted a tree before" Volunteer Everado H. (He was just beaming)

ARAMARK representative Dave T. said he really enjoyed the project and he was pleased because ARAMARK had employees from higher education, corrections and hospital facilities all represented.

Brief description of Earth Day event & accomplishments

At the Our Savior Community Garden, Dallas volunteers:

- Cleared & removed brush along back fence line covering 3000 sq ft.
- Spread green sand and compost/coffee grounds in garden 1/4 acre.
- Removed weeds from berry patch 100 sq ft.
- Removed 10 invasive trees

- Mulched and spread compost around 25 trees
- Spread wood chips in garden along pathways

Pittsburgh

Location: Schenley Park

Partners: Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, Oakland Planning & Development Corporation, Friends of the Pittsburgh Urban Forest, ARAMARK, Pennsylvania Resources Council

Volunteers & Staff: 196

Brief description of Earth Day event & accomplishments:

Nearly 200 volunteers and staff from SCA and partner organizations worked to plant trees, restore natural areas and beautify one of Pittsburgh's largest parks. Also, with support from partner, the Pennsylvania Resources Council, the service event was a *Zero Waste Pittsburgh* event. All food, cups, and plates were composted and all recyclables were collected for recycling. No bottled water was used and minimal trash was produced.

Project outcomes included:

- 19 trees & 120 shrubs planted
- 200 bags of garlic mustard removed
- 5 rain barrels installed
- 1 rain garden planted
- 44 bags of trash removed—plus 1 metal barrel, 3 parking meters
- 10 bags of recyclables & 2 buckets of glass shards collected

Seattle

Location: Washington Park Arboretum

Partners: Washington Park Arboretum, a University of Washington Botanic Garden, ARAMARK, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Volunteers & Staff: 200

Highlights/ Guest Speaker: Congressman Jim McDermott visited the event, saw some of the projects and talked with many SCA members and volunteers about their experience.

Brief description of Earth Day event & accomplishments:

Earth Day for the SCA Seattle high school program represented a culmination of over a year's work of outdoor and leadership development as they planned and led 200 volunteers in 9 conservation projects at the Washington Park Arboretum. The teens, working mostly in pairs, led groups of 15-25 at each site to complete the following projects:

- Invasive plant removal (Himalyan Blackberry, English Ivy, Bamboo and Buttercup) in 7 locations in the Arboretum
- Laid gravel on a ¼ mile section of trail to become ADA accessible
- Propagated and potted 200 ferns in the Arboretum greenhouse

Oakland/San Francisco

Two Locations: Dimond Park, Oakland & Harding Park, San Francisco

Volunteers & Staff: 135

Brief description of Earth Day event & accomplishments:

The Oakland/Bay Area SCA office held two Earth Day service events at two separate sites in the SF Bay Area. The larger site, Dimond Park in Oakland, hosted 100 volunteers who completed much needed work in the native plant demonstration garden. Volunteers created a distinct pathway thru the gardens to improve visitor access and educational programming.



Across the bay in San Francisco, volunteers worked in Harding Park to remove non-native poison hemlock, wild radish, fumaria and other invasive plants to support native habitat for California quail. As the day ended, youth gathered their piles of discarded plants and created one very large pile of plant debris that was over six feet tall and 20 feet wide. It was a great visual of the work they accomplished that day as a team and the impact that it represented for the park and the environment.