

Green Team taking shape again



City Councilors Rob Consalvo, Steven Murphy, John Connolly and State Senator Mike Rush stand with local youths from last year's Green Team.

COURTESY PHOTO

Gil Haylon
Staff Reporter

The Hyde Park Green Team will be reforming for the third year in a row, with its eyes set on improving and expanding upon the efforts of the past two years.

In 2009, in response to an identified need for youth jobs, Southwest Boston Community Development Corporation (SWBCDC) began the Hyde Park Green Team youth jobs and environmental education program.

“Because Hyde Park doesn’t have as large of a business district as other neighborhoods, we were looking for a way to create effective and helpful summer jobs,” said Patricia Alvarez, the assistant director of the SWBCDC.

Since local, state and national governments were beginning to prioritize sustainable building and greening of urban areas, SWBCDC endeavored to create a program that would allow Hyde Park youth to explore these growing fields of work.

With support from the Boston

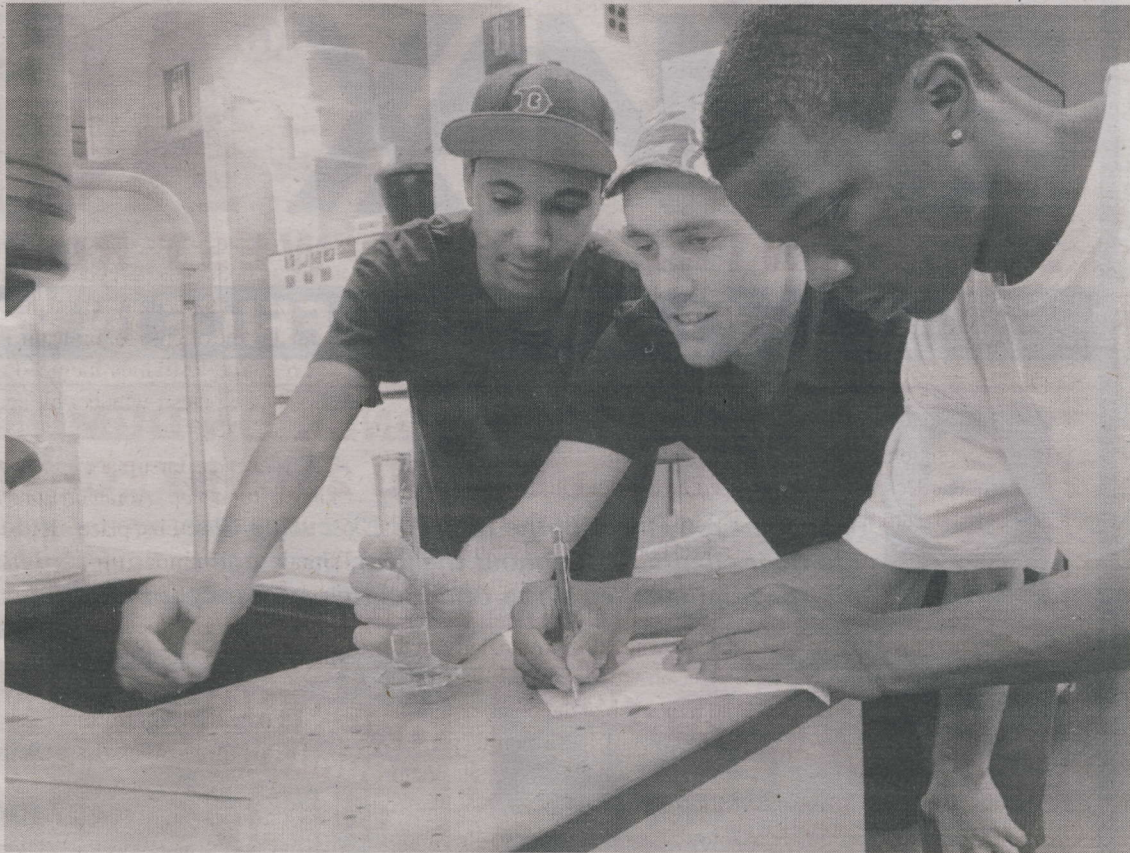
Youth Fund and the City of Boston Department of Parks and Recreation, The Hyde Park Green Team was designed to engage youth in a unique combination of job readiness training, bicycle use, environmental education and skill building, ‘green’ career exploration and community outreach.

Since 2009, 12-14 youth have been hired each summer to clean and green Hyde Park’s Cleary/Logan Square business

Green Team

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Students from last year's Green Team work to test water from the Neponset River, which they collected during a field trip.

COURTESY PHOTO

district, build and maintain trails in Hyde Park's Dell Rock and Sherrin Woods Urban Wilds, and conduct community outreach that engages residents and businesses in these efforts.

"It's a great way for kids to get hands-on work experience while connecting with environmental issues and problems," added Alvarez.

In 2010 Southwest Boston CDC collaborated with UMass Boston to teach Green Team members about the Neponset River's ecosystem, and to expose them to college-level science and environmental programs as well as to potential careers in water ecology and management.

University of Massachusetts

Boston Assistant Professor Anamarija Frankic and Neponset River Watershed Director Ian Cooke led the Green Team on a Neponset River Canoe Trip down the Neponset River where the Team learned about the river's history, current problems and future potential.

With assistance from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Conservation and Recreation, youth took water samples and learned how city and state government and residents can work together to help protect the river's ecosystem.

"This year we're expanding our field trips with a variety of places," said Alvarez, adding that they hoped to visit Thompson Is-

land and work with the Thompson Island Green Corps.

Alvarez also added that the group was hoping to add an anti-littering component to the program, indicating that the Green Team would work with local businesses and residents to help reduce littering in Hyde Park.

In addition to the environmental aspect of the program, participants are also given valuable experience for future jobs. Teens will learn how to manage their own bank accounts as well as how to put together a resume.

For more information visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-11YVV2eyI> for a short video.