

CA, Inc. Volunteers with Concrete Safaris in East Harlem



On Earth Day, April 22nd, the IT management software company CA, Inc. staff took time out of their regular business day to volunteer and support organizations around the country that have an environmental focus and offer programs and services to benefit and improve local communities. In New York City, CA joined Citizens Committee for New York City and our grantee group Concrete Safaris on their project in East Harlem, a student-designed urban farm.

“Environmental responsibility is everyone’s

responsibility. It’s terrific to have a company like CA join us in improving our community while also serving as role models by working side by side with the local neighborhood groups like Concrete Safaris,” said Peter H. Kostmayer, president of Citizens Committee.

Concrete Safaris works with youth in East Harlem public housing to become healthy community leaders through nutrition, and environmental stewardship. In the last six months with Citizens Committee’s assistance they have created the first youth-run fruit and vegetable farm on NYC Housing Authority property, involving about 200 local youth. The farm will provide organic produce to residents, and serve as a public green space in a neighborhood that severely lacks green space. It will also host environmental health workshops, leadership trainings, a composting project, and community events. On April 22nd, CA volunteers helped to build raised planting beds and to plant shrubs and flowers, as well as paint some colorful signs for the farm.

Citizens Committee to Honor Grantee Groups at Neighborhood Awards Reception

Citizens Committee will honor the volunteer groups we’ve supported over the past year at our annual Neighborhood Awards Reception on June 8th at the Municipal Arts Society.

Volunteer groups, as well as funders, elected officials, board members and Citizens Committee staff and volunteers are invited to connect and enjoy refreshments.

Groups are asked to RSVP by June 1st to Citizens Committee at (212) 989-0909 or shunt@citizensnyc.org.

Citizens Committee Partners with Mayor’s Office for Block Beautification Project

Citizens Committee for New York City is proud to partner with Mayor Bloomberg for the *Love Your (NYC) Block Contest*. The program was launched in January as part of the Mayor’s NYC Service Initiative (www.nyc.gov/service). In March, Citizens Committee selected 12 groups from across the five boroughs as finalists, and each received a \$1,000 grant to beautify their block. In addition to the grant, groups also have the support of multiple city agencies, including the Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit, and the Departments of Transportation, Sanitation, and Parks.

“This partnership has done so much already for our groups”, says Citizens Committee president Peter H. Kostmayer, “it gives them the resources and support that city agencies are best able to provide, and it’s great to have the city so involved in these resident volunteer projects”. Citizens Committee is currently conducting site visits, and the group that shows the most impressive transformation will win an additional \$3000 grant to be used toward future block improvements. The winner will be announced in July. For more information about the partnership or the project, contact Debra Sheldon at dsheldon@citizensnyc.org.

Bronx Homeowner’s Association Transforms Abandoned Lot into Community Park



The Harding Park Homeowner’s Association in the Parkchester neighborhood of the Bronx, is the oldest cooperatively-owned low-and moderate-income community in New York City. The neighborhood has waterfront access and many opportunities for recreation, but neglect and illegal dumping have made the waterfront area an eyesore.

On April 18th as part of the *Love Your (NYC) Block Con-*

test, the group conducted a massive clean-up, removing trash, dead trees, and a fence that blocked residents’ access to the space. All of this was done with the support of the Departments of Parks and Sanitation, and a grant from Citizens Committee. Now that they’ve reclaimed their park, the group will maintain and patrol the space regularly, and host waterfront picnics and recreation activities for Parkchester residents.