

At Science Barge in Yonkers, Gillibrand Announces \$190,000 for Groundwork Hudson Valley Targeted News Service
October 8, 2012 Monday 8:54 PM EST

Targeted News Service

October 8, 2012 Monday 8:54 PM EST

At Science Barge in Yonkers, Gillibrand Announces \$190,000 for Groundwork Hudson Valley

BYLINE: Targeted News Service

LENGTH: 1283 words

DATELINE: YORKERS, N.Y.

The office of Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., issued the following news release:

After touring the Science Barge on the Hudson River in Yonkers, U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand today announced \$190,000 in federal funding for Groundwork Hudson Valley to help youth to work at local farmers market and on the Science Barge, exposing students to organic farming, business, and employment skills, while also providing affordable fresh produce to Yonkers residents. The investment came through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Community Food Project.

"This is an important, long-term investment into our local community here in Yonkers," said Senator Gillibrand, the first New York Senator to serve on the Agriculture Committee in nearly 40 years. "Groundwork Hudson Valley has created a public-private partnership that works. Get Fresh Yonkers will increase local access to healthy and affordable food and teach job skills to our youth about agricultural production, marketing, and distribution."

"Groundwork is thrilled to have Senator Gillibrand announce this highly competitive national grant award that will provide youth, seniors, and parents with real options for obtaining fresh, healthy, and affordable food in our community," said Rick Magder, Executive Director of Groundwork Hudson Valley and Groundwork USA. "Get Fresh Yonkers will help our collective efforts to revitalize downtown Yonkers with new parks, markets, and attractions such as the Saw Mill River daylighting and the Science Barge. Senator Gillibrand's position on the Senate Agriculture Committee underscores her commitment to these critically important issues and the importance of promoting healthy communities."

"This very important grant will allow Groundwork Hudson Valley to expand the "Get Fresh Yonkers" program to include more participants, and provide needed job training to Yonkers youth at the same time," said Assemblymember Shelley Mayer. "It's a great example of what can happen with effective partnerships between government and our community-based organizations here in Yonkers. I applaud Senator Gillibrand and all of our government partners, as well as the extensive network of community and business participants, for making this happen. It's wonderful news."

"This is great news for the people of Yonkers," said Assemblyman George Latimer. "Groundwork Hudson Valley helps residents reclaim and revitalize communities. This smart investment will increase local access to healthy and affordable food and teach our youth important job skills."

"Senator Gillibrand knows that not all farms are in rural areas. The Groundworks community gardens and Science barge teach urban New Yorkers how to grow healthy food enriching job skills, nutritious diets and a progressive lifestyle. We thank her for bringing these scarce funds to our community," said Chuck Lesnick, President of City Council of Yonkers.

"I want to thank Senator Gillibrand and all the partners for obtaining and participating in this grant project," said Michael Sabatino, Yonkers City Council Member District 3. "As Education Chair for the Yonkers City Council I see this as an opportunity to engage our students and our seniors in gaining a better understanding of healthy living by eating healthy foods, new job skills for our youth, and how to go about farming in an urban setting. I am very pleased to have our Science Barge chosen as the site for this training program."

Groundwork USA is a federally sponsored national initiative that helps communities revitalize their environmental, economic, and social conditions. Groundwork Hudson Valley is one of 20 Groundwork nonprofits across the nation and opened in Yonkers 12 years ago with funding from the EPA and the National Park Service. Groundwork will use this

At Science Barge in Yonkers, Gillibrand Announces \$190,000 for Groundwork Hudson Valley Targeted News Service
October 8, 2012 Monday 8:54 PM EST

investment to help staff their farmers market with Yonkers youth as paid employees of Groundwork's "Green Team." Green Team members also spend part of the week working at the Science Barge, a hydroponic farm owned by Groundwork, where they learn to grow and harvest crops. These crops are then donated to local shelters. Students participating in this program will be taught valuable business skills while having access to healthy, affordable produce.

The farmers involved in the Saw Mill Farmers Market discount the produce they sell to Groundwork and mentor the Green Team youth on how to acquire and manage an organic farm. Many of these farms have selective apprenticeship programs, and Green Team youth are in the perfect position to apply. Farms currently working with Groundwork HV include Amba Farms in Bedford Hills, Stuart's Farm in Granite Springs, **Ryder Farm** in Brewster, J.D Farms in Brewster and Bedford Hills, and Meadow's Farm in Yorktown Heights.

Specifically, the federal funding and local matching funds will be used to:

- * Significantly expand the Saw Mill Farmers Market in downtown Yonkers that involves many local organic farms in the Hudson Valley. The Market is staffed by Groundwork's Green Team, as well as by its Environmental Food Team, a group of senior citizens who get together each week to learn about the history of food and advocate for healthy eating in Yonkers.
- * Double the size of the Yonkers Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program from 40 to 80 shares.
- * Increase the number of community garden beds through the Yonkers Community Garden initiative.
- * Train community garden members in state-of-the-art growing techniques to enhance food production.
- * Establish the Yonkers Youth Farm Team involving 20 young people from local high schools who will get paid to work on local farms during the summer, help sell the food they grow at the farmers market, help run the CSA program, and learn first-hand what farm managers think about and find fulfilling about their careers.
- * Create a new training program for young adults to prepare them for working in the growing field of hydroponic farming. The training will take place on the Science Barge with the goal to place graduates with partners in New York and for them to work in a new 10,000 square-foot greenhouse (called Teutonia Farm) that is planned for a rooftop above a major new downtown development.

Partners for these programs include The City of Yonkers, Westchester County Youth Bureau, Westchester Community Foundation, New York Power Authority, Con Edison, Domino Sugar, the Helen Andrus Benedict Foundation, the Greyston Foundation, Teutonia Buena Vista, LLC, the Yonkers Downtown BID, Philipse Manor Hall State Historic Site, and St. Johns Church.

The Science Barge is a "prototype sustainable urban farm" developed by New York Sun Works and acquired by Groundwork Hudson Valley in October 2008 to be used as an environmental education center. It grows fresh produce onboard and is powered entirely by solar panels, wind turbines and biofuels, and irrigated entirely by collected rainwater and purified river water, therefore making the Barge operate entirely self-sustaining. It is the only fully functioning demonstration of renewable energy supporting sustainable food production in New York, and is docked in downtown Yonkers.

The USDA's Community Food Project is a grant program that challenges communities to meet the food needs of low-income areas and increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own food, in addition to promoting comprehensive responses to local food, farm and nutrition issues. The program also takes aim at improving infrastructure and development, and planning for long-term solutions through the creation of innovative marketing activities that mutually benefit agriculture producers and low-income consumers.

Copyright Targeted News Services

TNS JB47121010 gv-4062054 61GemaViana

LOAD-DATE: October 10, 2012

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

At Science Barge in Yonkers, Gillibrand Announces \$190,000 for Groundwork Hudson Valley Targeted News Service
October 8, 2012 Monday 8:54 PM EST

Copyright 2012 Targeted News Service LLC
All Rights Reserved