

Bronx News (Bxnews.net)

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[Clean Up and Green Up Crotona Park East](#)



On October 10, 2009 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., over 80 community members participated in a community clean up in the Crotona Park East neighborhood organized by the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDCo), a nonprofit organization based in the South Bronx. Spanning a 16-block radius from Intervale Green, WHEDCo's newest, award-winning green housing development located at 1330 Intervale Avenue, participants engaged in a number of neighborhood improvement activities.

A crew of residents and students from East Bronx Academy for the Future, Crotona Academy High School and other nearby schools cleaned up streets, sidewalks, and gutters along one mile of the Southern Boulevard commercial corridor from E.174th Street to Westchester Avenue/Simpson. Led by WHEDCo-partner, the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, student volunteers and residents from the Salters Square Homeowners Association, and Intervale Green also cleaned up nearby Crotona Park and other mini-parks along the Southern Boulevard corridor, for which the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation provided tools.

Supervised by the Partnership For Parks' Greening Morrisania Project, a sizable group of volunteers became neighborhood "tree stewards" by learning how to care for new street trees that WHEDCo planted around the new building and for other trees in the neighborhood, airing the soil, watering it, and removing trash from the tree pits. More than 30 bags of garbage were collected.

Christine, an Intervale Green tenant participated in the tree care activities and noted that

the tree areas are located close to her son's school. "I'll be keeping an eye on those trees to make sure they stay okay," she said happily.

Students and teachers from Metropolitan High School and an area middle school conducted a block-by-block survey along the Southern Boulevard commercial corridor to identify problems with the neighborhood infrastructure, recording their observations with cameras and notes. Adding to WHEDCo's ongoing efforts to assess local needs and to help the community to thrive, youth from the organization BuildOn administered a WHEDCo-designed needs survey in Spanish and English to area residents and business owners, collecting over 40 responses in less than an hour.

Volunteers celebrated their clean-up and surveying accomplishments at a post-clean-up after party at WHEDCo's Intervale Green, complete with give aways/prizes from WHEDCo, its partners, and Southern Boulevard merchants. The Southern Boulevard Community Clean-Up was truly a collaborative effort made successful by WHEDCo's partners and residents, students and merchants who care about improving the neighborhood.

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