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Without New York Restoration Project’s work creating and caring for open space in our city’s lowest income communities, many beautiful moments of human connection would not happen.
There have been important advancements in NYRP’s core work in parks and community gardens as well. Our multi-year campaign to fund the renovation of more than 20 NYRP gardens resulted in 10 gardens that have been renovated, are undergoing design, and/or are funded. We continue deepening our commitment to the long term well-being of our communities by constructing sustainably, installing permeable pavers to replenish groundwater, using reclaimed building materials, and increasing our soil composting. Further, we planned our first garden piloting solar energy to provide charging capacity and free Wi-Fi.

We continue ongoing efforts to enhance the upper Manhattan public parks entrusted to our care by the City of New York. Comparing conditions in the southern section of Highbridge Park, Curbed noted, “by contrast, many of the trails in the northern section of the park have been cleared of debris and invasive species by the New York Restoration Project” (June 25, 2015). We are enjoying record visitor numbers at both Highbridge and Sherman Creek Parks. At Sherman Creek, work continues on development of the last waterfront site not currently publicly accessible, and we have begun planning for an outdoor classroom for both community and NYRP programs.

In 2015, our education programs reached 2,500 NYC students grades K-6. We hosted and/or produced almost 200 free visual art, dance, music, theater, film and yoga events, enjoyed by thousands of participants. We supported our community gardeners by providing materials, tools, seeds, technical expertise, and other resources. Many cultivate herbs, vegetables, and fruit native to their cultures of origin. Thirty-nine out of the 52 NYRP gardens support agricultural activity.

The vibrancy of our gardens spills beyond the garden gates. In response to demand from neighbors, in 2011, we developed Gardens for the City to help improve public open spaces other than our own. In 2015, 16 garden groups received training, materials, and site improvements through the program. We also donated material, such as shrubs, planters, lumber and more to 15 community spaces, including public schools and community centers.

Some of the nearly 7,000 volunteers we hosted last year helped with those projects. They came from schools and major corporations, faith-based groups, and small businesses. With their help we planted thousands of trees, transformed senior centers and preschools, and built new community gardens on New York City Housing Authority property and at a juvenile detention center.

This commitment to making quality open space accessible for all New Yorkers sometimes requires creation of new places where none existed before. In 2015, NYRP launched the Haven Project to build a network of parks within the the South Bronx’s Mott Haven and Port Morris neighborhoods, located within the poorest congressional district in the country. Haven’s multi-year fundraising campaign will support design and development of the South Bronx’s first ever waterfront recreational access in the form of a Pier Park and other open space amenities.

Access to nature, to safe and beautiful communal gathering spaces, to a built environment free of trash and disorder – common sense tells us these things are minimum requirements for a good life. Science tells us the same thing, with reports about the profound benefits of these basic amenities – on mental and physical health, crime, economic vibrancy – increasing every day. We at NYRP have long known the value of joy because we see it in our spaces every day.

Please accept our deepest thanks for your support of this important work.

With warm wishes,

Deborah Marton
Executive Director

“If you are a child growing up in a community where everything around you is in disarray, with trash and broken things, it sends a message that you don’t count. If you walk through a well-maintained open space, even in a low-income community, you feel like your city is investing in you.”

Together with the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, NYRP helped achieve this goal two years ahead of schedule.

By the end of 2015, MillionTreesNYC planted one tree for every nine city residents—everyone in Manhattan, everyone in the Bronx, everyone in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island.

For MillionTreesNYC, NYC Parks was responsible for planting approximately 70% of these million trees and NYRP was responsible for planting approximately 30% of these trees. NYC Parks covered street trees, parks, and publicly-managed land. NYRP’s tree planting responsibility was around homes, condo/coop/apartment buildings, schoolyards and universities, public housing campuses, libraries, museums, and community and senior centers.

Studies have proven the importance of expanding urban forests to make cities more livable. There are countless physical and mental health benefits to stewarding and expanding urban forests. This is especially apparent in low-income communities where people suffer disproportionately from health problems related to physical inactivity, including diabetes, obesity, and asthma. Urban forests provide social and physical opportunities to support healthy levels of routine physical activities and people are more likely to meet physical activity recommendations if they have access to more places for exercise, such as sidewalks, walking/jogging trails, and parks. Further, childhood obesity continues to be highly prevalent in the U.S., with an even higher prevalence among low-income children.

Trees make a significant difference, as found in research studies demonstrating the scientific benefits of trees. They improve air quality, mitigate climate change, improve our water systems, improve our neighborhoods, reduce energy costs, lower summer temperatures, attract customers to businesses, and increase property values.
Launched in 2007, NYRP’s Tree Giveaway program proved to be an innovative and cost-effective initiative that created a highly-efficient and personally-motivated means to add to the urban canopy, while establishing the emotional basis for stewardship. Approximately 50,000 of the trees planted through MillionTreesNYC were from NYRP Tree Giveaways. Planting sites for Tree Giveaways are primarily private home front and back yards in all five boroughs. And with the trees, NYRP offered training to all tree recipients. In fact, our 2015 survey found that after the training at tree giveaway events, 73% of participants felt confident with the information that was given and 83% wanted to attend another tree giveaway event. Among individual gardeners and community gardening groups in New York City, NYRP has become the recognized authority on tree giveaway events, training, and stewardship.

PHOTO CREDIT: Anna Yatskevich
COMMUNITY GARDENS

Our gardens provide a safe space for children to play, for families to gather and for neighbors to connect. We’re building stronger communities by improving access to high-quality, public space.

At New York Restoration Project, we restore and revitalize open space in the city’s most densely populated and least green neighborhoods. After acquiring 52 community gardens in 1999, we’ve steadily restored more than half of them. In 2014, NYRP launched a capital campaign to raise funds for the complete design and renovation of the remaining 26 gardens. The addition of 10 new gardens that have been renovated, are undergoing design, and/or are funded in 2015 puts us well on our way towards achieving our ambitious goals.

NYRP’s ability to work on our own land also provides the unique opportunity to pilot innovative new strategies for sustainability and green infrastructure. For example, this year we’ve used permeable pavements, reclaimed building materials, and soil composting. In addition, we have taken initial steps to install solar energy and wi-fi in our gardens.

Our gardens provide a safe space for children to play, for families to gather and for neighbors to connect. We’re building stronger communities by improving access to high-quality, public space. We help integrate the spaces into daily life by hosting free programs, events, and workshops that bring neighbors together and help families spend more time outdoors.

In 2015, NYRP hosted almost 200 events for nearly 10,000 participants. These included free health and wellness programs such as outdoor yoga, a dynamic entertainment offer including movie nights and live performances, and educational workshops like gardening, composting, and urban chicken keeping. We further expanded our partnership with Brooklyn Academy of Music and The Bronx Museum of Art, bringing dozens of high-quality art, music, and dance programs into the city’s most underserved neighborhoods.

PhoTO CREDIt: Anna Yatskevich
RESTORATION SPOTLIGHT

Jane Bailey Memorial Garden

LOCATION
327 Greene Ave.
BEDFORD-STUYVESANT, BROOKLYN

SIZE
4,280 sq. ft

RENOVATIONS
• Planting beds
• Picnic tables and benches
• Shade structure
• Compost restroom
• Large lawn for activities
• Trees, flowers and bushes
In the 1990's, neglect and illegal dumping rendered the public parks of upper Manhattan practically unusable. Yet today, after years of work in partnership with the NYC Department of Parks, NYRP has completely transformed open spaces in the northernmost reaches of Manhattan. We helped rehabilitate Fort Washington Park and Fort Tryon Park in upper Manhattan. Today, NYRP serves as the manager for Highbridge Park and neighboring Sherman Creek Park.

Parks managed by NYRP receive a range of services and physical improvements intended to provide beautiful, safe, clean environmentally functional spaces. Home to some of New York City's most vibrant natural forests, Highbridge and Sherman Creek Parks are not only beautiful, family-friendly green open spaces, but also serve as outdoor classrooms for NYRP programming. Highbridge Park is undergoing reforestation while the multi-faceted Sherman Creek Park is home to Swindler Cove, the Riley-Levin Children’s Garden, and a boathouse. The park offers a unique mix of habitats, making it a popular spot for students to see and touch the things they’re learning about in the classroom.

NYRP has invested some $25 million to convert Sherman Creek Park from a dumping ground into a unique and accessible slice of public parkland. The project continues with the construction of a new public space on a waterfront site that will feature an environmental education pavilion, an amphitheater, and boat storage facility, returning waterfront access to the under-served Washington Heights/Inwood community.
Highbridge Park

LOCATION
29 Dyckman St
WASHINGTON HEIGHTS, MANHATTAN

SIZE
119 Acres (5,183,640 sq ft.)

REFORESTATION
• Focus on closing gaps in the existing, high-value forest caused by intense storms, including Hurricane Sandy
• 500 trees planted
• 350 shrubs planted

RESTORATION SPOTLIGHT
Once NYRP gardens and parks are safe, clean, and beautiful, we add a layer of programming that engages, cultivates, and connects the community.

**Education**

Our hands-on education program, Garden Growers—launched in 2013—worked in six NYRP gardens in 2015 across the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan. Within easy walking distance of elementary schools, teachers commit to bringing their classes out throughout the spring or fall growing seasons to complete a series of lessons and to tend to a garden bed. Nearly 2,000 students in grades K-6 from 12 schools participated this year. By providing hands-on learning in our community gardens to students who reside in the surrounding neighborhood, we are teaching essential skills while instilling the values of long-term care and stewardship.

Home to New York City’s most vibrant natural forests, Highbridge and Sherman Creek Parks serve as the destination for field trips through NYRP’s “Nature in My Neighborhood” program for public school students. Nature in My Neighborhood is the umbrella for five unique, 1.5 hour long environmental education programs centered on the urban forest and aquatic ecology. The curricula, as well as the activities and events for educators, students, and youth groups, are all geared towards empowering urban youth and communities to identify, create, and care for nature in their neighborhood. In 2015 alone, Nature in My Neighborhood provided outdoor education programming for nearly 500 K-6 students from six schools at Sherman Creek Park.

The schools we worked with in 2015 were all located in low-income, under-resourced neighborhoods, including: Bronx Charter, Bronx Excellence, Bronx Promise Academy, Eagle Academy, Metro Lighthouse Charter, PS 178, PS 236, PS 376, and PS 58 (located in Central Bronx, Southeast Bronx, and Northeast Bronx); Harlem Children’s Zone, Young Women’s Leadership, PS 5, PS 72, PS 187, PS 366, and PS 367 (located in Inwood, Harlem, east Harlem, and Washington Heights); and PS 41 (located in central Brooklyn).

**PHOTO CREDIT:** Anna Yatskevich
Community Engagement

Garden group members see to it that NYRP’s 52 gardens are open at least 20 hours a week to the community and staffed by community volunteers. During open hours, all community members are welcome to use the gardens to relax, read, play, and socialize. As the community becomes more engaged in a garden, we generally see garden open times exceed 20 hours.

Gardeners apply for space in garden beds each season to grow their own herbs, vegetables, and fruit. All agriculture takes place in raised beds full of clean soil so that the produce is safe and healthy for gardeners to eat. Gardeners commit to caring for their beds throughout the growing season, receiving support from NYRP in the form of tools, free seeds, and advice on tending plants. Growing produce enhances access to fresh fruits and vegetables, and provides the opportunity for adults and children to learn about healthy eating and gardening.

Thirty nine out of the 52 NYRP gardens support agricultural activity.

Furthermore, NYRP gardens function as outdoor classrooms, hosting free workshops throughout the spring, summer, and fall on topics from tree care and urban ecology, to composting and chicken-keeping. Led by NYRP staff and local experts, workshops are offered from introductory to advanced levels to connect a wide array of community members to the garden, growing skills, and each other.

Arts in the Gardens

NYRP successfully promotes stronger, healthier communities in underserved neighborhoods by increasing the number of people who interact with and benefit from community gardens through arts. We engage community members, especially young people, through community-driven activities including a film series, music festival, theater, and dance performances, working in partnership with such leading cultural organizations as the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Bronx Museum of the Arts, and others.

By delivering arts and culture programs, NYRP addresses the desire of urban communities to participate in visual art, dance, theater, music, and film activities in shared spaces with professionals in the field. This strategy drives exposure to the gardens, which have health, socialization, and community investment benefits that extend well beyond the performances delivered. In 2015, we worked with over 60 local partners and community organizations to produce 145 events reaching nearly 4,000 individuals. As a result of this project, a greater number of urban community members, the majority of which are underserved and come from economically challenged backgrounds, have been exposed to and are excited about visual arts, dance, theater, and music.

Fitness

During the warmer months, NYRP brings a series of free yoga classes to our gardens. Local instructors host open classes on Saturday mornings, making available to all a fitness activity that might otherwise be prohibitively expensive. Through attending fitness classes, community members can begin to build a relationship and connection with NYRP gardens on another axis, introducing them to the space and the many ways to use it. Club Fit is offered in four gardens and easily fills 625 spots a year.

Gardens for the City

We give non-NYRP-owned gardens ways to access NYRP’s resources and expertise through our Gardens for the City program. Recognizing that many community gardens do not have the centralized resources of NYRP, we created Gardens for the City to help dedicated gardeners in spaces other than our own. In 2015, 16 garden groups received training, materials, and site improvements through the program.

Mayor de Blasio and his predecessor Michael Bloomberg, in a rare joint appearance, celebrated the planting of over one million trees in New York City in the past eight years, an ambitious city initiative that began under the former mayor and was completed this month under the current one.

Midler, whose nonprofit New York Restoration project, partnered with the city on the effort...

- New York Daily News, "Michael Bloomberg joins Mayor de Blasio to celebrate planting more than 1 million trees in NYC over past eight years" November 20, 2015

PHOTO CREDIT: Anna Yatskevich
We built raised planting beds for community gardens in places like New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) public housing properties. We also donated materials, such as shrubs, planters, lumber, and more to 15 other community spaces including public schools and community centers.

**Volunteering**

NYRP engages volunteers in large-scale tree plantings and maintenance projects in a variety of sites across NYC, including gardens, parks, public housing, and schools. For tree planting and maintenance projects, NYRP recruits volunteers from among dozens of corporate partners and the general public. In 2015, 6,764 volunteers representing corporations such as American Express, Goldman Sachs, Jo Malone London, Jones Lang LaSalle, and PwC participated in cleaning up gardens, planting trees and shrubs, pruning and stewarding trees, and transforming bleak areas into lush, green, open spaces that now serve the residents of low-income, under-served communities throughout New York City.

Furthermore, in 2015 we engaged more millennial volunteers by launching Twigs & Swigs, putting a social twist on neighborhood greening by bringing New Yorkers across the five boroughs to meet like-minded environmental stewards. Monthly events include a green neighborhood tour, a gardening volunteer activity, and ends with drinks at a local bar. In this first year since launching the program, we engaged 115 new individuals at four events.

**PHOTO CREDIT:** Anna Yatskevich
In 2015, NYRP launched the Haven Project to build a network of parks that will restore waterfront access to the nearly 100,000 residents of the South Bronx’s Mott Haven and Port Morris neighborhoods, located in the poorest congressional district in the country.

The residents of Mott Haven and Port Morris suffer from extremely high rates of diabetes, asthma, and obesity. A factor in these chronic health issues is the area’s lack of open space where people can relax, socialize, walk, play, and exercise. In July 2015, following months of community outreach and expert analysis, the Haven Project issued a transformative open space plan calling for the design, funding, and building of a network of parks and other green spaces to improve public health by significantly increasing opportunities for physical activity and social interaction. The first priority is to develop the waterfront site at East 132nd Street and the East River — an extraordinarily visible and impactful urban intervention. The second part of this project is to build a spectacular pier and promenade connecting the 132nd Street waterfront street end park in the South Bronx to the Randall’s Island Connector (approximately a one mile distance).

In 2015, NYRP launched a multi-year fundraising campaign to support this transformation of green, open space for people and families from the neighborhood and beyond to enjoy, take in the waterfront vistas, exercise, and easily access Randall’s Island Park. Stay tuned for more updates in 2016.
# NEW YORK RESTORATION PROJECT AND CONSOLIDATED ENTITIES

## Year Ended September 30, 2015

### PROGRAM SERVICES

| Service         | Gardens   | Parks     | Trees     | Other     | Total Program Services | Management and General | Fundraising | Total Expenses |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Payroll and benefits | $1,419,551 | $880,782 | $654,872 | $254,969 | $3,210,174              | $443,028               | $722,521    | $4,375,723     |
| Materials and supplies | $278,982  | $195,635  | $328,118  | $45,041   | $847,776                | $43,519                | $19,737     | $911,032       |
| Professional fees | $246,203  | $78,245   | $435,809  | $193,604  | $953,861                | $81,758                | $211,807    | $1,247,426     |
| Office expense   | $123,796  | $242,530  | $128,490  | $90,942   | $585,758                | $214,531               | $317,341    | $1,117,630     |
| Occupancy        | $49,400   | $51,954   | $31,194   | $16,749   | $149,297                | $41,245                | $31,703     | $222,245       |
| Interest expense | -         | $1,044    | -         | -         | $1,044                  | $6,811                 | -           | $7,855         |

**TOTAL** $2,117,932 $1,450,190 $1,578,483 $601,305 $5,747,910 $830,892 $1,303,109 $7,881,911

### SUPPORTING SERVICES

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<th>Management and General</th>
<th>Fundraising</th>
<th>Total Expenses</th>
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<td>Interest expense</td>
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**TOTAL** $830,892 $1,303,109 $7,881,911

### NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR

$17,595,374
DONOR LIST — 2015

$250,000+
The Walt Disney Company, Inc.
The Frances and Benjamin Benenson Foundation
Brownstone Family Foundation
Lisa W. Callahan
Clifford Chance US LLP
Betty Y. Chen
Andy Cohen
Cushman & Wakefield
The Carole & Robert Daly Charitable Foundation
Diamond Integrated Marketing
The Durst Organization
EcoMedia - A CBS Company
Edgemere Fund of The Greater Cincinnati Foundation
Ernst & Young LLP
Ioana M. Ertegun
Vernon Evenson
EvensonBest LLC
Evercore Wealth Management
Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver, & Jacobson
The Georgetown Company
Georgescu Family Foundation
Friman & Stein, Inc.
Global Brands Group
Goldman, Sachs & Co.

$100,000 – $249,999
American Express
Midler Family Foundation
The Thompson Family Foundation
Toyota Motor North America Inc.

$25,000 – $49,999
Mercedes T. Bass Charitable Corporation
Patricia A. Durkan
The Estee Lauder Companies, Inc.
Fisher Brothers Foundation, Inc.
Genesis American UK
The Jeffrey and Jamie Harris Family Foundation
Kitty Hawks
Dorothy Herman
Edmund D. Holland
The Malkin Fund, Inc.

$10,000 – $24,999
3.1 Phillip Lim LLC
Anonymous (3)
Linda Allard
ALSAC/St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital
Altmann/Kazikas Foundation
Lilly Auchincloss Foundation, Inc.

$50,000 – $99,999
Anonymous (1)
Bloomberg Philanthropies
CB Richard Ellis
Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation, Inc.

$25,000 – $49,999
Newmark Grubb Knight Frank
Darcy A. Stacom
The Geraldine Stutz Trust, Inc.
Elaine P. Wynn & Family Foundation
The Bill & Ann Ziff Foundation

$10,000 – $9,999
1 Hotel
Barbara Ann Abeles
Adopt a Highway Maintenance Corporation of New York

$1,000 – $9,999
1 Hotel
Barbara Ann Abeles
Adopt a Highway Maintenance Corporation of New York
Fred Alger & Company, Inc.
Aliza Family Foundation
Alliance for Community Trees
Jack Amiot
Janet Asimov
ATS-1 Fund
Estate of Judith Halevi
The Jeffrey and Jamie Harris Family Foundation Trust
Kitty Hawks
Dorothy Herman
Edmund D. Holland

PHOTO CREDIT: Mia McDonald
MISSION STATEMENT

New York Restoration Project (NYRP) is a non-profit organization dedicated to transforming open space in under-resourced communities to create a greener, more sustainable New York City. NYRP improves, maintains, and programs open spaces in communities lacking adequate resources. Working on public and private land citywide, NYRP’s flexible approach to land management serves as a model for non-profit municipal engagement. Together with partners in city agencies, non-profit organizations, and local communities, NYRP demonstrates the social and environmental value of building ownership over open spaces. Learn more at www.nyrp.org.