

MILWAUKEE'S CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP CORPS

Program Overview

The Milwaukee Conservation Leadership Corps (MCLC) is a partnership program operated by the Student Conservation Association, Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board and Johnson Controls. Since the program's inception in 2006, 156 MCLC members have completed over 25,000 hours of conservation service to Milwaukee public lands and natural areas.



Funding for the program is provided by Johnson Controls, the founding sponsor, with additional support provided by:

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The Milwaukee Conservation Leadership Corps are crews of high-school students who spend seven weeks during the summer completing vital conservation projects to preserve public lands and improve access to Milwaukee parks. During the program, members complete hands-on conservation projects, build job skills, develop a strong work ethic and gain a personal sense of stewardship for the environment.

Each member of MCLC gains valuable job experience and earns a meaningful wage and more importantly, the young people develop into leaders and leave with a sense of accomplishment and pride for their communities.



Program Accomplishments

The MCLC program collaborates with Milwaukee County Parks, the Urban Ecology Center, and the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center to complete conservation projects and support education and career training objectives. MCLC crews have worked in many parks such as: Washington, McGovern, Kohl, Grant Estabrook and Riverside. The crews completed significant projects such as:

- Building 6,600 feet of new trail, including a signature trail network in Kohl Park.
- Restoring and maintaining over 40,000 feet of existing trail.
- Leading educational activities and peer mentoring for over 500 elementary and middle school youth.
- Restoring habitat by removing invasive plant species and planting over 10,000 native plants, shrubs and trees.



“This job has been a journey! When I first started, I was presumptuous and thought that it was going to be easy work, but it was very hard at times.”

Lamar W, 2007 MCLC Member

Member Experience:

- All 156 members are Milwaukee city residents with over three-quarters of members enrolled in a Milwaukee Public School
- The average age of new members was 16 years old and MCLC was typically their first paid work experience. As part of the program, every member completed over 20 hours of Job Readiness Training and career services.
- Members represent the rich diversity of Milwaukee: 77% of members were African-American, 7% Hispanic/Latino, 6% Asian/Pacific-Islander, 6% Caucasian/White and 4% Multi-racial/Other. 45% of members were Female and 55% Male
- Over 50% were residents of center city Milwaukee
- 94% successfully completed the program on average over the three years of the program
- 86% responded they would like to participate again
- Over 70% of 2006 Alumni surveyed reported they got another job during the following school year and summer. Nearly all of those members noted specific job skills and the experience was important in securing their new jobs. 4 MCLC members have become seasonal Milwaukee County Park employees.

“Turkeys are getting closer all the time...”

2008 Crew Member working at Schlitz Audubon Nature Center

“Today we made awesome progress on the bridge. We have the base of it and the sides all done. For 4 days of work we (have) done a lot. Our main tool used was the saws and drills. I never knew building a bridge can be so hard but fun.” From the Crew Journal on Thursday, July 3, 2008

“Crew members were amazed at the sight of the completed bridge (31 ft) and that they had actually done it.” Crew Leader, one week later

“The best part of the program was the fact that we worked well as a team. We got a lot of work done in the past 7 weeks and it felt good to do it.”

Tony L, 2006 MCLC Member
