PREPARING A FUTURE GENERATION

Rock Creek Conservation Corps (RC3) is a youth conservation program that connects high school students to nature. Through restoration of the natural world, young people learn to be stewards of their communities and become ambassadors for Rock Creek Park.

The program provides a transformative experience for youth from communities close to, but historically disconnected from, public lands. Students gain real-world experience in the conservation field, learn skills for stewarding their local natural environment, and develop their leadership potential.

RC3 crew members work together to plant native trees at the Audubon Naturalist Society in Montgomery County, MD.

RC3 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- **A summer outside.** Students work and learn in Rock Creek watershed and are paid through the Mayor Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program.

- **Students engaged.** Since 2015, the program has employed more than 120 crew members between the ages of 15 and 19.

- **Having an impact.** Crew members support the restoration of Rock Creek by removing exotic plants, installing green infrastructure, and building trails. The impact on students is equally profound.

- **Partners in conservation.** To reach their goals, RC3 crew members work with community partners like the National Park Service, the Audubon Naturalist Society, and Montgomery County Parks and Recreation.

- **Creating community.** To encourage a culture of stewardship, RC3 crew members are selected from three area high schools east of Rock Creek Park: Theodore Roosevelt, EL Haynes and Capital City Public Charter School.

ON THE JOB EDUCATION

Crew members leave the program with an appreciation of Rock Creek and its ecology, the relationship of the park to the community, and the importance of taking action to maintain a healthy watershed. Many students remain connected to RC3 through school-year service learning or a second summer in the program.

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Rock Creek Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) organization and an official philanthropic partner to Rock Creek Park.
WEED WARRIORS
RC3 crew members work in Washington, DC and Montgomery County, MD to restore Rock Creek’s forests for our native plants and animals by working hard to remove invasive plants, like bush honeysuckle and winged burning bush, from the parks we love.

STOPPING STORMWATER
One of the biggest threats to Rock Creek is pollution from stormwater runoff. RC3 students help stop stormwater by installing green infrastructure, like rain gardens, in Rock Creek’s parks to slow and absorb water before it gets to Rock Creek.

BUILDING COMMUNITY
RC3 crew members take on leadership roles as junior Stream Team Leaders, organizing service events in Rock Creek and encouraging friends and family to join them as stewards and friends of Rock Creek.

RC3 CREWS INSTALLED
- 2,000+ square feet of green infrastructure
- 50+ native trees and shrubs
- 3,600 ft of trail

RC3 CREWS REMOVED
- 2,000+ invasive shrubs
- 90,000+ square feet of invasive plant coverage

“THE WORK I DID WITH ROCK CREEK CONSERVANCY MADE ME VIEW THAT EVERY SMALL THING I DID LED TO SOMETHING BIGGER, WHETHER THAT MEANT TAKING DOWN JUST ONE HONEYSUCKLE TREE OR CUTTING DOWN VINES. EVERYTHING LEADS TO SOMETHING BIGGER.”