

## Yonkers charity wins environmental award for Saw Mill River 'daylighting'



Ernie Garcia, [elgarcia@lohud.com](mailto:elgarcia@lohud.com) 6:00 a.m. ET June 28, 2017



Groundwork Hudson Valley has won an environmental award for its work on exposing the Saw Mill River in downtown Yonkers.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) selected Groundwork Hudson Valley for its 2017 Environmental Champion Award for Region 2, which includes New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and eight Indian nations in New York.

*A view looking west toward the Hudson River at Van der Donck Park in Yonkers, in this photo shot Oct. 13, 2016.*

*(Photo: Mark Vergari/The Journal News)*

Groundwork was recognized for its work with the City of Yonkers and New York State to lead the Saw Mill River "daylighting" project, which consisted of restoring a river that was covered with concrete for 90 years and recreating it as Van der Donck Park in Larkin Plaza.

The park's 13,775 square feet of aquatic habitat is a green space with educational exhibits that teach visitors about the river's history and the various ways human activity has affected its ecology over the past 400 years.

"We have worked for nearly twenty years to re-green and revitalize the City of Yonkers and the Lower Hudson Valley. We are so proud to be recognized alongside our fellow awardees from across the region," said Brigitte Griswold, executive director of Groundwork Hudson Valley.

Yonkers teens employed by Groundwork are now offering weekly tours of Van der Donck Park, featuring the American eel and the Eastern Phoebe. The tour is every Friday from 2 to 3 p.m., starting at Philipse Manor Hall in Yonkers, through Oct. 27.

Groundwork's current Yonkers project is the Yonkers Greenway, a project that will convert an abandoned spur of the Old Putnam Railroad into a 2.2-mile biking and walking trail through the heart of southwest Yonkers.