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COMPLETE

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Page 1

**Q1** Name of your organization.

Mill River Park Collaborative

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**Q2** Grant #

20150828

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**Q3** Grant Period

Nov 15, 2015 - Oct 15, 2016

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**Q4** Location of your organization

City	<b>Stamford</b>
State	<b>Connecticut</b>

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**Q5** Name and Title of person completing evaluation.

Trent McCann

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**Q6** Phone Number:

203-989-0321 x105

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**Q7** Email address.

trent@millriverpark.org

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Page 2: Key Outcomes and Results

**Q8** Total number of clients served through this grant funding:

16

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**Q9** Describe the project's key outcomes and results based on the goals and objectives. Use the following format: State the Goal: State Objective 1: Describe the Activities, Results and Outcomes for Objective 1: State Objective 2 (if applicable): Describe the Activities, Results and Outcomes for Objective 2: State Objective 3 (if applicable): Describe the Activities, Results and Outcomes for Objective 3:

The objective of the Mill River Park Stewards Program is to engage local teenagers with nature within their community and expose them to a potential career in environmentalism. All 16 of our students saw the program through to the end and all expressed feeling a connection to both the Park and nature on a larger scale by the end of the summer. The students also completed six college and career prep workshops and by the end of the summer all have cover letters, resumes, and the skills to apply for college. Through participating in field work and environmental education workshops, the students demonstrated the ability to explain what they've learned to others.

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**Q10** Please describe any challenges/obstacles the organization encountered (if any) in attaining goals & objectives.

The largest challenge faced during the summer was one student who we did not believe would last the entire length of the Program. The Stewards spent 3 hours every morning working in the Park on a variety of land care projects, such as removing invasive species, maintaining gardens, and cleaning litter. It was difficult work in hot weather, and teamwork and group morale were paramount. In the beginning of the summer she had a bad attitude towards the work, arrived late, slacked off, or talked back to her superiors. She was one of the older students in the program and I wanted her to understand that other kids looked to her and she needed to lead by example. She made it through the whole summer and we were very proud to see her make such a quick turnaround.

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**Q11** How did you overcome and/or address the challenges and obstacles?

I spoke with her two times after days where I felt she had been slacking or had a bad attitude about whatever we were doing. These did not seem to make a difference so one morning I brought her in to meet with myself and our Executive Director. We explained our concerns and told her that if she was going to continue with the program, that she needed to demonstrate that she wanted to be here. We told her to take the rest of the day off to think about it and come ready to work hard the next morning if she decided that's what she wanted to do. She was there the next morning and we never had an issue with her for the rest of the summer.

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**Q12** Describe any unintended positive outcomes as a result of the efforts supported by this grant.

An unintended positive outcome that we've seen in the three months since the Stewards Program came to an end, is that at least 5 of the students have come back to volunteer at different events. The intent of the program is for them to feel more connected to nature within their own community, but it's great to see the kids want to help out with events and other programs at Mill River Park, even when they're not being paid.

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**Q13** Briefly describe the impact this grant has had on the organization and community served.

By funding the Mill River Stewards Program, this grant has the impact of bringing teenagers closer to nature within their own community. We offer them the opportunity to learn and engage with nature that they otherwise would never have. By the end of the Program every single student reported feeling a closer connection to the environment, as well as recording far higher scores on exit surveys than they did at the start of the summer. Their ability to identify plants, explain complex ecological concepts, and passion for the Park make me proud to lead this program. All of the students enjoy themselves, work through difficult conditions, and learn a lot. They all said they would recommend the Stewards Programs to friends for next summer.

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Page 3: Budget

**Q14** Please provide a budget expenditure report of the approved line items. Include a brief narrative on how the funds were used to fulfill grant objectives.

The funds allowed us to pay each program participant an hourly wage. By doing this, the program becomes a viable option for all teenagers in the Stamford community, and not just those who can afford to have an unpaid summer job. Additionally, we went on field trips to other local urban parks, such as Central Park and the NY Botanical Gardens, sometimes we treated the kids to lunch, we bought supplies, and t-shirts.

I will speak to our Business and Operations Manager about getting copies of these receipts sent to you.

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Page 4: Success Stories

**Q15** Please relate a success story:

As I mentioned earlier, one student was particularly difficult to work with. At the beginning of the summer, she had a bad attitude and was very dismissive of my suggestions. She had just graduated high school and, like many other teenagers, thought that she knew better than the adults. After some difficult conversations and essentially an ultimatum about whether or not she wanted to continue with the program, she truly turned her attitude around. She was helpful, cheery, and lead by example. She even applied to community college late in the summer and is currently enrolled and taking classes while working a part time job.

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**Q16** Please relate a success story here:

Another student from the Stewards Program has been a very active volunteer with Mill River Park since the end of the summer. He has volunteered on three separate occasions at public events and programs. He has totaled nearly 20 hours of volunteering at those events. He really seems to be proud to be a part of the Mill River Park family and is willing to help in whatever ways he can.

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**Q17** Please relate a success story here:

This is not a particular success story of an individual, but I have noticed that more than half of the students from this years program have come back to the park for one reason or another. I've seen kids walking with their friends, jogging, reading, or coming to a public program. I believe this is tied to our objective of bringing students closer to the environment within their own community.

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Page 5: Organizational Information

**Q18** Which category best describes the organization. **Cultural**  
Please choose only one.

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**Q19** What is the organization's primary program area of interest? **Environment/Environmental**

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S.L. Gimbel Foundation Fund

<b>Q20</b> Percentage of clients served through grant in each ethnic group category. Total must equal 100%	African American	<b>50</b>
	Asian/Pacific Islander	<b>12</b>
	Caucasian	<b>19</b>
	Native American	<b>0</b>
	Hispanic Latino	<b>19</b>
	All Ethnicities	<b>0</b>
	Other	<b>0</b>
	Unknown	<b>0</b>

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<b>Q21</b> Approximate percentage of clients served from grant funds in each age category.	Children Birth-05 years of age	<b>0</b>
	Children ages 06-12 years of age	<b>0</b>
	Youth ages 13-18	<b>88</b>
	Young Adults (18-24)	<b>12</b>
	Adults	<b>0</b>
	Senior Citizens	<b>0</b>

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<b>Q22</b> Approximate percentage of clients served with disabilities from grant funds.	No clients served with disabilities	<b>100</b>
	Physically Disabled	<b>0</b>
	Blind & Vision Impaired	<b>0</b>
	Deaf & Hearing Impaired	<b>0</b>
	Mentally/Emotionally Disabled	<b>0</b>
	Learning Disabled	<b>0</b>
	Speech Impaired	<b>0</b>
	Other Disability	<b>0</b>

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<b>Q23</b> Approximate percentage of clients served in each economic group.	At/Below Poverty Level	<b>0</b>
	Homeless/Indigent	<b>0</b>
	Migrant Worker	<b>0</b>
	Working Poor	<b>0</b>
	Other	<b>0</b>

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S.L. Gimbel Foundation Fund

**Q24** Approximate percentage of clients served from grant funds in each population category.

Single Adults	6
Families	0
Single Parent Families	0
Disabled	0
Ethnic Minority	0
LGBTG	0
Abused Women/Children	0
Homeless/Indigent	0
Immigrants	0
Military	0
Parolees	0
Students	94
Elderly	0
Children/Youth (those not included in Family)	0

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