

# GREEN CITY FORCE

Our ambition is that national service directed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the environment becomes an avenue to prosperity for a generation of urban young adults, as well as a means to build a culture of sustainability that can drive the growth of the green economy.



Through its Clean Energy Corps, Green City Force (GCF) engages young New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents in rigorous training and service as AmeriCorps members.

GCF's innovative model has been recognized locally and nationally as a breakthrough approach to creating economic opportunity while employing young people to achieve city climate action and sustainability goals in public housing communities and beyond.

#### RECOGNITION

In 2013 GCF was recognized by Mayor Bloomberg as the **Most Innovative Non-profit in New York City**. GCF received White House recognition as a **Youth Jobs+ Champion of Change**, one of five organiza-

tions highlighted nationally. Mayor Nutter cited GCF as his **inspiration for creating PowerCorps PHL**, launched in 2013 to benefit 300 unemployed young adults in Philadelphia over three years.

#### NEED

Young adults are caught in the spiral of not having enough experience to get a job to be able to get ahead. GCF employs national service as a strategy to engage unemployed young adults to gain marketable skills and experience while addressing city climate action goals. **350,000 NYC young people**

IN OUR FIRST FIVE YEARS WE HAVE ENGAGED:

300+

unemployed young adults from public housing in NYC

80%

of graduates successfully transitioned to employment or college

1 million sq ft

of rooftops coated and cleaned white in NYC, lowering energy use on average 18%, as part of the city's NYC Cool Roofs campaign

11%

reduction in energy consumption over baseline with the launch of a behavior change campaign in public housing

NYC's first urban farm in public housing

Expanded green space and access to healthy food in public housing, through a sustainable park built on the Lower East Side and NYC's first urban farm in public housing in partnership with NYCHA and Added Value

ages 18-24 are neither working nor attending school (Social Research Council, 2012). In many low-income communities, unemployment rates for young people of color are nearly 50%. At the same time, the push is underway to meet the city's climate action plan objectives. NYC's sustainability policy goals target outdated infrastructure and poor usage habits contributing to **\$750M+ in annual energy waste** and unnecessary pollution (PlaNYC, 2011).

**Green City Force connects the dots between these critical needs.**

## MODEL

GCF Corps Members are young adults who hold a GED or high school diploma but test on average at a 9th grade level and are likely to end up in dead-end jobs or in remedial classes at community college without intervention. At GCF, they serve full-time on teams, gaining work experience in the field four days a week on projects related to energy efficiency, urban agriculture and sustainability, and acquire academic and technical skills in the classroom every Friday as they work towards technical certifications and success on college exams. They earn a monthly stipend, support for finding a job or getting into college, and membership in an active alumni community after graduation.



## TESTIMONIAL: TERRELL FULWOOD

A resident of NYCHA's Marcy Houses in Brooklyn, Terrell graduated from high school and then found himself doing little with his life besides eating, sleeping and wasting time. That all changed when he joined Green City Force. Terrell demonstrated his work ethic at the NYCHA Farm and discovered an interest in building science through Green City Academy, the Friday classroom training component of the program. Reflecting on his experience as a Corps Member, Terrell remarked, **"Green City Force was not only a way to sustain my family and me financially, but it also helped me engage my passion. I like helping others."** Upon graduating from GCF in August 2013, Terrell secured a full-time position as a Field Technician at the Association for Energy Affordability, performing energy audits and outreach as part of Con Edison's Green Team—skills he learned during his GCF service term.

## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT GREEN CITY FORCE:

"This is a huge deal. You can do this in every city in America."

— **President Bill Clinton**,  
on stage with Green City Force  
at the Clinton Global Initiative in 2011

"A pioneering program... Green City Force graduates are defining their own success and teaching us all by example that social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and economic self-sufficiency can truly go hand in hand."

— **John Rhea**,  
Former Chairman, New York City  
Housing Authority

"I and my staff were blown away by the GCF trainees and program. We work with training groups around the country and they are a stand-out. Every trainee was enthusiastic and engaged."

— **Erica Mackie**,  
Founder and Executive Director,  
Grid Alternatives

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