

Media Advisory

CONTACT:

Adam Green, Rocking the Boat
(347) 236-9089; adam@rockingtheboat.org
Amy Chender, ABC Carpet and Home
(646) 602-3865

SOUTH BRONX NONPROFIT ROCKING THE BOAT TEAMS WITH ECOLOGICAL ARTIST LILLIAN BALL, eDESIGN DYNAMICS, DREXEL UNIVERSITY AND ABC CARPET & HOME ON PROJECT TO REDUCE POLLUTION IN BRONX RIVER

LOCAL TEENS PLANT 10,000 SQUARE FEET OF WETLAND AND GRASSLAND

Tuesday, October 25, 4pm

WHAT:

Rocking the Boat, a Bronx-based boatbuilding and environmental education youth development organization, Lillian Ball, an internationally acclaimed ecological artist, and ABC Carpet and Home, a NYC institution that has taken a leadership role in sustainability, have worked together to conceive, design, and complete WATERWASH ABC, a green infrastructure project that will improve water quality in the Bronx River. The project, which was funded by New York State Office of the Attorney General, is located in the backyard of the ABC Carpet and Home Bronx Warehouse and includes a 10,000 square foot wetland and grassland, a picnic area, and interpretive signage, allowing the public to enjoy previously inaccessible space and learn about storm water infrastructure and native habitat restoration. With construction finished in four months at the cost of \$350,000, WATERWASH ABC was completed in a fraction of the time and at a fraction of the cost of comparable projects.

Rocking the Boat

- Rocking the Boat applied for and received \$350,000 from the New York State Office of the Attorney General's Bronx River Watershed Initiative Funding to administer the project and ensure its successful completion
- Following excavation, Environmental Job Skills Apprentices and Program Assistants spent four weeks this summer planting and watering over 8,000 salt tolerant native plants in wetland and grassland habitats
- Environmental Job Skills Apprentices will monitor and maintain the newly constructed wetland and native habitat for one year in conjunction with Drexel University environmental scientists
- Adam Green, Executive Director, Rocking the Boat: "WATERWASH ABC has allowed Rocking the Boat's young people to work with a dynamic team of artists, engineers, and contractors, to design and create something that will have lasting social and ecological impact for the South Bronx community. We are thrilled to have taken a leadership role in such a groundbreaking project."

Ball Studio

- Ecological artist Lillian Ball created the vision for the project and designed the entire site—including the wetland, water features, picnic area and grassland, and permeable recycled glass pathway. The concept is based on the previous and acclaimed public storm water management WATERWASH project in Mattituck, NY, on Long Island's North Fork.
- Ms. Ball worked tirelessly to insure that the project would meet its goals of significantly reducing direct storm water runoff into the Bronx River while opening up new Bronx River public access space, and allowing for community awareness and education around the native Bronx River habitat and storm water infrastructure..
- Lillian Ball: "WATERWASH ABC offers a creative opportunity for the public to learn about the benefits of wetland storm water remediation while enjoying the native plants that improve wildlife habitat."

eDesign Dynamics

- eDesign Dynamics (EDD), a water resources and habitat restoration design firm, was responsible for development of design documents for the project.
- From its engineering perspective, EDD completed the feasibility analysis and hydrologic model that informed the catchment area and wetland sizing to optimize water quality improvements.
- From its habitat restoration perspective, EDD was critical in specifying soil and native species that would provide the greatest habitat value along the Bronx River estuary.

Drexel University

- Under the direction of Franco Montalto, PhD, Drexel University researchers will be quantifying the volume of precipitation captured in this new green infrastructure project, as well as its ability to improve runoff water quality prior to discharge to the Bronx River.

ABC Carpet & Home

- Paulette Cole: “As a mission-driven business, ABC Home has had a deep commitment to environmental consciousness. The Bronx waterfront project at our Warehouse Outlet has been a opportunity to align our values fully with a community effort which has included engaging inter-city youth with Rocking the Boat to re-creating the indigenous wetland habitat native to Bronx River.”
- Family-owned company has committed to generously support the project, and is setting a wonderful example for other businesses along the Bronx River
- ABC will maintain the site beyond the terms of the grant

New York State Office of the Attorney General's Bronx River Watershed Initiative

- The New York State Office of the Attorney General dedicated \$350,000 from its Bronx River Watershed Initiative (BRWI) to Rocking the Boat to design and create the WATERWASH ABC project.
- The BRWI is funded from over \$7 million that the Attorney General's Office obtained from settlements, completed in 2007, with four local municipalities and the Yonkers Racing Corp. that ended their illegal discharges of raw sewage to the Bronx River. The Office of the Attorney General contracted with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to administer these settlement funds. NFWF solicits applications for projects, which are then selected by the Office of the Attorney General with advice of an expert panel convened by the Foundation and in consultation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.
- Through the BRWI, the Office of the Attorney General has, to date, provided nearly \$9 million in direct and matching funds to Bronx River restoration and pollution efforts.

Members of the press are welcome to preview the site and interview the main partners: Paulette Cole (ABC), Lillian Ball, Adam Green (Rocking the Boat), Eric Rothstein (eDesign Dynamics), Franco Montalto, PhD. (Drexel University)

WHERE: Behind ABC Carpet and Home Bronx Warehouse Outlet: 1055 Bronx River Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472

WHEN: October 25, 2011, 4pm-6pm

* * *

