Nova Southeastern University Students Embrace their Custom Day of Service

The City of Fort Lauderdale issued a call for volunteers for a recent Adopt-A-Neighbor event to assist a local homeowner with property improvements. The response from the City’s neighbors, local businesses, and community organizations was tremendous, but there was one group of zealous students that really embraced the spirit of volunteerism!

Nova Southeastern University’s Office of Student Leadership and Civic Engagement recruited 84 students to volunteer for the original Adopt-A-Neighbor event. Unfortunately this would have been too many people for the small residential project the required volunteers. Rather than lose out on a terrific opportunity to build our community, the City’s Neighbor Volunteer Office created “Nova Southeastern University Day of Service.”

On Saturday, August 30th, 84 Nova students partnered with the Neighbor Volunteer Office to work on the following four different community projects:

Local Neighbor’s Residence
Fourteen students arrived at a Fort Lauderdale neighbor’s residence. The homeowner was recently widowed and could not keep up with some of the day-to-day maintenance issues with the property. As a result, she was cited
for overgrown landscaping, trash and debris, lack of exterior maintenance, and a damaged wooden fence. Nova Southeastern students diligently painted the house, landscaped the front yard, and removed trash from the back yard under the supervision of volunteer Meg Hooper. The students’ efforts helped this homeowner beautify her property and bring her house into compliance.

**Bill Keith Preserve**
Twenty Nova students removed litter from the shoreline and mulch trails at Bill Keith Preserve, which is a 3.5-acre nature preserve located in the Shady Banks neighborhood. Since this is a “natural” preserve, the students’ efforts positively impact the environmental, local wildlife, and those who visit and enjoy the preserve.

**Snyder Park**
Snyder Park is one of Fort Lauderdale’s largest parks, spanning approximately 93 acres of natural history and beauty. To further enhance this magnificent park, 42 Nova students worked in unison to clean and landscape this subtropical Fort Lauderdale gem, elevating its reputation as a top-notch, family fun park.

**Fort Lauderdale Woman’s Club**
The Fort Lauderdale Woman’s Club headquarters is a more than 100-year-old building located in the heart of downtown in Stranahan Park at the southeast corner of Broward Boulevard and Andrews Avenue. Maintenance of the landscape is imperative to the beauty and allure of this historic building, and 21 of Nova’s students help ensure its captivating presence by weeding and completing minor landscape work at the property. The students’ efforts will definitely be appreciated by the hundreds of people that pass by this beautiful City landmark on a daily basis.

The Nova Southeastern University Day of Service was a tremendous success, with all volunteer efforts completed by 1 p.m. that day. The City of Fort Lauderdale thanks Nova Southeastern University and all of the students who unselfishly donated their time to help make a difference in our community. The City would also like to thank the Neighbor Volunteer Office for coordinating the day with Nova Southeastern; the volunteers; Suzanne Southwell and Laura DeMatteo for assisting with the Bill Keith Park cleanup; Aaron Bethencourt for supervising the Snyder Park initiative; Jo Ann Smith for leading the Stranahan Park beautification project; the Neighbor Support Division for supporting the Adopt-A-Neighbor project; and the City’s Parks & Recreation staff for providing supplies and trash pickup.