



CPRA ACPL

GREEN JOBS INITIATIVE

Success Story

The Bentway Conservancy's skate way in the winter.

Urban Ranger Helps City Park Thrive

THE SPACE UNDER A MAJOR HIGHWAY. in Canada's largest city may not seem to be a likely place for a park

But The Bentway Conservancy saw the unused, unkempt land and imagined the possibilities. In 2018, the organization transformed the area under Toronto's elevated Gardiner Expressway and re-named it The Bentway – which has since served as a year-round outdoor public space for residents and visitors to enjoy. It includes interactive art installations, seasonal and special exhibitions, theatre, performances and festivals.



TORONTO,
ONTARIO

Canada

This project is funded by
the Government of Canada



The Bentway Conservancy's greenery for visitors to enjoy in the summer months



The Bentway Conservancy's skate way in the winter

“Jacquiline has contributed to sharing our values and keeping The Bentway a safe, clean environment for all to enjoy.”

Stephan Lamoureux, a facility supervisor at The Bentway

The group even maintains the park's Bentway Skate Trail - a 220-metre community ice rink in the winter.

The space is located on the lands of Fort York National Historic Site, and creates a gateway to the Waterfront of Lake Ontario. It also provides residents and visitors access to popular attractions and destinations including Ontario Place, Exhibition Place, Harbourfront Centre and the CN Tower.

But it takes many people to keep this space thriving, and in the summer and fall of 2021, the The Bentway Conservancy was able to add one more staff member thanks to funding from the CPRA Green Jobs Initiative, which is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Skills Strategy program.

“We always relish the opportunity to share our knowledge and bring new friends into our workplace, and we are grateful to work hand-in-hand with the CPRA to make it all work,” says Stephan Lamoureux, a facility supervisor at The Bentway who maintains the site and its facilities, as well as assists visitors to the city park.

The grant helped the organization hire Jacqueline Hargreaves, who worked as an Urban Ranger and was instrumental in helping Stephan keep the area maintained – as well as helping visitors feel welcome.

In her role, Jacqueline's duties included landscaping, gardening, groundskeeping, and collecting waste to ensure

The Bentway remained a clean and welcoming open park space for its users.

Additionally, she had the opportunity to work as a front-line customer service representative for the park's visitors, as well as the general public. She also educated the public on The Bentway's unique history, and helped execute programs and events that took place at the site.

“As an Urban Ranger, Jacqueline was one of our main assets on-site for any patrons to bring issues or questions to,” Stephan says, adding that the job gave the student the opportunity to learn real-world skills that are essential in many fields.

As a customer service representative, Stephan says Jacqueline also interacted with The Bentway's visitors who often come from a variety of socioeconomic, racial and cultural backgrounds – allowing her to learn diverse perspectives and develop high-level communication skills.

“Through at least hundreds of interactions, she's been a friendly face to all, and has done a great job of facilitating a pleasant experience for those visiting The Bentway,” says Stephan, adding that the grant helped further The Bentway's mission to provide an outdoor urban space that serves many communities. “Jacquiline has contributed to sharing our values and keeping The Bentway a safe, clean environment for all to enjoy.” 🍁