

JOB CREATION

ESSEX NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



Essex National Heritage Area

www.essexheritage.org

An example of the ability of National Heritage Areas to leverage the best attributes of a community and to create the most public benefit at the lowest cost can be found in the **Essex National Heritage Area** in Massachusetts. Within this heritage area a partnership was created with the National Park Service to create a summer youth employment program at the Salem Maritime National Historic Site and the affiliated Saugus Iron Works NHS.

Initiated in 2009, the Essex National Heritage Area built a unique youth employment and training program with the NPS and the regional North Shore Workforce Investment Bureau.

Prior to this, the National Park was unable to hire local area teens to work in the parks because of employment restrictions. In turn, local youth had developed no affinity to or relationship with the park sites even though many lived just a few blocks away. This was changed in the summer of 2009 when ten at-risk students were hired by the Essex National Heritage Area and assigned as volunteers to work at Salem Maritime and Saugus Iron Works. These students learned skills in historic preservation, building maintenance, natural resource management, interpretation and visitor operations – and, in turn, the teens gained confidence and essential work experience. The summer youth provided 200 hours of visitor support, 500 hours of assistance in natural resource restoration, 200 hours of painting, 600 hours of landscaping, restored 250 linear feet of wooden fencing and learn the art of gilding the historic Custom House sign. Based on the success of this pilot, the program was doubled in 2010. Twenty teens were hired this past summer through the Essex National Heritage Area using a combination of public and private funding. Some of the students were able to continue working with the NPS during the busy fall ‘leaf peeping’ season through additional fund raising by Essex Heritage.

The results of the program have been significant. For the students, this program has changed their concepts about their neighborhoods and themselves – opening up new career possibilities that they never considered. For the communities, there is a growing population of young people, reflective of the region’s new diversity, that is engaged and positively contributing to our society. And for the government and private businesses in the area, there is the satisfaction of seeing a small amount of public and private funds leveraged to create a very big impact.



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AUGUSTA CANAL NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA



Augusta Canal National Heritage Area

www.augustacanal.com

Conceived as a jobs engine nearly two centuries ago, the Augusta Canal has helped Augusta, Georgia to overcome economic challenges since the 1800s. When faced with a national economic recession in the 1840s, city leaders constructed the Augusta Canal to harness waterpower from the nearby Savannah River. The Canal ushered in an era of industrial development and created a booming textile industry along its banks by the late 19th Century. By the late 20th Century, the textile industry across the South was in steady decline.

In July, 2001, 301 employees at the King Mill were abruptly thrown out of

When 301 employees became abruptly unemployed, the Augusta Canal Authority acted quickly, resulting in the rehiring of almost all the employees.

work when the owners of the plant closed after nearly 120 years of producing cotton. Acting quickly, the Augusta Canal Authority, management entity of the **Augusta Canal National Heritage Area**, stepped in, purchased the property and leased the plant to a new operator. Standard Textile rehired almost all the King Mill employees and continues processing textiles for the health care industry today.

In 2010 the Augusta Canal Authority purchased the adjacent Sibley Mill. The massive plant that once manufactured denim for top-name jeans labels ceased production in 2006 as employment dropped from 1,000 to 125. Private developers had shied away due to environmental concerns at the 120 year old plant. The Authority is now undertaking an environmental cleanup of the site. Upon completion, the property will be marketed to private developers for a \$35 million mixed use development that will employ in excess of 200 people. The Canal Authority now operates the mill's hydropower plant and employs eight former Sibley workers. Proceeds from the hydro operation will help fund the clean-up.

The heritage area will market the site to private developers for a \$35 million mixed use development which will employ in excess of 200 people.

