

NEWS

# Working for Worcester collegiate volunteers roll up sleeves for 10th annual Build Day



**Jeff A. Chamer**

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WORCESTER — Volunteers looking to give back to the community gathered Saturday morning in front of City Hall to kick off Working for Worcester's 10th annual Build Day.

The tradition continued strong, as 1,100 volunteers dispersed to one of 20 sites throughout the city Saturday to, among other opportunities, build playgrounds, clean and clear outdoor spaces and garden.

"It's been hard the past few years to really gather everyone and build a sense of community," Sabrina Ramos, co-executive director of Working for Worcester and a student at College of the Holy Cross, said. "It's really great to get everyone together for a special day today."

The organization, which is entirely run by college students, was started in 2012 by Jeffrey Reppucci and Derek Kump, both Holy Cross graduates.

Over the last 10 years, the organization has mobilized thousands of volunteers and raised thousands of dollars including over \$135,000 and counting in donations this year.

"We have a 100% reinvestment policy into the city, so every penny that we raised, we put it right back into our projects," Ramos said.

This year's group of volunteers is the largest since the pandemic started, which included students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester State University and Clark University as well as other area colleges and community partners, Ramos said.

Volunteer sites included Vernon Hill Elementary School, El Buen Samaritano and Nativity School of Worcester.

"We want to make students feel really comfortable at school," Ramos said. "We're trying to empower students from a young age, so volunteering at their school and creating a safe environment for them is a way to support them during this tough time."