

## **Earth Day Celebrations**



# **Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council Celebrates 25 Years Of Improving The River**

[\*\*Learn More\*\*](#)

The Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council (WRWC) is celebrating 25 years of restoring, protecting, and reimagining the river and the communities around it. Though it became a nonprofit in 2001, its roots trace back to the early 1990s,

when neighbors and local leaders recognized the potential of the neglected river. Together, they transformed polluted, abandoned spaces into parks, trails, and gathering places, reconnecting communities across Providence and surrounding towns. The river's name, meaning "where the saltwater ends," reflects its deep cultural history and enduring role as a place of connection.

Today, WRWC's work has expanded to include environmental restoration, education, recreation, and community leadership. The nonprofit organization improves water quality, builds green infrastructure, and works toward a river that is clean, fishable, and swimmable. WRWC restores habitats, maintains trails, and creates welcoming public spaces along the Greenway. Through bilingual programming and youth engagement, it fosters long-term stewardship and connection to the environment.

To celebrate Earth Day, WRWC will host a hands-on, family-friendly 2026 Earth Day Clean Day and Celebration on Saturday, April 25, at 15 Goldsmith St. in Johnston from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event will feature planting, mulching, art activities, live music, and refreshments along the Woonasquatucket River.

"Our hope is that Earth Day helps people see there are many ways to get involved and that everyone has a role to play," said WRWC's Chris Dalpe. "We create real, hands-on opportunities all year long. These moments are about more than getting work done. They're about building community, sharing knowledge, and making stewardship part of everyday life. When people come out, meet their neighbors, and take care of the river together, they start to see that their actions matter, and that's where real change starts."



**Turning Trash Into Treasure:**

# Creative Reuse Center Of RI Celebrates Earth Day —Every Day

[Learn More](#)

This Earth Day, one Rhode Island organization is proving that one person's discarded materials are another's masterpiece.

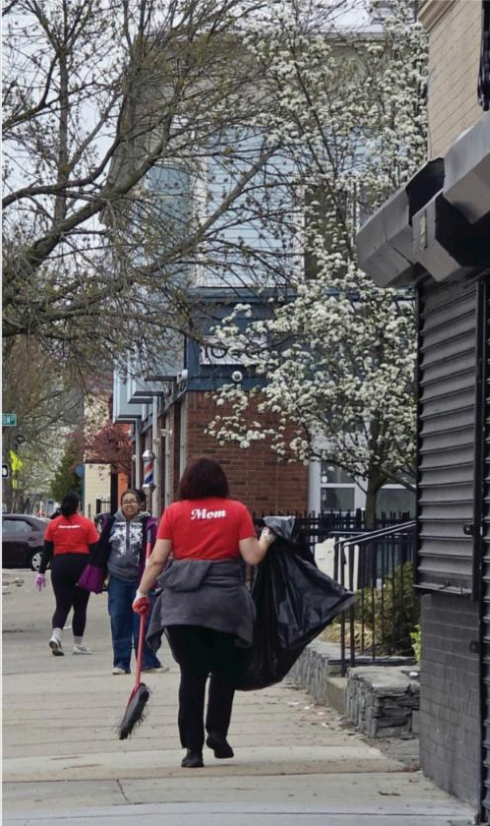
The Creative Reuse Center of RI (CRC) was founded on a simple but powerful mission: save reusable materials from the landfill and make them accessible to everyone. Artists, educators, caregivers, nonprofits, small business owners, and children all walk through their doors to find art and office supplies at just \$3 per pound. "These prices help teachers fit out their classrooms, spur creativity for artistic expression, and reduce operating costs for creators and businesses alike," said Sheri Griffin, Operations Director.

Since opening in 2022, the CRC has received donations from more than 800 donors and, in 2025 alone, diverted over 43,000 pounds of materials from Rhode Island's waste stream. Through in-store sales, classes, field trips, and artist residencies, they're not just reducing waste, they're building a community that sees the value in what others throw away. They've done such a good job of that, [they've run out of room](#) to store materials and are moving to a new home at 50 Sims Ave in Providence this June.

"We hope our community members are inspired to see how to reclaim 'waste' to be used for art or for everyday life," Griffin said. "Reusing, upcycling, sharing, and repairing, these show the way toward a sustainable future."

Support their mission and their move. Donate to their moving campaign at [givebutter.com/crcmove](https://givebutter.com/crcmove).

---



# Roots, Culture & Clean Streets: Quisqueya In Action's Clean-Up Tradition Continues

[Learn More](#)

For nearly four decades, [Quisqueya in Action \(QIA\)](#) has been doing the quiet, consistent work of building community, and to celebrate Earth Day this month, they took it to Broad Street.

Founded to preserve the art, culture, and language of the Dominican Republic, QIA has long understood that a thriving community starts from the ground up, literally. The organization's president, Marilyn Cepeda, says their "Broad Street Initiative" was born from a simple belief: "teach children early to respect their environment, and they'll grow into leaders who care for their neighbors too."

For the 15th consecutive year, QIA hosted a Community Clean-Up Day & Tree TLC event. In partnership with the City of Providence, the clean-up drew volunteers who tackled the littering challenges facing Broad Street through cleanups, tree care, and neighborhood beautification. Organizers hoped to engage 100 residents and send everyone home with a renewed sense of pride and purpose. Mission accomplished!



# RIBBA Celebrates 16 Years

[Learn More](#)

For 16 years, RIBBA has been committed to closing the wealth gap in Rhode Island by empowering residents to thrive and expanding equitable opportunities for future generations.

RIBBA recently marked this major milestone with its Annual Meeting, themed “*The Rhode Forward: Anchored in Resilience*,” which brought together business

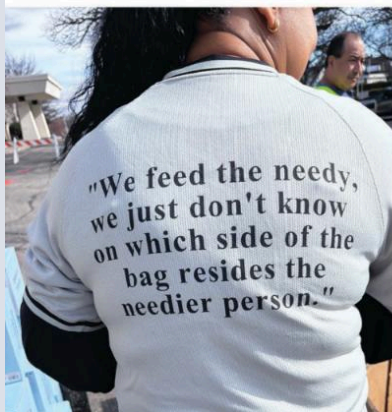
leaders, community partners, and members to celebrate success and share a vision for the future.

RIBBA's work has driven meaningful, measurable change across Rhode Island:

- 1,700 businesses served, with outreach to more than 6,000 businesses
- 3,000+ jobs created and sustained
- Over \$2.3 million in capital secured for entrepreneurs
- \$200,000 in forgivable grants awarded to microbusinesses
- 280 individuals trained and advanced—many securing new jobs, promotions, and increased wages
- 2,300+ mentoring hours provided through small business and workforce development programs

“These figures represent more than numbers, they reflect lives transformed: entrepreneurs launching and growing businesses, individuals advancing their careers, and families building stability and wealth,” said RIBBA President & CEO Lisa Ranglin, who thanked POC for its support.

During the annual meeting, small business owner Anne Rabel, founder of Haitian.ish, shared how she turned her vision into a growing enterprise with RIBBA's support. That evening, RIBBA also awarded scholarships to five college-bound RI high school students. To date, RIBBA has awarded more than \$100,000 to students and young entrepreneurs, an investment in the next generation of changemakers beside you.



## News & Notes

## 2026 Transform Rhode Island Scholarship Update

We asked—and more than 500 RI high school students responded.

“If you had a million dollars, how would you change Rhode Island’s communities most in need?”

When the 2026 Transform Rhode Island Scholarship (TRIS) application portal closed on April 7, nearly 550 students from 57 Rhode Island public, private, parochial, and charter schools had submitted their Big Ideas!

Shoutout to the top five schools with the most submissions:

- 1) Cumberland High School
- 2) The MET School
- 3) St. Mary Academy\_Bay View
- 4) West Warwick High School
- 5) La Salle Academy

The applications (Big Ideas) are now being reviewed by judges. Ten winners will be chosen to receive scholarships ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000, and POC will invest \$1 million in the winning student’s idea.

The Top 10 TRIS finalists will be announced in early May, and the overall winner will be revealed on May 27 at a celebration at the Graduate Hotel. Stay tuned!



### The Empowerment Factory Hosts Annual Fundraiser May 6 At The MET

The Empowerment Factory will host its Annual Fundraiser: *Meet Me at the MET* on Wednesday, May 6, 6-8:30pm at [The MET](#) in Pawtucket’s Hope Artiste Village. The event will feature live music from [The New Providence Big Band](#), refreshments, raffles and community building. Proceeds will support equitable access to art and social-emotional learning youth programs in local low-income communities.

Event tickets can be purchased [here](#).



### Update On The December Grant Applications

Many have inquired about the status of their December applications. All grantees will be notified within the next two weeks period.



### Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook 2026 Released May 4th

Data is a powerful thing. Especially when public policy is being shaped. For more than 30 years, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT has been gathering facts, and statistics about kids in the Ocean State that help all of us to develop policy and programs to improve the lives of children. On Monday, May 4th the 2026 Rhode Island KIDS

COUNT Factbook will be released during a breakfast presentation from 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

You can register and purchase tickets [here](#).



### **Spud-tacular: The ELISHA Project Gives Away 80,000 Pounds Of Potatoes**

The [ELISHA project](#), RI's leading food rescue organization, is giving away 80,000 pounds of Idaho potatoes to any Rhode Island non-profit organization, food pantry or restaurant. Any non-profit or restaurant that is interested in receiving some potatoes, can schedule a pickup at the ELISHA project - 100 Main Street, Pawtucket (Old Apex building) by contacting the ELISHA project at 401-302-2553 or email [bdavila@elishaproject.org](mailto:bdavila@elishaproject.org).



### **The ELISHA Project Holds First Share Market Of 2026**

Speaking of the ELISHA project, on April 7, it held its first Share Market of 2026 and distributed fresh food, hygiene products, household goods and more to 500 Rhode Island families in need.

This Share Market came at a critical time - ahead of Easter and on the heels of recent SNAP benefit reductions impacting 2,500 Rhode Islanders.

The ELISHA project's next Share Market will be held on May 9. Follow the ELISHA project on social media for details.

[WEBSITE](#)

[MISSION](#)

[SIGN UP](#)

[CONTACT](#)

Papitto Opportunity Connection  
100 Westminster St., Suite 105  
Providence, RI 02903 US

[Unsubscribe](#)  
[Update Profile](#)  
[Our Privacy Policy](#)  
[Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

**Papitto  
Opportunity  
Connection**