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# Press Release

## **Mill River Collaborative Receives Hands-On Help from GE**

### **GE Volunteers Donate Their Labor to Stamford Park**

Stamford, CT, June 6, 2011

After receiving a \$1.5 million pledge from GE to build and maintain the planned Mill River Park & Greenway in downtown Stamford, volunteers from Stamford-based GE Energy Financial Services donated 150 hours of volunteer service to landscape and plant shrubs and other greenery.

Sixty-five volunteers from GE Energy Financial Services worked in shifts over two days, spreading and raking compost over more than two acres along the Mill River, in addition to cutting the grass and trimming shrubs in a historic cemetery across the street from the Mill River Playground.

"The volunteers from GE Energy Financial Services were amazing. In two days, they have given new life to more than two acres of parkland," said Vincent Piselli, Mill River Park Land Manager.

"We work in Stamford every day and are proud to give back to the community that provides our company a home," said GE volunteer Vasanthi Sekhar, Manager of Technology at GE Energy Financial Services. "In addition to the personal connection, this project is consistent with GE's wider ecomagination initiative, focused on building innovative solutions to today's environmental challenges while driving economic growth."

In keeping with this commitment to support the environment while driving economic growth, GE Energy Financial Services has invested \$6 billion in wind, solar, hydro and other renewable energy projects and is headquartered at a LEED Gold certified building.

The city of Stamford expects to accept a bid to fund initial construction of the Mill River Park & Greenway, between Broad and Main Streets on both sides of the Mill River, this summer. Construction is expected to begin by fall of this year and is expected to be completed in late 2012.

### About Mill River Collaborative

Mill River Collaborative is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit corporation that works to secure private resources to complement city funding for construction and maintenance. To date Mill River Collaborative has raised or received pledges over \$5 million from corporations, foundations and individuals towards construction of Mill River Park. Over 500 people are members of the Mill River Collaborative, providing annual financial support for project management, park maintenance and the capital campaign for Mill River Park. Staff of Mill River Collaborative manage the design and development of the park and maintain newly developed park facilities.

During the past two years, Stamford's Mill River has seen enormous changes. Today the river flows freely in its natural channel. There is a busy playground, built by 1500 volunteers in 2006. There have been annual Playground Birthday Parties to celebrate the anniversary of this major building event.

The Big Apple Circus came to Mill River Park during the summer of 2010 and will return this summer. The Circus Soiree will be held on Friday night, June 10<sup>th</sup>, to benefit Mill River Collaborative and Downtown Special Services District, DSSD. The opening Circus Show on June 11 at 12:30 will also be a benefit for the two organizations.

Today the benefits of city parks are widely recognized. Central Park is certainly the best known example in this part of the U.S., but Boston and Chicago, as well as cities closer in size to Stamford, such as Hartford, have built urban parks. Parks make physical exercise easier and more accessible, and physical exercise makes people healthier. Property values are improved by nearby parks and open spaces. Businesses are more attractive to employees when there is a park close at hand.

It's time for Stamford to have its own urban park.

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