



HUMBER
ARBORETUM

CENTRE
FOR URBAN
ECOLOGY



THE W. GARFIELD WESTON

FOUNDATION

The Weston Family Parks Challenge is an initiative of The W. Garfield Weston Foundation

HUMBER ARBORETUM RECEIVES WESTON FAMILY PARKS CHALLENGE GRANT TO PRESERVE HABITAT AND BUILD OUTDOOR CLASSROOM AT COLONEL SAM SMITH PARK

TORONTO, ONTARIO - The Weston Family Parks Challenge is supporting the Humber Arboretum's *Colonel Sam Smith Park Improvements and Programs*. This project brings together diverse partners such as, the City of Toronto, Friends of Sam Smith Park and Citizens Concerned About the Future of the Etobicoke Waterfront, to improve wetland habitat and create a new outdoor classroom. Environmental programs and stewardship opportunities will connect youth and community members to nature by raising awareness of the importance of providing and maintaining natural areas for birds and other wildlife. Public, private and non-profit partnerships will ensure the long-term sustainability of the project, enhancing one of Toronto's most popular birding destinations for future generations.

"The Humber Arboretum and its partners are thrilled at the opportunity to help increase educational opportunities, enhance habitat, and rebuild the very popular wetland lookout structure within Colonel Samuel Smith Park. The Colonel Samuel Smith Park Improvements project is the perfect example of how local government, businesses and community volunteer groups can work together to make Toronto Parks even better, and showcase the importance of these natural areas - in our communities." – Jimmy Vincent, Humber Arboretum.

Great parks are essential to Toronto's health and vitality. They strengthen the community and provide environmental, economic and social benefits. With a commitment of \$5 million over three years, [The W. Garfield Weston Foundation](#) launched the Weston Family Parks Challenge to ensure the long-term sustainability of Toronto's parks. Building on the success of the first year, the Ontario Trillium Foundation joined in 2014 with an additional commitment of \$1.125 million towards the initiative. Toronto Park People brings expertise and is administering the program. The Weston Family Parks Challenge supports projects that enhance the natural elements in parks, engage a broad range of partners and the local community, offer new solutions to manage and maintain parks, and have the potential to be replicated in other jurisdictions.

Humber College has been a huge supporter of the Humber Arboretum's educational programming that has taken place down at Colonel Samuel Smith Park for the last 4 years in May and June. Humber's Lakeshore Campus has allowed Humber Arboretum Nature Interpreters to use classrooms to host school groups attending these outdoor education programs. Without Humber College's help these programs may never have seen the success they did last year when 1700 students from various school boards located in the GTA took part in this programming.

The Humber Arboretum was started through the initiative of Humber College horticulture students in 1977. Its purpose is to facilitate research and education, establish and maintain living plant collections, promote conservation and restoration practices, and provide a quality visitor experience. It is a joint venture of the City of Toronto, Humber College, and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

For further information, please contact Jimmy Vincent, Coordinator, Humber Arboretum and Centre for Urban Ecology, Jimmy.Vincent@humber.ca, 416-675-6622, ex. 77402



friends of sam smith park

