

National Park's Junior Ranger Service Corps Receives Award in Ceremony



The Junior Ranger Service Corps is a group of 4th to 8th graders who meet monthly at the park to learn about history and offer their service to the community.

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park recently held an award ceremony honoring the Junior Ranger Service Corps as the National Park Service's Northeast Region recipient of the George and Helen Hartzog award for Outstanding Volunteer Service, Youth Group Category. The ceremony took place in the Corson Maritime Learning Center of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park on Saturday, September 13. The group developed a project to research New Bedford's South Water Street neighborhood during the 1850s, the heyday of whaling. With this material, the Junior Ranger Service Corps presented their findings by portraying individuals who lived on South Water Street during that time.

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and offer their service to the community. In 2013-14, Junior Ranger Service Corps members learned about the diversity of New Bedford and spent considerable time researching who lived in the city during the height of the whaling industry. Youth participants used the 1851 city directory to make a list of all the people who lived or worked on South Water Street and learned about their ethnicities and occupations. This information was used to build a model of the street using boxes to represent the buildings and sites found in the directory.

Each member of the group dressed in appropriate clothing and wrote a statement about the person they portrayed. The public presentation of "The South Water Street Project" on July, 2013 AHA! (Art History and Architecture) night last year offered visitors an opportunity to get a sense of what it would have been like to walk down Water Street and speak to the residents in 1851. Visitors learned about the diversity of residents, their occupations, and stories such as a nurse who lived on the street and was nearly sold into slavery. AHA! is a free arts & culture event which takes place the 2nd Thursday of every month in Downtown New Bedford.

The Junior Ranger Service Corps is seeking new participants for this coming school year (September through June). Applications for the program can be obtained at the National Park Visitor Center or downloaded at www.nps.gov/nebe/forkids/service.htm.
