

Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council  
Year End Appeal – Draft 1

Date

Address Block

Dear Blank:

“I love being a River Ranger because I am making my community clean and safe. It’s our neighborhood, it’s our park.” That’s what Arielis Melendez, our 16 year old River Ranger, told the Providence Journal reporter this August while he interviewed and filmed her during a cleanup. The article was entitled “River Rangers to the Rescue” and ran on August 6, 2009.

When Arielis started the summer with us, she had just finished her Junior year at Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School. She was behind in school, and her family is in the lowest income bracket in the state. Arielis is from the Manton neighborhood on the West Side of Providence and lives near Merino Park. When she came in for an interview with Amanda Blevins, WRWC’s Assistant Program Director, her fingernails were really long and Amanda asked her how she could possibly do all the outdoor work we need with nails that long. Arielis told Amanda it was just for her birthday and she didn’t care at all about her nails. Arielis wanted to be a River Ranger because she wanted “a healthy world” and “to learn to take responsibility and find direction.”

As a River Ranger, Arielis was trained in public speaking, landscaping, bike maintenance and repair, graffiti and trash removal, art, and environmental education. She was naturally good with children so every week, she worked with 30 kids from the Nickerson and Joslin community centers in Olneyville leading games and teaching environmental stewardship. Arielis spoke at the River Ranger Graduation at the end of the summer saying “I loved the program, it helped give me confidence and taught me so many things.”

Amanda was very proud of Arielis’ commitment and dedication to the program. According to Amanda, “Arielis was dedicated to getting better, improving herself and always willing to take on a challenge even if she was nervous about it. I saw her self confidence was much improved

by the end of the program both in how she worked with kids and spoke to adults.



Arielis Melendez,  
Woonasquatucket River Ranger,  
At the Red Shed Bike Shop  
Riverside Park

Arielis has continued as a part time Ranger with us this fall because she has such a strong work ethic. She is working with our Assistant Program Director on our Middle School after-school program and is helping to organize and run our new bike shop at Riverside Park, and works at our events.

Arielis was very proud when she told us in October, “Now I feel more comfortable speaking. My school work has improved and I am taking more classes to graduate on time and go to college. I got an award from my English teacher for a college essay that I wrote about the River Ranger program and how it made a difference for me.”

Thanks to your support, Arielis and 21 other River Rangers got a job that made a huge difference in their lives. Not only did they learn valuable skills they can use throughout their lives, took ownership of their parks and bike path this summer. Three parks and a beautiful off-road bike-path in the heart of urban Providence are now places we can all enjoy. Donigian, Riverside and Merino Parks are free of graffiti, full of art and best of all, enjoyed by the families, children and all those who work and live nearby.

Your donation makes this program possible. \$500 employs a River Ranger for a week and assures our beautiful natural places in Providence will remain so now and for future generations. I hope you will take this opportunity to support the River Rangers and our many other programs that protect the resources of the Woonasquatucket Watershed.

Sincerely,

Alicia J. Lehrer  
Executive Director



p.s. Your contribution has turned a dangerous rubble heap into a beautiful park and greenway, and you gave Arielis and 20 other young people the chance to become leaders, proud of the difference they make in their communities.



Overall: Is this about River Rangers or WRWC? It can be either, but you need to at least mention the Council. If you don't address WRWC's other work, you may be morally or legally bound to restrict the income to River Rangers.



Cuts and suggested rewording in blue.

Date

Address Block


Dear Blank:

"I love being a River Ranger because I am making my community clean and safe. It's our neighborhood, it's our park." That's what Arielis Melendez, our 16 year old River Ranger, told the Providence Journal reporter this August. August 6 while he interviewed for the article "River Rangers to the Rescue".

When Arielis started the summer with us River Rangers, she had just finished her Junior-junior year at Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School. She was behind in school, and hHer family is struggling struggles to survive on an income well below poverty level. Arielis is from the Manton neighborhood on the West Side of Providence near Merino Park.

When she came in for anAt her interview with Amanda Blevins, WRWC's Assistant Program Director, her fingernails were really long and Amanda asked her Arielis how she could possibly do all the outdoor work we need a Ranger does with nails that long. Although she had herDespite doubts, Amanda gave Arielis a chance to be in the program because she said she wanted "a healthy world" and "to learn to take responsibility and find direction."

I'm Alicia, Executive Director of the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council, (WRWC), the amazing environmental group that reclaimed 52 acres of neglected and unsafe abandoned urban lands into beautiful parks and, natural places, and We created Providence's first off-road bike path in to one of America's poorest neighborhoods, Now, we are and is returning a native herring run to what was once one of the most industrialized rivers in America.

Our River Rangers Program is the best way we know to assure that all of our incredible accomplishments keep getting better -- by putting young people like Arielis in charge of their own environment.. 

Local yYoung people from the surrounding neighborhoods in Providence's challenged West End learn about the amazing blessings of the natural resources of the River and the surrounding parks and how to care for them. They become lifelong stewards and teach others with the passion they find as they learn.

When Arielis started with us, she was too shy to talk to groups but like all of our Rangers, we trained her in public speaking, environmental education, art, landscaping, bike maintenance and repair, and graffiti and trash removal. When we needed a Ranger to lead games and teach environmental stewardship to kids from the Nickerson and Joslin Community Centers, Arielis turned out to be a natural. Arielis spoke at the River Ranger Graduation at the end of the summer saying "I loved the program, it helped give me confidence and taught me so many things."

Amanda is very proud of Arielis' commitment and dedication to the program. According to Amanda, "Arielis was dedicated to getting better, improving herself and always willing to take on a challenge even if she was nervous about it. I saw her self-confidence was much improved by the end of the program both in how she worked with kids and spoke to adults.



Arielis Melendez,  
Woonasquatucket River Ranger,  
At the Red Shed Bike Shop  
Riverside Park

Arielis has continued as a part time Ranger with us this fall because she has such a strong work ethic. She is working with our Assistant Program Director on our Middle School after-school program and events, and is helping to organize and run our new bike shop at Riverside Park.

[Your support for Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council doesn't just save a river or extend an off-road trail. Your contribution helps us open pathways to a better life for Arielis and kids like her.](#)

Arielis ~~was very proud when she told us in October, "Now I feel more comfortable speaking"~~ [knows the difference River Rangers has made in her life.](#) "My schoolwork has improved and I am taking more classes to graduate on time and go to college. I got an award from my English teacher for a college essay that I wrote about the River Ranger program and how it made a difference for me." Arielis, like 80% of the kids in her school was not even considering going on to college before this program. (Must get fact supported).

Thanks to your support, Arielis and 21 other River Rangers got a job that made a huge difference in their lives. Not only did they learn valuable skills they can use throughout their lives, they took ownership of their parks and bike path. Three parks and a beautiful off-road bike-path in the heart of urban Providence are now places we can all enjoy. Donigian, Riverside and Merino Parks are free of graffiti, full of art and best of all, enjoyed by the families, children and all those who work and live nearby. But these beautiful places would degrade without programs like River Rangers.


Your continued support assures our beautiful natural places in Providence will remain so now and for future generations. It helps us run our paddling program that brings over 300 people to the Woonasquatucket every year. It helps us bring native fish back to our river. But best of all, it gives kids like Arielis, a young person growing up in

one of the most at risk communities in the country, a chance to learn what an amazing difference she can make in the world. You'll know that you've helped deserving kids beat the odds and grow into caring, capable adults.

I hope you will take this opportunity to support our many programs that protect the resources of the Woonasquatucket Watershed.

Sincerely,

Alicia J. Lehrer  
Executive Director

P.s. River Rangers has evolved from a summer program to a year-round program. and y Your contribution not only gives kids opportunities to participate but a chance for a real employment in a job that they are proud of. 



Alicia,  
Here are my thoughts. You are zeroing in on the main point and the letter makes narrative sense. I'd like to see more about why I should give in the letter, but you have to balance that with not wrecking the flow you have established and keeping it all under 2 pages. You could "wrap" the text around the photo to save space, which would look better anyway. I have cut several of your paragraphs into two. Readers really need lots of little bites, not a big meal. If you break up your compound sentences, you will see that there are two or three elements where you may only need one. One good fact or example is usually enough. Look at what each paragraph does in terms of its contribution to the point of getting a contribution. If it's not helping, you may be able to cut it. Good luck. I look forward to seeing your final product.  
Jon

Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council  
Year end appeal draft 3

Date

Address Block

Dear Blank:

“I love being a River Ranger because I am making my community clean and safe. It’s our neighborhood, it’s our park.” That’s what Arielis Melendez, our 16 year old River Ranger, told the Providence Journal reporter this August.

When Arielis started the summer with River Rangers, she had just finished her junior year at Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School. She was behind in school. Her family struggles to survive on an income well below poverty level.

When Arielis interviewed with Amanda Blevins, WRWC’s Assistant Program Director, Amanda asked Arielis how she could possibly do all the outdoor work a Ranger does with the beautiful long nails she wore. Despite doubts, Amanda gave Arielis a chance to be in the program because Arielis wanted “a healthy world” and “to learn to take responsibility and find direction.”

I’m Alicia, Executive Director of the Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council (WRWC), the amazing environmental group that reclaimed 52 acres of neglected and unsafe abandoned urban lands into beautiful parks and natural places we can all enjoy. We created Providence’s first off-road bike path in one of America’s poorest neighborhoods. Now, we are restoring a native herring run to what was once one of the most industrialized rivers in America.

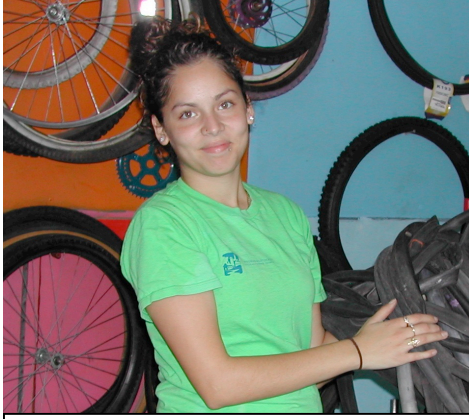
Our River Rangers Program is the best way we know to assure that all of our incredible accomplishments keep getting better -- by putting young people like Arielis in charge of their own environment. I hope you will make a year-end contribution of \$50, \$75, \$100, \$500 or more to help us make all of our programs even bigger and better in 2010.

Young people from the surrounding neighborhoods in Providence’s challenged West End learn about the amazing blessings of the natural resources of the River and the surrounding parks and how to care for them. They become lifelong stewards and teach others with the passion they find as they learn.

When Arielis started with us, she was too shy to talk to groups. Like all of our Rangers, we trained her in public speaking, environmental education, art, landscaping, bike maintenance and repair, and graffiti and trash removal. When we needed a Ranger to lead games and teach environmental stewardship to kids from the Nickerson and Joslin Community Centers, Arielis turned out to be a natural. Arielis spoke at the River Ranger Graduation at the end of the summer saying “I loved the program. It helped give me confidence and taught me so many things.”



Arielis knows the difference River Rangers has made in her life. “My schoolwork has improved and I am taking more classes to graduate on time and go to college. I got an award from my English teacher for a college essay that I wrote about the River Ranger program and how it made a difference for me.” Only a little over half the kids in Arielis’ Hartford neighborhood even graduate high school!



Arielis Melendez -  
Woonasquatucket River Ranger  
at the Red Shed Bike Shop,  
Riverside Park

Amanda agrees that there’s been a big change since last June. According to Amanda, “Arielis is dedicated to getting better, improving herself and always willing to take on a challenge even if she is nervous about it. Her self-confidence is much improved and shows in how she works with kids and speaks to adults. What a big difference from when we started!” Arielis did such a great job this summer, she continues to work with Amanda on our fall after-school program for middle-school students. She also helps at events, and assists in our new bike shop at Riverside Park.

Your support for Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council doesn’t just save a river or extend an off-road trail. Your contribution helps us open pathways to a better life for Arielis and kids like her.

Thanks to your support, Arielis and 21 other River Rangers got a job that made a huge difference in their lives. Two parks, recently crime-ridden, trashed and in one case closed are now beautiful, fun, safe places in the heart of urban Providence. Riverside Park, once a contaminated pile of rubble, is now full of art, gardens, playgrounds, a bike shop, an off-road bike path, and most importantly children and families. Our Rangers maintain and enhance these wonderful places in the part of Providence where parks are scarcest.

Your continued support assures that these hard won achievements will remain so now and for future generations. It helps us run our paddling program in which over 300 people enjoy the Woonasquatucket every year. It helps us bring native fish back to our river. But best of all, it gives kids like Arielis, a young person growing up in one of the most at-risk communities in the country, a chance to learn what an amazing difference she can make in the world. You'll know that you've helped deserving kids beat the odds and grow into caring, capable adults.

I hope you will take this opportunity to support our many programs that protect the resources of the Woonasquatucket Watershed.

Sincerely,

Alicia J. Lehrer  
Executive Director

**P.s. With your support, River Rangers has evolved into a year-round program. Your contribution not only gives kids like Arielis a chance to participate next summer - it will help them prepare for lifelong opportunities as well.**

This letter tells a clear story about one person representing many and connects kids to the environment. You highlight strong results and at least one benefit to your donors.





27 Sims Ave • Providence RI 02909  
(401) 861-9046 • FAX (401) 861-9038  
[www.woonasquatucket.org](http://www.woonasquatucket.org)

WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

PROVIDENCE, RI 02906  
FEB 10 2010



The final appeal, as it arrived at my house.

How Arielis became a Woonasquatucket Ranger!

Ms. Gayle Gifford & Mr. Jonathan Howard  
178 Ninth Street  
Providence, RI 02906

02906\$2931



Happy Holidays Gayle + Jon!  
Thanks so much for all your help, Jon!

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WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER  
WATERSHED COUNCIL

This letter is as much your  
handiwork as mine. See you round  
the neighborhood and  
thanks for being  
such great  
supporters!  
- Alicia

December 8, 2009

Ms. Gayle Gifford & Mr. Jonathan Howard  
178 Ninth Street  
Providence, RI 02906

Dear Gayle and Jon:

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When Arielis started the summer with River Rangers, she had just finished her junior year at Dr. Jorge Alvarez High School. She was behind in school. Her family struggles to survive on an income well-below poverty level.

When Arielis interviewed with Amanda Blevins, WRWC's Assistant Program Director, Amanda asked Arielis how she could possibly do all the outdoor work a Ranger does with the beautiful long nails she wore. Despite doubts, Amanda gave Arielis a chance to be in the program because Arielis wanted "a healthy world" and "to learn to take responsibility and find direction."

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Arielis Melendez -  
Woonasquatucket River Ranger  
at the Red Shed Bike Shop,  
Riverside Park

Donald T. Burns  
President  
Smithfield

Bruce G. Hooke  
Vice President/  
Secretary  
Providence

Carol Drowne  
Treasurer  
Providence

Joe Baer  
Providence

Donald P.  
Gagnon  
North Smithfield

Eugenia Marks  
Providence

Paul McElroy  
North Providence

Jane B. Sherman  
Providence

Alicia J. Lehrer  
Executive Director

Lisa Aurecchia  
Program Director

Amanda Blevins  
Assistant  
Program Director

Arielis spoke at the River Ranger Graduation at the end of the summer saying "I loved the program. It helped give me confidence and taught me so many things."

Only a little over half the kids in Arielis' Manton neighborhood even graduate from high school! Arielis knows the difference River Rangers has made in her life. "My schoolwork has improved, and I am taking more classes to graduate on time and go to college. I got an award from my English teacher for a college essay that I wrote about the River Ranger program and how it made a difference for me."

Amanda agrees that there's been a big change since last June. According to Amanda, "Arielis is dedicated to getting better, improving herself and always willing to take on a challenge even if she is nervous about it. Her self-confidence is much improved and shows in how she works with kids and speaks to adults. What a big difference from when we started!" Arielis did such a great job this summer, she continues to work with Amanda on our fall after-school program for middle-school students. She also helps at events, and assists in our new bike shop at Riverside Park.

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Thanks to your support, Arielis and 21 other River Rangers got a job that made a huge difference in their lives. Two parks, recently crime-ridden, trashed and, in one case, closed are now beautiful, fun, safe places in the heart of urban Providence. Riverside Park, once a contaminated pile of rubble, is now full of art, gardens, a fish ladder with an outdoor classroom, playgrounds, a bike shop, an off-road bike path and, most importantly, children and families. Our Rangers maintain and enhance these wonderful places where parks are in short supply.

Your continued support assures that these hard won achievements will remain, now and for future generations. It helps us run our paddling program in which over 300 people enjoy the Woonasquatucket every year. It helps us bring native fish back to our River. It helps us do all the work of preserving and restoring the Woonasquatucket to health.

But best of all, it gives kids like Arielis, a young person growing up in one of the most at-risk communities in the country, a chance to learn what an amazing difference she can make in the world. Now you have a chance to make a difference with your contribution to WRWC today. Please send what you can in the enclosed reply envelope. You'll know that you've helped deserving kids beat the odds and grow into caring, capable adults.

Sincerely,

Alicia J. Lehrer  
Executive Director

**P.S. With your support, River Rangers has evolved into a year-round program. Your contribution not only gives kids like Arielis a chance to participate next summer - it will help them prepare for lifelong opportunities as well.**

Gayle & John  
Happy Holidays  
Hope to see you  
on the river -  
thanks for all  
support!  
Lisa



# WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

   **YES!** I WANT TO HELP A NEW GENERATION OF RIVER RANGERS LIKE ARIELIS!  
ENCLOSED IS MY 2009 YEAR-END GIFT OF:

   \$500    \$250    \$100    \$75    \$50    \$35, OR    OTHER: \$

*PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE  
WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL*

Ms. Gayle Gifford & Mr.  
Jonathan Howard  
178 Ninth Street  
Providence, RI 02906



WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER  
WATERSHED COUNCIL



**The Woonasquatucket River, Fall 2009**

Your tax-deductable donation to the WRWC will help develop resources and opportunities to implement initiatives that positively impact the health of our communities, the river and the watershed.

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WOONASQUATUCKET RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL

PLEASE  
PLACE  
POSTAGE  
HERE

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