



ANACOSTIA WATERSHED SOCIETY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Anacostia Watershed Society Launches “Countdown to 2025” Campaign

First Year Goal to Raise \$150,000 to Restore 12 Acres of Vital Wetlands

(Washington, DC – September 21, 2016) – On Monday September 19th, the Anacostia Watershed Society launched the *Countdown to 2025 Campaign* before an audience of 175 community leaders, stakeholders and AWS supporters gathered at Osteria Morini, on the banks of the Anacostia River.

“In this first year of the *Countdown to 2025 Campaign*, we have set a goal of raising \$150,000 to restore twelve acres of wetland habitat,” announced Elissa Feldman, Chair of the Anacostia Watershed Society Board of Directors. “As we started tonight, we were already more than halfway to our goal, and a donor has just made a special challenge gift that will bring us within 70% of our goal,” added Feldman to the cheers of the crowd.

To contribute to the campaign, visit <https://www.anacostiaws.org/donation/checkout>

The *Countdown to 2025 Gala* also recognized Anacostia River Heroes, a new initiative designed to recognize individuals whose work protects and restores the water and the shores, advocates for the health of the river, or connects our watershed communities to the Anacostia River. Kirk Talbott, representing the Nelson S. Talbott foundation, who provided the initial funding for the Anacostia River Heroes program, presented the four awardees:

- **Alan Spears** who leads the Friends of Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens. Over the past 15 years under Alan’s leadership, the Friends have partnered with the National Park Service to improve the natural resources of Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens and to engage the local community who had previously been disconnected from Kenilworth.

- **Jennifer Chavez**, a staff attorney in the Washington D.C. office of Earthjustice. Jennifer has led major litigation on toxic remediation and pollution discharges, winning in court and then leading the monitoring effort to be sure these wins are enforced over the long run.
- **Josh Burch** is a native Washingtonian, a passionate advocate for the environment, a community organizer and a leader at the District Department of Energy and Environment.
- And **Nathan Harrington** founder of Restore Shepherd Parkway, a grassroots organization based in Ward 8 that organizes community cleanups and works with the National Park Service on stewardship of this section of national parkland.

A [short video](#) tells the inspiring story of the four Heroes.

The Countdown to 2025 Gala was sponsored by Norfolk Southern, along with Osteria Morini, Bloomberg Philanthropies, the JBG Companies, CH2M, Larry Cooley & Marina Fanning, and Charles and Shari Pfleeger; as well as dozens of other corporations, foundations and individual supporters of the Anacostia Watershed Society.

About the Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS)

The mission of the Anacostia Watershed Society is to protect and restore the Anacostia River and its watershed communities by cleaning the water, recovering the shores, and honoring the heritage. The vision is to make the Anacostia River and its tributaries swimmable and fishable by 2025, in keeping with the Clean Water Act, for the health and enjoyment of everyone in the community. Community involvement is critical to achieving this vision and AWS seeks strong partnerships and coalitions with all parts of the community, government, and other stakeholders. Anacostia Watershed Society's programs include environmental education, stewardship, recreation, and engaging the community through advocacy and volunteer opportunities. www.anacostiaws.org

Photo caption: (left to right) Josh Burch, Alan Spears, Nathan Harrington and Jennifer Chavez accept their Anacostia River Hero Award from AWS President Jim Foster.

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