

## Greater Newark Conservancy Goes Smokefree

*A smokefree environment will contribute to Conservancy's efforts to make Newark a cleaner and healthier place.*

By Vince Baglivo (Star Patcher)  
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From the Judith L. Shipley Environmental Center on Prince Street to the urban farms, parks and other properties it manages citywide, Greater Newark Conservancy has decided to go smokefree.

At the Conservancy's recent Fall Block Party, Executive Director Robin Dougherty joined Karen Blumenfeld, Esq., Executive Director of Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy (GASP) to announce the new policy. The Newark City Council also recently voted unanimously in favor of a Newark ordinance to make all city outdoor parks and recreation areas 100% smokefree. GASP is a 40-year old non-profit organization that tracks laws and policies on tobacco-free living and smokefree environments, providing technical assistance on emerging trends in tobacco control and policy.

“Going smokefree blends seamlessly with the Conservancy's efforts to make Newark a cleaner, greener and healthier place to live, work and learn,” Dougherty noted. “Programs like community greening, urban farming and environmental education are contributing to better air and water quality in the city's neighborhoods; going smokefree will further enhance quality of life in our urban environment.”

Even outdoors, there's no safe level of secondhand smoke, especially for children and seniors. Studies show that outdoor secondhand smoke concentrations can be as high as indoor smoking-permitted locations.

Plus, creating smokefree environments outdoors helps reduce asthmatic triggers, a key issue given that Newark’s childhood asthma rate is 1 in every 4 children, more than double the state’s average of 1 in 10 children.



(l-r): GASP Executive Director Karen Blumenfeld, Esq., GNC’s Leslye and GASP Intern Elena McKeown.

Communities and organizations with 100% smokefree parks policies also enhance their green sustainability plans and reduce preventable fires and tobacco litter (like cigarette butts) decreasing maintenance costs.

“GASP is proud of Greater Newark Conservancy for adopting a smokefree policy for their properties. There are health, environmental and economic benefits from 100% smokefree parks and recreational areas,” said Blumenfeld. “It normalizes smokefree outdoor environments where children engage in recreational activities, reducing the likelihood that they will be exposed to and then start smoking.”

Founded in 1987, Greater Newark Conservancy's mission is to promote environmental stewardship to improve the quality of life in New Jersey's urban communities through environmental education, community gardening, beautification of neighborhoods, job training opportunities and environmental justice.

For more information about programs, services, volunteer opportunities or to make a donation, contact Greater Newark Conservancy at 973-642-4646 or visit CityBloom.org. You can also follow news from the Conservancy through social media at Facebook.com/GreaterNewarkConservancy, plus Twitter and Instagram - @Citybloom87.

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