

Projects transform Urban League Academy Elementary school's interior, Aeon Ripley Gardens exterior

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When the students of Urban League Academy Elementary walked in their school's front door on Monday May 2, there were big changes.

On Saturday, April 30, a volunteer crew of 40+ from Comcast added color and inspiration to the hallways of Urban League Academy Elementary, an alternative school run by the Minneapolis Urban League (MUL) at 2220 16th Ave. N.

As the economy continues to tighten its grip on Minnesota nonprofits, Comcast employees volunteered throughout the Twin Cities to assist nonprofits in the upgrade of their facilities. More than 1,300 local Comcast employees and their families and friends volunteered to upgrade 33 work sites as part of Comcast's 10th annual *Comcast Cares Day*.

"Principal Mfon Archibong knew exactly what he wanted at the school," said Comcast project leader Madeline Koch. "He asked us if we could paint big, beautiful words on the walls about being successful in school and in life. We went from the walls to the stairwells, the pillars and the lockers."

"We hired graphic artist Annie Ulku to sketch the design and we'll bring the walls to life painting the words honesty, courage, respect, love and others in bold, beautiful letters and color."

This is the fourth year that a volunteer crew has worked at an MUL site for *Comcast Cares Day*. □

A crew of 40 Comcast volunteers added mulch, weeded the rain gardens and landscaped the courtyard of Ripley Gardens, an award-winning mixed-income Aeon development in the Harrison Neighborhood in North Minneapolis.

"We're excited to help," said Comcast's project coordinator Alison Hatch. "It's an absolutely beautiful complex. The gardens are extensive and the story behind the restoration of the historic hospital building into high quality affordable housing is fascinating."

Council Member Don Samuels was on hand early morning. to greet the volunteers and thanked

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them for the work they have committed to accomplish for the residents of Ripley Gardens.

"Aeon is able to celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2011 thanks to tremendous community support," said Alan Arthur, Aeon's president and CEO. "*Comcast Cares Day* is a prime example of this community's collective effort to create bright futures."

Across the country, more than 62,000 Comcast volunteers participated in this annual day of service, which has become one of the largest single-day corporate volunteer efforts in the country.

"The missions and programs of these social service organizations are key to the stability and health of our communities," said Mary Beth Schubert, Comcast's vice president of corporate affairs. "We know budgets are tight for nonprofits. Our projects are well planned and fully staffed with volunteers who are ready to roll up their sleeves and get to work. In addition, we invest up to \$1,000 in supplies such as paint and landscape materials for each nonprofit as needed."