




## St. Leonard's House, Windsor Good Neighbour Service

by Angelo Quaglia and George Palmer

Richard Florida, in his book *Who's Your City* wrote "When you walk on downtown streets in the morning, does it fill you with inspiration or distress?"

Windsor's Downtown Business Association recognized the importance of clean streets by recently contracting with St. Leonard's Good Neighbour Service (GNS). Since 2008, with funding from the City of Windsor, this community service program has provided a work hardening experience for hundreds of unemployed men and women on Ontario Works. St. Leonard's provides an on-site supervisor five days a week providing an anti-graffiti and anti-litter program. The participants develop good work habits and job experience while giving back to the community that supports them. As one businessman said, "This program not only improves business sites but helps youth obtain employment."

GNS has removed graffiti from over 5,000 sites and adopted several parks and streets for litter pickup and landscaping. Our daily presence is the best deterrent to littering our streets and has resulted in several positive stories including CBC and the Windsor Star. This media attention has heightened community awareness regarding the blight of graffiti and litter in our community as well as its prevention.

In the words of one participant, "I learned that people can take action to improve their neighbourhoods spreading pride city-wide." 

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SPREADING PRIDE CITY WIDE

Photo: George Palmer