Award-winning landscape management

City of Chicago

The 1998 Honor Award winner of the Professional Grounds Management Society in the public works sites is the city of Chicago, in partnership with Chicago Christian Industrial League Landscape Services and ServiceMaster Corp.

This program keeps the landscapes of Chicago in top condition while providing employment for the city's less fortunate. The city purchases needed landscape services and receives quality service at a competitive price. The Chicago Christian Industrial League provides a social services network, life skills training and work experiences for their clients. ServiceMaster offers job skill training, business management expertise and professional work supervision. It gives everyone an opportunity to get the results they want.

CCIL Landscape Services work/training program presently operates 21 crews and employs 75 formerly homeless or unemployed people to produce revenue of approximately $3.5 million. The program has trained 350 people over the last five years, and maintains 65 health clinics and small parks; 11 major roadway medians; the Chicago River Walk; 200 Chicago public schools; 10 Chicago community colleges; and also provides nighttime power washing for two miles of sidewalks on State St.

Editors' note: Landscape Management is the exclusive sponsor of the Green Star Professional Achievement Awards for outstanding management of residential, commercial and institutional landscapes. The 1999 winners will be named at the annual meeting of the Professional Grounds Management Society in November. For more information on the 2000 Awards, contact PGMS at 120 Cockeysville Road, Suite 104, Hunt Valley, MD; 410/584-9754. Web-site: www.pgms.org

Property at a glance:
Location: Chicago
Staff: Outside contractor — Chicago Christian Industrial League Landscape Services
Category: Public works sites
Total budget: $3.5 million
Year site built: 1985
Acres of turf: 1,200
Acres of woody ornamentals: 115
Acres of display beds: 8 acres
Total paved area: 800 acres, more than 20 miles of planting egress
Total man-hours/week: 5,000

Maintenance challenges
► Flower care
► Care of perennial beds
► Care of specialty trees/shrubs

Project checklist
(Completed in last two years):
► 1998 spring planting of 8,295, 6-inch pots
► 1,773 flats of annuals
► 20,000 fall bulbs in medians

On the job
► 22 full-time staff, 75 seasonal employees, 15 licensed pesticide operators

► CCIL crew installs a bed.
► (large photo) On the Chicago River Walk, planter boxes are installed and planted by CCIL crews.

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Cascading flower pots are used where no planting beds can be developed.