

## Earth Day at Hartford Public HS



Saturday at Hartford Public High School was the ninth annual Earth Day, which is to say, major cleanup in the neighborhoods around the School. Asylum Hill received its share of the love both in terms of the litter pick-up and the attention to the Salvation Army Marshall House playground, not to mention of course the HPHS campus. It began with words of encouragement from Mayor Bronin as well as Principal Maziarz, and the required safety reminders from Rick Papapietro from UTC. Having attended several of these events, I was familiar with the basic plan. Four groups of volunteers of a dozen or so students and a few adults, each with a separate geographical area to cleanup. Then several crews dedicated to the plants and scrubs in various parts of the campus, and a couple of construction projects. What stood out this year was the progress that has been made. Some of the same areas, such as the Marshall House playground or the area in front of the main entrance have been a selected sight several years in a row. The work that's being done now is building on the work of the past, not repeating it. Even before the students began mulching the tulips and daffodils near the main entrance, it looked beautiful, much better than in previous years after they were done. And the playground didn't need near as much work as two years ago as you can see from the photos above. Even the playground equipment repairs from 2015 are holding up well. But this is not the only place where the progress has been cumulative. I spoke with Wilberto Torres, a fourth year student at AEGT. He commented on the improved appearance of the school over the years as well as his personal growth. He has volunteered each year for the cleanup and it makes a difference in how he feels coming to school. "I feel proud coming to school here now" Wilberto said. His plans for the future include getting further education in automotive repair and then doing that for a living. For more photos, go to; <https://goo.gl/photos/8rG9qr7Ln8gByCiTA>