

## Media Advisory



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## Worcester Youth Filmmakers Win National Award

**Sergio Castillo, age 16, to receive national award from EPA for winner of their “Faces of the Grassroots: Environmental Justice video contest”**

**WHAT:** Worcester Roots Project's youth team, Toxic Soil Busters Co-op, will be going to Boston on Sept. 23 to receive a national award. The Toxic Soil Busters Co-op created a 5 minute documentary film, “A Worcester EJ Story,” about one of the youth founders of Toxic Soil Busters. This award is accompanied by a \$500 cash award, which will be invested back into the project to make more documentaries about environmental justice in Worcester. The film is about the high levels of lead (pb) in the soil in Worcester, the dangers of lead poisoning, and what a group of teenagers are doing about it.

Video available at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F\\_t4Lf88gD0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_t4Lf88gD0)

**WHEN:** Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010 from 1-3 PM.

**WHO:** Worcester Roots Project / Toxic Soil Busters Co-op & EPA  
<http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/events/video-contest.html>

**WHERE: EPA New England Headquarters**  
5 Post Office Square - Suite 100, Boston, MA 02109-3912



*Sergio Castillo, 16, receives notice of award, which will formally be presented on Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>.*

For more information, see: <http://worcesterroots.org>

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

**Environmental Justice**

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## Faces of the Grassroots: Environmental Justice Video Contest

The Faces of the Grassroots contest challenged amateur and professional filmmakers to create videos that capture the faces of the environmental justice movement. Thanks to each of the contest participants for sharing your creativity, stories, and for raising awareness about environmental justice.

**Winning Videos** [View All Videos](#)

**Public Service Announcement**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place**  

[The Riches of the Environment](#)  
 Urbana, IL

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place**

**Informational Video**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place**  

[BOLD Teens the New Faces of Grassroots](#)  
 Dorchester, MA

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place**



[A Worcester EJ Story](#)  
 Worcester, MA



**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

Toxic Soil Busters is a youth led collaborative that uses direct action to remove contamination by lead, other heavy metals, and hydrocarbons from Worcester soils. Our aim is to empower communities to protect their environmental health.

Our target sites are low-income neighborhoods throughout the city, which have some of the highest levels of soil pollution and the largest number of lead-paint contaminated dwellings in the nation. Worcester is home to many old triple-deckers, which used to house factory workers. Worcester’s old factories are part of the reason why present day Worcester is contaminated. Almost every old triple-decker was painted with a lead based paint. The poorer neighborhoods are also areas that have been most contaminated from leaded gasoline previously used on the nearby highways.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Childhood Lead Poisoning is one of the most common pediatric health problems in the United States today. Yet, it is entirely preventable. Lead causes permanent damage to the brain, kidneys, and nervous system and can lead to behavioral and learning problems. The inability to control one’s behavior is an effect of lead poisoning that is often overlooked, but research shows that communities with high numbers of lead-poisoned children also have higher rates of violent crime and educational failures (Source: ClearCorps, Baltimore, MD).

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