



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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## New Trier rowers' success a reflection on cleaner waters

A high school rowing team is making the most of a Chicago waterway created and maintained by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) and turning its hard work and talents into champion caliber rowing.

As the world sets its sights on Rio de Janeiro for the Olympics and the world's best rowers, at home along the North Shore Channel a special program is emerging, thanks in part to the New Trier Trevians and their cleaner training waters. The accomplished men's and women's rowing teams were honored for their recent victories by the MWRD Board of Commissioners with a resolution. In May, New Trier qualified for the 2016 Scholastic Rowing Association of American finals in Nashport, Ohio, and dominated the premier varsity events, winning all four first-place trophies (Men's Varsity 8+, Women's Varsity 8+, Men's Second Varsity 8+ and Women's Second Varsity 8+).



*The New Trier High School girls hit the water for rowing practice on the North Shore Channel north of the Dammrich Rowing Center in Skokie. There are more than 130 New Trier student athletes participating in the national powerhouse rowing program.*

"Congratulations to the Trevians on their remarkable success. We are happy to support their hard work and talents and will continue to make their home along the waterway a place of pride and enjoyment," said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. "The work the MWRD has put in to maintain and improve water quality in the North Shore Channel has led to major increases in recreation and aquatic life, and it is truly rewarding when we hear about the success of the New Trier rowing program."

Head coach Rose Marchuk founded the program in 2002. Since winning its first Midwest Scholastic Rowing Association (MSRA) championship in 2004, the program has excelled, winning 71 MSRA first place medals and other first place trophies around the country.



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*Despite rain and cold, the New Trier rowers have fun on the North Shore Channel training for competitions or holding scrimmages with rivals like Loyola Academy. The program's success has led to invitations to compete around the country and scholarships.*

"It was a wonderful honor to be recognized for the accomplishments of New Trier's rowing team especially by MWRD, which has been instrumental in the improved water quality of the Chicago River," said Marchuk. "Trevians who proudly row on the North Shore Channel of the Chicago River, our home body of water, raise the awareness that it is a great resource to be protected."

The MWRD is committed to improving the water quality in the Chicago River and its associated waterways. In addition, the MWRD supports the use of the Chicago River and associated waterways for sport and recreational use, and New Trier directly benefits as they train on the North Shore Channel based (*continued*)

# New Trier rowers' success a reflection on cleaner waters *(continued)*

out of the Skokie Park District's Dammrich Rowing Center.

"To be able to get on the waterway that is maintained by the MWRD, it is fantastic," said New Trier Men's Rowing Coach Nate Kelp-Lenane. "Competing at colleges and talking to coaches across the country, I say time and time again that we have the best water to train on in the country. It's really great to see it develop and grow, that we really appreciate the hard work you do to maintain that and continue to support the sport on the waterway."

Today, there are more than 130 New Trier student-athletes participating in the rowing program, but rowing was not even considered when the channel was excavated at the beginning of the 20th century. Built as part of the MWRD's massive project to reverse the flow of the Chicago River and protect Lake Michigan, the North Shore Channel was envisioned more as a way to convey water and sewage.



*Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) Commissioner Debra Shore (front right) presented a resolution to honor the New Trier High School Rowing Program. Accepting the resolution with the student-athletes were New Trier Rowing Club Parents Board President Rory Dunne (front left), Women's Coach Rose Marchuk (front center) and Men's Coach Nate Kelp-Lenane (right).*

Several of the program's rowers have earned scholarships to prestigious rowing programs, such as the University of Michigan and Georgetown University, and many return to the Channel to reunite with their former teammates and the waterway where they



*The Boys Varsity 8+ achieved an 18th-place finish, and the Girls Varsity 8+ achieved an 8th place finish, over the 3-mile distance at the 2015 Head of the Charles Regatta, which was held in Boston, Massachusetts in October 2015, rowing in a field of 85 youth national and international teams.*



"In 1910 when the North Shore Channel was completed, no one would ever have imagined that people would want to recreate on it," said MWRD Commissioner Debra Shore, in introducing the resolution. "The designers of the channel would be astonished to learn that this lovely and affecting North Shore Channel is home to a nationally recognized rowing team and several other teams and clubs that row along the North Branch. The success of these student athletes has led to college scholarships to top programs across the country."

The MWRD's Tunnel and Reservoir Plan and other innovations have led to fewer pollutants in the water and as a result more wildlife and recreational opportunities have appeared. While it's not unusual to find debris in the area after heavy rainstorms, the rowers from New Trier have come to feel at home on the waterway because the flat water makes it ideal for rowing conditions.

"It's a place we look forward to going to every single day after school. On the days we are there with all 130 of us, it brings the team together and we all share that body of water, and I think we learn a lot about ourselves rowing on that water," said senior Carolyne Newman.

learned to row and embrace the smell of the waterway even after a storm.

"I have to say that I am eternally grateful to what the team has given me and what the channel has given me," said senior Brendan Gloyd. "Ever since my freshman year, I have seen use of the channel expand; more clubs have popped up and there have been more boat houses. We have seen different people of all age groups kayaking or starting different clubs. I love to see the progress made on the Channel and how it has blossomed from a sewage canal into a spot where people from all over the city of Chicago and the suburbs can come out and try new sports and enjoy themselves."

Rowing, which has been an Olympic sport since the founding of the modern Olympic Games in 1896, dates back to the time of Athens and ancient Egypt and was the first intercollegiate sport established in the United States. Yet creating an ideal waterway to row on is a rarity, Marchuk said.

"If you had a billion dollars you couldn't build this for your own private little playground," Marchuk said. "It's just a wonderful body of water to row on."

## Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

*Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwrld.org](http://www.mwrld.org)) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.*