

# 2022 Brings New Leader, Pre-Pandemic Results, and Tri-Sector Event at Rockefeller Center for Keep America Beautiful®

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EINPresswire.com/ -- As the year ends, Keep America Beautiful® reflects on the major milestones and achievements that helped in the mission to clean, green, and beautify America in 2022. Founded in 1953, Keep America Beautiful is the nation's leading community improvement nonprofit organization and has continued to transform communities across the country for almost 70 years.

The Great American Cleanup® (GAC) was held March 21 to June 22, engaging the Keep America Beautiful (KAB) network of 700 affiliates and KAB partner organizations to beautify communities across the nation. GAC 2022 saw a news reach of two billion impressions in earned media, with national media interviews on The Weather Channel and Fox Weather Channel and articles in major publications including the LA Times.

In 2022, GAC delivered:

- 11,191 Events
- 208,379 Volunteers and Participants
- 14,056,280 Pounds of Litter and Debris Collected
- 2,449,669 Pounds of Items Recycled
- 29,979 Acres of Parks, Public Lands, Playgrounds, and Trails Cleaned & Improved



- 29,358 Miles of Streets, Roads, and Highways Cleaned, Improved or Beautified
- 702,451 Plants, Shrubs, Flowers, and Bulbs Planted
- 8,465 Trees Planted
- \$39,796,901 in Benefit to Communities
- 2,500 Free Litter Removal Kits Mailed

On May 16, Jennifer Lawson was named the new President and Chief Executive Officer. Lawson came to KAB from the nonprofit Points of Light, where she served as the Chief Civic Innovation Officer and Corporate Citizenship Leader.

Upon the announcement of her hiring, Lawson said, "The work of Keep America Beautiful feels freshly aligned with the power of this moment in our journey, as all of us seek new ways to bridge divides, build our communities, and establish new ways to relate to our environment. A commitment to shared efforts to build and maintain beautiful places is essential infrastructure for that healthy and vibrant future. I am honored to have the privilege to lead this iconic organization that can deliver that impact at scale."

In April, a new team member was added, Jerí Irby, the manager of RETREET®. With her help, not only were 305 large native trees planted in the Miami Valley of Ohio through the RETREET program in 2022, our tree debris removal and maintenance program in that area was drawn to a close successfully, facilitating over 200 requests for help. Two final tree planting events for the North Texas TREEcovery Campaign also were organized, one in partnership with Arbor Day Foundation, with numerous new project areas identified and initiated across the US. Further, over \$150,000 in grant funding was awarded specifically to take RETREET to scale across the KAB affiliate network. In 2023, a toolkit will be created using that support which will increase the number of RETREET activations significantly in years to come.

In October, the annual Vision for America event was held in New York City. Themed "Vision for a Litter-Free America," Vision 2022 was a two-day event. On October 26th, 30 people rolled up their sleeves and walked the talk by cleaning a section of Hell's Kitchen. With the partnership of the Sanitation Foundation of NYC and volunteers, 121 pounds of trash and recyclables were collected.

On the 27th, Vision continued at Rockefeller Center through three facilitated discussions focused on pathways, partnerships, and business strategies that engage communities to inspire action and find solutions to end littering across America.

America Recycles Day® (ARD), the only nationally recognized day dedicated to promoting and celebrating recycling in the US, is held on and around November 15 each year. On November 4, a public space recycling presentation was held at a KAB regional meeting hosted by Keep Ohio Beautiful. With approximately 1/3 of beverage containers consumed "on-the-go" and an estimated 2.9 billion beverage containers littered on the ground on any given day, the presentation highlighted the importance of public space recycling, noting both the challenges

and opportunities. Furthering this, a panel discussion of KAB Georgia affiliates took place November 14, highlighting the 2020 Keep America Beautiful National Litter Study, during the annual conference of the Georgia Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America.

ARD events were capped December 6 with the presentation of the ARD Recycling Hero Awards by KAB President and CEO Jennifer Lawson at SWANA's WASTECON event in San Diego. The Military Installation Award was presented to the 144th Griffin Fighter Wing of the Air National Guard in Fresno, chosen for its commitment to environmental responsibility and for making recycling an everyday responsibility for all base members. The Individual Recipient award was presented to Sergeant Ray Scott, Retired U.S. Marine Corps. As the past president of Keep California Beautiful, Ray has inspired the next generation of leaders through the development of K-12 and collegiate environmental education and stewardship programs. His 22-year effort has left a legacy to encourage individuals to act every day to improve their community.

2022's America Recycles Day had over 2.45 billion media impressions – and counting. Social media influencers Ashley Benson (on behalf of Thomas Ashbourne Craft Spirits) and Trash Caulin posted videos encouraging their followers to take the [#BeRecycled Pledge](#) and, to date, 88,739 people have now taken the pledge.

Also in 2022, Keep America Beautiful provided day-of-service programs for several companies with the goal of getting people outside, working together and team building all while benefiting communities where they live and work. In June, KAB engaged 800 Pernod Ricard employees on their 10th annual Responsib'All Day event, leading projects including cleanups, community gardening, and beautification activities. Other corporate groups created seed bombs or did individual and group cleanups with KAB provided materials. Volunteers helped launch the Anheuser-Busch National Recycling League, collecting recycling and educating fans at MLB and NFL stadiums across the country.

Learn more about the work of Keep America Beautiful at [kab.org](http://kab.org).

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