



## **Remembering Javier Martinez Common Ground High School Senior December 2013**

On Saturday, December 28th, Javier Martinez, a member of Common Ground High School's senior class, was the victim of a homicide. We have lost a precious member of our community, and are deeply shaken. We want to make sure that all members of the Common Ground community get the support they need over the coming days and weeks, and are so grateful for the offers of support we have already received.

### **We want to honor and remember Javier.**

Earlier this week, Common Ground students and staff gathered to support one another and share their memories of Javier. They talked about his love of sneakers and good food, his intelligence and gentle nature, his promise as a student and leader.



Larry Dome, Javi's guidance teacher for the past four years, spoke for all of us: "Javi, you left a hole in my heart and in our guidance group."

Here is how some of Javi's friends and teachers describe him:

"Your smile is forever imprinted on my mind"

"I never saw you mad. I always saw a smile on your face."

"He was always looking for some candy, always making jokes, and always smiling."

"His laugh was so contagious, everyone had to laugh with him."

"Javi was kindness personified. He was a leader, a thinker, and a friend. The world will miss his light."



Javi was going places, and growing into an environmental leader. Last summer, for instance, he interned with The Nature Conservancy on Block Island -- creating habitat and protecting



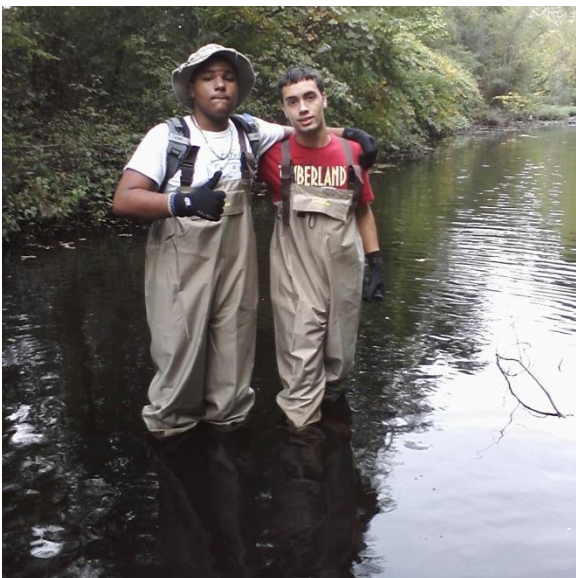
endangered species. “I was placed in a group where I was with none of my own friends, so our pride for the environment was what connected us at first until we found other similarities. I learned that even though the effort from one person may seem insignificant, all of us working together can help solve our environmental issues.”

On Saturday, Javi’s family passed around copies of his Western Lit papers – reading aloud, with pride, the good work their child had done.



Joan Foran, Javi’s teacher for Western Lit, remembers Javi’s reaction to Oedipus Rex. “He was so PROUD of his acting. When we had ‘talk back,’ he asked the class: ‘Did you notice how I placed my hand over my heart when I read those lines? That was to show that even though I was King Oedipus, I was feeling pain and relating to my people.’”

In the lunch line, Javi would remind other students to say thank you. Once he got his food, he would make his daily rounds – visiting every table in the cafeteria, joining briefly in the basketball game going on outside, stopping by each picnic table where students were seated. He greeted and checked in on every group of students, making sure they were o.k., making sure no one was forgotten.



Javi was a leader in our small school family -- and in the larger New Haven community. He joined in a summer Water Boot Camp with the Regional Water Authority. He spent last Spring planting trees with the New Haven Urban Resources Initiative. This fall, he joined a crew of West River Stewards, identifying and documenting sources of pollution along the West River.

*From [www.commongroundct.org/remembering-javier-martinez](http://www.commongroundct.org/remembering-javier-martinez)*