

Civil engineer volunteers time to project

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Michael Bloom is a civil engineer who received his degree from Penn State University.

Since he couldn't find a job, he decided to pursue a position as a VISTA (Volunteers In Service To America) volunteer.

One of his interests is acid rain, and that attracted him to Hazleton, where he's working with the Greater Hazleton Area Civic Partnership.

He will be assisting with all of the partnership's activities, including the Greater Hazleton Rails-to-Trails project, as well as other environmental issues with Friends of the Nescopeck.

Bloom, a native of Clearfield in central Pennsylvania, graduated from Clearfield High School in 2004 and Penn State in 2008.

"I wasn't finding anything out of school," Bloom said of his pursuit of a first job. "I applied everywhere. But no one was hiring anyone coming out of school.

"I knew this position involved acid mine drainage, which I did a lot of in school."

Bloom will perform his duties for the next year, and is the second VISTA volunteer in the civic partnership-Friends of the Nescopeck position.

- Jim Dino