

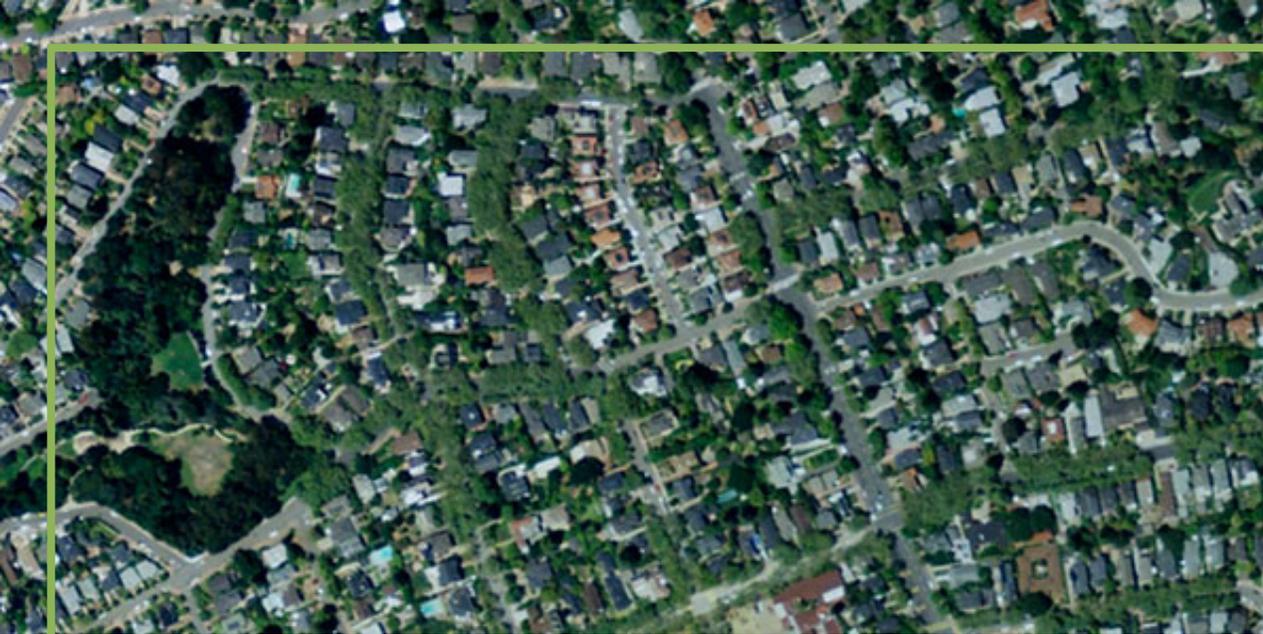


# California ReLeaf Grant Summaries

CAP AND TRADE DOLLARS AT WORK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL  
JUSTICE AND CALIFORNIA'S URBAN FOREST  
2015 - 2019



**URBAN FORESTS  
PLAY A CRITICAL  
ROLE IN CREATING  
CLIMATE-RESILIENT  
COMMUNITIES.**



**PIEDMONT, CA**



**OAKLAND, CA**

Disadvantaged communities and people of color frequently suffer disproportionate effects of environmental problems. In turn, these populations are on the front lines of environmental hazards, and the health risks that they exacerbate or cause.

These same communities also have less access to environmental benefits, such as fresh produce and a healthy tree canopy, and are often left out of decision-making processes that affect their neighborhoods. The environmental justice movement asserts that living in a clean and healthy environment is a basic right afforded by all.

In 2015, California ReLeaf joined numerous other state and local entities in distributing the first funds allocation from the California Investments Program.

Through a grant from CAL FIRE's Urban and Community Forestry Program, California ReLeaf managed a pass-through grants program to help underserved areas across California. This included two grant programs: Social Equity and Green Innovations.



Across the state, communities made their neighborhoods greener and healthier, engaged and educated school children about the environment, created local nutritional food sources, helped young adults gain workforce skills, brought about healing in the aftermath of gun violence, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, **all using one simple tool: urban trees**





# Clean & Green Pomona

## POMONA

Pomona suffers from some of the worst air quality in the state. Rumbling diesel trucks and heavy traffic causes congestion, not just on the roads but also in the chests of vulnerable children. Too many elementary schools reside next to major freeways, creating unhealthy conditions for children, especially those with asthma. Luckily, Clean and Green Pomona (CGP) planted 425 shade trees at 10 elementary schools and implemented new educational materials for 4th-6th grade students to understand the benefits and challenges associated with urban forests.

CGP also helped Pomona City Council revive a commitment to renewing their tree canopy. Pomona has witnessed a steep decline in trees over the past 10 years due to drought. Fortunately, city council members and CGP elevated a concern for reforesting the city with a better tree canopy. CGP provided expertise and technical training to the city to assist in this renewal effort and advocated for additional city resources to support the ongoing care of the trees.



*Clean & Green Pomona is a community-based board, working to improve environmental quality, safety and appearance in southeastern Pomona.*



# Clean & Green Pomona

## POMONA

- 425 trees planted
- 443 volunteers donated 1100+ hours
- Increased shade canopy by 517% at 10 elementary schools
- Created environmental education program and materials
- Partners:
  - Pomona City Council
  - Pomona Unified School District
  - Ca. State Polytechnic Univ.- Lyle Center's Interdisciplinary Regenerative Studies Program



*Clean & Green Pomona is a community-based board, working to improve environmental quality, safety and appearance in southeastern Pomona.*

# Fathers & Families of San Joaquin

## STOCKTON

Stockton struggles with violence in the streets and a lack of access to healthy food. Less than 6% of the city's land is dedicated to parks and green spaces. Elected officials also declared a moratorium on tree planting on city-owned property, making it difficult to build a better urban forest. Fathers and Families of San Joaquin County (FFSJ) advocates for neighborhoods affected by "The Green Divide" while focusing on healing racial and social injustices. Their Healing Roots program focuses on tree memorials at Brandon Harrison Memorial Garden to honor those who lost their lives to violence. When vandals threatened the long-term care of those trees, FFSJ empowered a transient population to help protect them.

Seeds in Concrete, another FFSJ program, helps the formerly incarcerated and youth gain valuable leadership and workforce skills to care for their communities through tree planting. Essentially, through environmental design, FFSJ was able to offset crime, recidivism, and addiction by greening these spaces, resulting in higher social capital, workforce and leadership development, and cultivating community pride.



*Fathers and Families of San Joaquin County promotes the cultural, spiritual, economic and social renewal of the most vulnerable families in Stockton and the greater San Joaquin Valley*

# Fathers & Families of San Joaquin

## STOCKTON

- 202 trees planted and 39 plants
- 158 volunteers donated 452 hours
- Hired three FTE environmental justice organizers
- Created tree memorial to honor lives lost to violence
- Partners:
  - County Supervisor Miguel Villapudau
  - San Joaquin County Recovery House
  - Brandon Harrison Memorial Garden
  - Transient population
  - Formerly Incarcerated population



*Fathers and Families of San Joaquin County promotes the cultural, spiritual, economic and social renewal of the most vulnerable families in Stockton and the greater San Joaquin Valley*

# PUENTES

## STOCKTON

Puente means bridge in Spanish, and through food advocacy and urban farming, Promotores Unidas para la Educacion Tecnologias Sostinibles (PUENTES) builds metaphorical bridges of transformation, turning disadvantaged neighborhoods into sustainable and vibrant places for people to live. PUENTES knew the challenge of planting trees on city property because of The City of Stockton's tree planting moratorium. As an innovative solution, PUENTES partnered with the bustling Port of Stockton to plant 200 trees on their private property. PUENTES also worked in Bogg's Tract to establish an urban community farm on five private acres. This effort not only greened the neighborhood, but also increased access to healthy foods (one of the only places to purchase groceries is a nearby liquor store).

To promote healthy living, PUENTES also gave away free fruit trees to residents who attended their Arboranza event where they taught residents how to invest personally in improving Stockton's lack of trees. As a step toward sustainability, PUENTES started a tree nursery at the farm to store trees for future planting, educate residents on urban forestry, create a revenue stream from sales for the organization, and provide valuable training and assistance to residents about caring for trees and plants



*PUENTES shares opportunities in sustainable agriculture to enable urban families to improve the health, well-being, and prosperity of their communities.*



# PUENTES

## STOCKTON

- 168 trees planted on private land
- 200+ volunteers donated 843 hours
- Established a community farm on 5 private acres with a tree nursery and classes for future plantings and educate citizens on Urban Forestry
- Held community-wide Arboranza event and raffled off fruit trees
- Partners:
  - Port of Stockton
  - Stockton Unified School District
  - Boggs Tract Community Farm

# Sustainable Claremont

## CLAREMONT

Claremont is known as a “City of Trees and PhDs;” but the urban forest has been affected by an over-mature aging tree canopy, ongoing drought, and city growth. Approximately two out of every three trees (16,000/24,000) are threatened. The unforgiving sun in this desert-like region threatens the elderly, children, and commuters who suffer in the outdoors. Sustainable Claremont’s “Green Crew” organizes, mobilizes, and trains over 1500 urban forest volunteers who plant much-needed shade trees and educate the populace about the importance and care of them. During their Taking it to the Streets campaign, Green Crew spoke with 2,468 residents about the city’s planting plan, and offered free trees to residents. Prior to the initiative, residents only adopted 27% of the free trees offered to them. After the campaign, residents adopted 76% of trees!

To better support residents in properly caring for and watering their trees, Green Crew developed an email/text application and sent reminders to care for their tree at critical times in its growth and maturity based on weather data. Because of Sustainable Claremont’s successful impact, they have become the defacto experts for advising the city on arborist activities.



*Sustainable Claremont engages people in education and action to create a more sustainable community – environmentally, socially, and economically.*

# Sustainable Claremont

## CLAREMONT

- 164 trees planted
- 858 volunteers donated 2,442 hours
- Advocated for nine annual, city-sponsored planting days
- Developed an email/text app to remind residents how and when to water their trees
- Expanded to help Rancho Cucamonga
- Partners:
  - Harvey Mudd College's computer science students
  - City of Claremont



*Sustainable Claremont engages people in education and action to create a more sustainable community – environmentally, socially, and economically.*

# Growing Together

## OAKLAND

It's a concrete jungle in some of Oakland's poorest neighborhoods. The nonprofit Growing Together (GT) wanted to change the impact of choosing concrete over dirt. With its Root to Rise program, they removed over 10,000 square feet of asphalt, creating conditions where trees and people can flourish while reducing pollution, beautifying learning spaces, and educating the next generation. Collaborating with Oakland Unified School District, GT was able to create a Living Schoolyard Initiative which mitigates the environmental burden felt at five public schools flanked by congested Bay Area freeways.

For instance, at Prescott Elementary, situated by a BART station, GT engaged the school campus to redesign and install two new outdoor learning areas by removing 8,000 pounds of concrete. Students, educators, parents, and volunteers created a new garden-based classroom, planting sixteen fruit trees and installing irrigation. The school district also invested in hiring garden and nutrition teachers and landscaping services to support the efforts. Lastly, GT's Food Corps members hosted ecological classes and tree planting events in Spanish and English, while presenting food justice issues to students and volunteers.



*Growing Together plants fruit trees in urban neighborhoods in order to improve the environment, build community, and create a long-term source of local healthy food in neighborhoods with a lack of tree cover, and classified as "food deserts."*



# Growing Together

## OAKLAND

- 129 trees planted and 169 plants
- 705 volunteers donated 1870 hours
- Created three jobs
- Removed 10,000 square feet of asphalt
- Trained 370 elementary students on urban forestry
- Advocated with Oakland Unified School District to hire nutrition and garden classroom teachers
- Partners:
  - Oakland Unified School District
  - Merritt College



*Growing Together plants fruit trees in urban neighborhoods in order to improve the environment, build community, and create a long-term source of local healthy food in neighborhoods with a lack of tree cover, and classified as “food deserts.”*

# Episcopal Impact Fund

## OAKLAND

Most people don't like to share space and in a place like Oakland, communities can easily be parceled into the "haves," and the "have-nots." The Episcopal Impact Fund (EIF) sought to strengthen fragile social ties between a congregation at Santiago Episcopal Church and its neighbors. Volunteers ripped up dirty concrete from a dilapidated parking lot, transforming that blight into a community garden "oasis" which helped transform residents into "real" neighbors. Garden-based events and classes seeded cross-cultural connections, celebrated diversity, and helped neighbors better "belong" to one another in the garden.

A nonprofit partner, Indigenous Permaculture, provided a "Green Environmental Leadership Training" where residents learned about food deserts, sustainability, pathways out of poverty, and cultural well-being. EIF also improved access to healthy food for vulnerable populations by growing "culturally appropriate produce," and donating any surplus to the Alameda Food Bank. As a partner of the food bank, the church was able to connect with Southeast Asian and Latino immigrant populations through bilingual urban forestry classes to better engage residents in the greening effort. Lastly, they planted trees at Stonehurst Elementary to continue strengthening the neighborhood.



*The Episcopal Impact Fund supports organizations that address the root causes of poverty in the San Francisco Bay Area, both financially and through mentorship and guidance.*

# Episcopal Impact Fund

## OAKLAND

- 104 trees planted and 60 garden beds of vegetables
- 723 volunteer hours
- Transformed dilapidated parking lot into beautiful cultural garden and community oasis
- Grew culturally relevant food for Asian and Latino immigrant populations and donated to local foodbank
- Partners:
  - Indigenous Permaculture
  - Alameda Food Bank
  - Stonehurst Elementary School



*The Episcopal Impact Fund supports organizations that address the root causes of poverty in the San Francisco Bay Area, both financially and through mentorship and guidance.*

# Incredible Edible Community Garden

## SAN BERNARDINO

Historic Route 66 is often referred to as the “Mother Road of America,” however Route 66 doesn’t formally exist today-- it’s more a memory stitched together by patches of road. However, Incredible Edible Community Garden (IECG) desired to beautify and unify 400 miles of Route 66-- within San Bernardino County-- by engaging volunteers and Veterans of Foreign Wars posts to plant much needed shade trees. Plantings at VFW Post 8737, Maple Hill Apartments, and along busy road street medians help filter dirty air particles from busy two-way traffic along the old highway.

At Uplands Memorial Park, some of the shade trees planted have a dog tag cemented into a small plaque, commemorating the service of a soldier. The Veteran’s name, military branch, and years of service are engraved. In step with celebrating Americana, IECG coordinated its efforts to engage citizens and turn them into volunteers and tree caregivers at public events such as county fairs, VFW events, Fourth of July celebrations, Earth Day, and more. The planted shade trees have inspired residents and other local nonprofits to begin seeding the installation of a walking and bike path along parts of historical Route 66.



*The Incredible Edible Community Garden is focused on strengthening neighborhoods with community gardens and agroforestry projects that engage stakeholders from the bottom-up.*



# Incredible Edible Community Garden

## SAN BERNARDINO

- 338 trees planted and 10 plants
- 228 volunteers donated 1435 hours
- Created awareness and engaged communities by hosting planting days in conjunction with public events, such as County Fairs and Fourth of July Parades
- Implemented a tree memorial service with dog tag plaques to honor military service veterans
- Partners:
  - Multiple VFW Posts
  - Maple Hill Apartments
  - Uplands Memorial Park
  - Multiple Cities and Service Organizations



*The Incredible Edible Community Garden is focused on strengthening neighborhoods with community gardens and agroforestry projects that engage stakeholders from the bottom-up.*

# Pacific Housing

## SACRAMENTO

While Sacramento proudly displays its “Sterling Tree City USA” distinction throughout the city, it is not reflected in Del Paso Heights. Decades of poverty and violence have made it less desirable for developers to support this community. However, one unique housing developer sees the rewards in greening the neighborhood as a way for residents to achieve upward mobility. Pacific Housing (PH) served as the backbone grantee to support the work of the Del Paso Heights Growers’ Alliance, a collective of environmental and food justice nonprofits. They planted shade trees at two local parks and along streets, while investing in a community garden with a robust youth-based workforce development program.

PH partnered with Green Tech and the Sacramento Tree Foundation to help youth learn valuable work skills within in urban forestry and earn stipends. Youth were provided education on basic construction, tool identification, safety, basic urban farming, aquaponics, sustainability, residential weatherization, basic soil science, microbiology, and ecological literacy. Youth also built business plan for the long-term sustainability of the community garden, which is situated in the center of a food desert. PH also promoted economic equality by awarding sub-contracts to local business owners who bid on the work. Over fourteen contracts were awarded to residents, ensuring that community engagement was high and that money meant for that community stayed wholly within that community.



**Pacific Housing Inc.**

A California Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation

*Pacific Housing advocates and promotes the development of quality affordable housing, affordable housing programs, and quality resident services.*

# Pacific Housing

## SACRAMENTO

- 140 trees planted and 433 plants
- 220 volunteers donated 560 hours
- Promoted economic equality by requesting bids from local business owners, resulting in 14 contracts.
- Provided in-depth environmental-based workforce development skills and stipends to 45 youth
- Partners:
  - Del Paso Heights Growers' Alliance
  - Green Tech Youth
  - City of Sacramento
  - Grant High School
  - Sacramento Tree Foundation

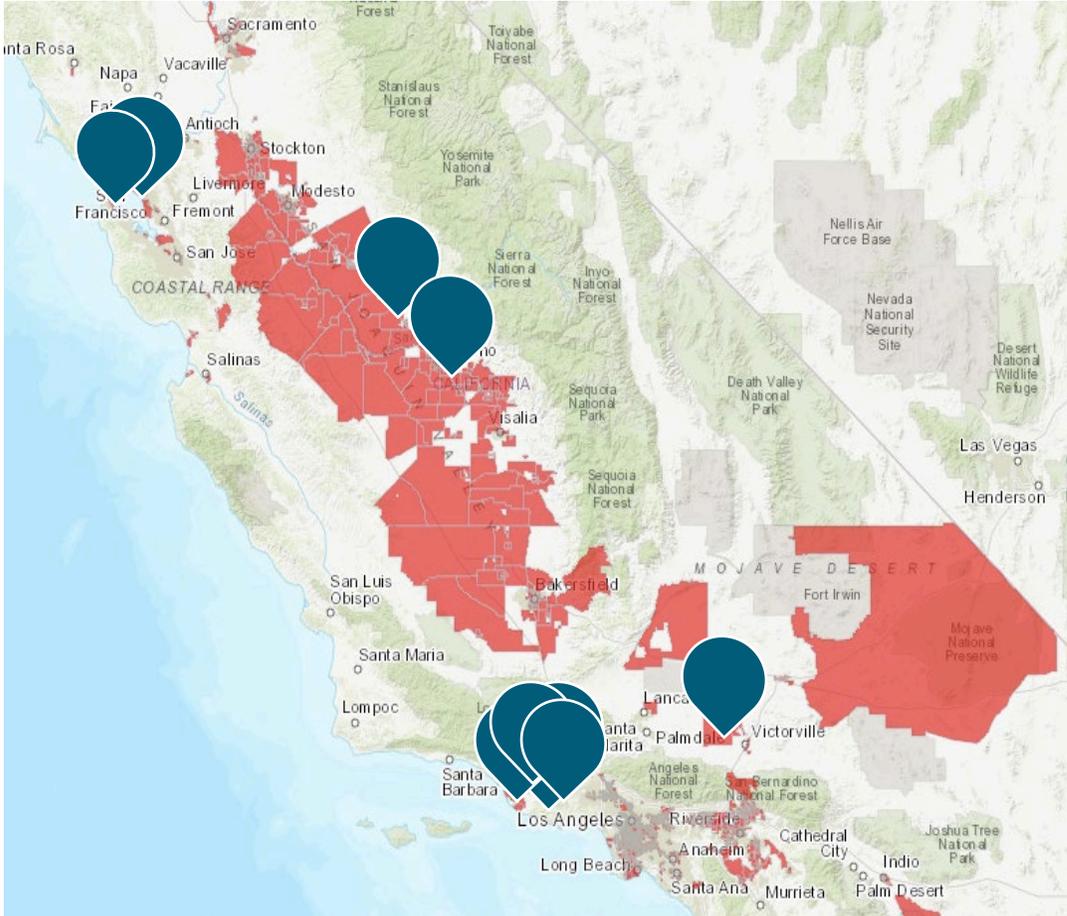


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# Social Equity Grants Program



Disadvantaged Community, per Cal EnviroScreen 3.0 (SB535)

Social Equity Grant location

With CAL-Fire funding, California ReLeaf provided sub-grants, named Social Equity, to fund shovel-ready, tree planting projects in Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) that focus on carbon sequestration, community education and engagement about the importance of urban forestry, and integrating related green infrastructure to significantly reduce greenhouse gases. All projects should:

1. Engage volunteers and residents from planning to implementation;
2. Commit to engaging with — and utilizing the skills of — volunteers and residents in neighborhoods where the trees are being planted; and
3. Provide multiple co-benefits to for the communities being served.

# Parent Pioneers

## SAN BERNARDINO

“The Future is in Our Hands” is the slogan of Parent Pioneers (PP), a group of mostly Latina mothers working hard to combat stereotypes while improving health and education outcomes for children in the San Fernando valley. Parents are a critical element in embedding pro-environmental values into the next generation of would-be urban forest stewards. Rosa, a volunteer with PP and professor at California State University- Northridge (CSUN), became passionate about transforming an elementary school’s abysmal landscape when she saw that there were no shade trees for children. Unfortunately, her team discovered the high cost of ripping up asphalt and the required soil testing after removal.

PP organized to approach the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) board and the nonprofit TreePeople for help. TreePeople were able to show Parent Pioneers how to affordably remove enough asphalt to encourage shade tree growth and which species of shade trees were able to naturally thrive despite heat reflecting off the hardscape. A LAUSD board member found funding for some of the asphalt removal and all the soil testing, which was upwards of \$15,650. Lastly, parents and graduate students at CSUN developed and implemented an enviro-literacy afterschool curriculum that makes urban forestry come alive for students.



*Parent Pioneers cultivates students as empowered scientists, artists, and mathematicians that employ the strengths and values of their families and cultures to chart new pathways in the sciences, technology, culture, art, and mathematics for the benefit of their communities, humanity, and the Earth.*

# Parent Pioneers

## SAN BERNARDINO



Family presents their project, a plant that is growing and an upcycled frame made with materials found at home

- 59 trees planted
- 168 volunteers donated 5290 volunteer hours
- Launched eight-week literary and theatre based environmental issues after-school program for elementary children
- Partners:
  - Los Angeles Unified School District
  - California State University- Northridge
  - TreePeople
  - Humanities Action Lab International Museum



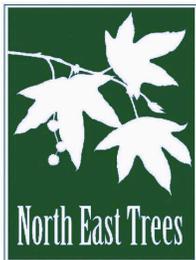
*Parent Pioneers cultivates students as empowered scientists, artists, and mathematicians that employ the strengths and values of their families and cultures to chart new pathways in the sciences, technology, culture, art, and mathematics for the benefit of their communities, humanity, and the Earth.*

# North East Trees

## LOS ANGELES

HACLA (The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles), oversees fourteen communities where 40% of families (2-4 people) earn less than \$25,000 a year. In HACLA communities, high obesity rates, poor air quality, and inequitable access to parks and outdoor spaces is also a problem. Covering 459 acres, there is little landscaping and few shade trees. Additional stresses make it difficult to plant a large number of shade trees in housing communities. Motivated to address inequities, North East Trees (NET) helped HACLA residents better advocate for and embrace shade trees.

NET has planted over 100,000 trees and a part of their “secret sauce” is the art of transforming at-risk youth into urban forestry workers who are skilled and employable in green industries. The HACLA has a high population of disenfranchised youth (over 30%), and its young people are in danger of dropping out of high school, turning toward gangs to find ways to make money and belong, therefore repeating a violent cycle of poverty. Luckily, NET gave HACLA youth a robust training program with hands-on learning and amplified the powerful voice and skills of young people as “influencers” to gain support from HACLA residents for 250 tree plantings.

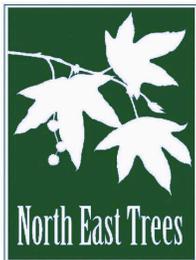


*North East Trees brings nature back to the urban environment, working primarily in Los Angeles County's disadvantaged communities.*

# North East Trees

## LOS ANGELES

- 250 trees planted
- 13 volunteers donated 1300 hours
- Improved health for 21,500 residents in fourteen communities
- Transforms disenfranchised youth into trained urban forestry workers
- Partners:
  - Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles



*North East Trees brings nature back to the urban environment, working primarily in Los Angeles County's disadvantaged communities.*

# Industrial District Green

## LOS ANGELES

Downtown Los Angeles' Industrial District is home to "Skid Row," a place where nearly 4,700 people live without basic shelter. There are no trees and finding shade is a joke. These residents suffer from the poorest air quality in California due to the close proximity of rail freight traffic and heavy commercial trucking. Industrial District Green (IDG), improved these conditions by leading the first urban forest effort in this community. However, the City of LA requires landowners to provide all care for the new trees three-years post planting. Unfortunately, most commercial landowners did not want to take on this responsibility. So, IDG turned toward embracing "bottom up" community leaders and small business to get the job done.

They worked with Bobby Buck, a former Skid Row resident, and his "Street Tree Team," to provide monthly walks with those experiencing homelessness to engaged them in caring for the nascent trees. Relationship building also proved crucial in getting buy-in from small business owners to abide by the city's code requirement for tree care. The adjacent arts-district was a supportive partner in helping gain support for 100 tree plantings along sidewalks



*Industrial Green District improves the livability of the downtown Los Angeles Industrial District through comprehensive planning, implementation and maintenance of community-based greening and streetscape improvement projects.*



# Industrial District Green

## LOS ANGELES

- 100 trees planted
- 28 volunteers donated 323 hours
- Leveraged expertise and network of community leaders and business owners
- Engaged transient population to plant much-needed shade trees
- Partners:
  - Skid Row population
  - Bobby Buck Show
  - Small business owners
  - Los Angeles Arts District



*Industrial Green District improves the livability of the downtown Los Angeles Industrial District through comprehensive planning, implementation and maintenance of community-based greening and streetscape improvement projects.*

# Madera Coalition for Community Justice

## MADERA

One in four newborns in Madera County suffer from asthma. This data coupled with ongoing socio-economic struggles, a depressed economy, and a historic drought have negatively impacted this region. While California's Central Valley is supposed to be the agricultural "Eden" of flora and food that feeds a nation... it's suffering from environmental burdens and young people are growing apathetic to the needs of both the residents and the Earth.

The Madera Coalition for Community Justice (MCCJ) made their first foray into urban forestry by combining youth development practices with environmentalism. Focusing on elevating the voices of young people to become involved in tree plantings, MCCJ was successful in turning apathy into passion, and engaged twelve youth paid interns to work with 89 volunteers to remove 60 dead trees and plant 120 greenhouse gas-reducing ones. These youth leaders eventually became empowered community trainers and lead awareness and education sessions in the larger community to help create tree stewards. When they planted at schools and parks, these youth leaders also tailored brochures and disseminated tree-care materials specifically for the neighborhood and in different languages in an effort to be inclusive and relevant.



*The Madera Coalition for Community Justice educates and assists low-income residents of Madera County by working together to obtain appropriate and sufficient food, clothing, health care, educational and employment opportunities and other fundamental needs.*

# Madera Coalition for Community Justice

## MADERA

- 120 trees planted
- 89 volunteers donated 178 hours
- One job created
- Paid youth interns to assist volunteers to remove dead trees and plant new ones
- Youth lead community and education meetings and disseminated urban forestry materials to create awareness
- Partners:
  - City of Madera



*The Madera Coalition for Community Justice educates and assists low-income residents of Madera County by working together to obtain appropriate and sufficient food, clothing, health care, educational and employment opportunities and other fundamental needs.*

# Earth Team

## SAN PABLO

Earth Team (ET) is a robust nonprofit entrenched in leveraging the passion and talent of young people to renew tree canopies and build the urban forest in neighborhoods throughout the San Francisco Bay area. ET worked specifically in the cities of Richmond and San Pablo, and recruited fourteen high school students to become paid interns who received year-long, hands-on STEM and job training. They assisted 370+ volunteers in planting 180 trees in Wanlass Park, a recreation and outdoor destination that serves residents who, unfortunately, live in a disadvantaged community due to poor air quality. Asthma rates in the area rank in the 92 percentile according to the Cal EnviroScreen 3.0 tool.

Renewing the tree canopy in the park was paramount to protecting residents' overall health. Planting trees also helped improve much needed shade, which can be a catalyst for residents to improve their health by being outdoors and active. Student interns not only planted trees, but also developed vital workforce skills and learned about career and college pathways into environmental studies. They wrote educational materials, gave presentations, and created awareness while becoming lifelong stewards of the environment.



*Earth Team empowers urban youth to become lifelong environmental stewards through experiential education, skills development, and the building of community connections.*



# Earth Team

## SAN PABLO

- 180 trees planted
- 357 volunteers donated 1381 hours
- Increased workforce development skills for 42 high school interns
- Renewed urban forest in Wanlass Park, situated near residents who suffer from some of the highest asthma rates in California
- Partners:
  - City of San Pablo
  - Richmond High School
  - East Bay Regional Park



*Earth Team empowers urban youth to become lifelong environmental stewards through experiential education, skills development, and the building of community connections.*

# From Lot to Spot

## LENNOX

Lennox, not far from Los Angeles Airport (LAX), is one of the densest and poorest communities in the entire nation. More than half of the population is under the age of 18 and more than 90% of households earn under \$35,000 a year. Residents' health is negatively impacted by two abutting highways and air traffic from LAX. There are barely any healthy trees on streets that could provide vital shade for residents and help filter dirty air particles from traffic and airplanes. However, From Lot to Spot (FLTS) changed the small town of Lennox forever by seeding the first urban forest.

They partnered with a local youth drop-out recovery program for 16-24 year-olds to do the work. FLTS taught them environmental workforce skills through their Spaces of Blight program, and engaged youth in three planting community days. They successfully planted shade trees along Lennox streets and spoke with neighbors in a door-to-door campaign. Throwing a block party in this small town also helped as residents celebrate the newly planted trees and learn important tree care techniques to maintain their growing urban forest.

The logo for From Lot to Spot, featuring the words "FROM", "LOT TO", and "SPOT" stacked vertically in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on a black square background.

**FROM  
LOT TO  
SPOT**

*From Lot to Spot is dedicated to improving blighted, urban neighborhoods in the greater Los Angeles area one vacant space at a time.*

# From Lot to Spot

## LENNOX

- 68 trees planted
- 300 volunteer donated 300 hours
- Employed a community engagement campaign that went door-to-door with residents to engage them in planting days.
- Threw block party to create excitement over the new urban forest
- Partners:
  - Century Center Economic Opportunity- Youth Build Program
  - Los Angeles County Road Maintenance



**FROM  
LOT TO  
SPOT**

*From Lot to Spot is dedicated to improving blighted, urban neighborhoods in the greater Los Angeles area one vacant space at a time.*

# Growing Together

## RICHMOND

Working in some of Oakland and Richmond's most disadvantaged communities, Growing Together (GT) is changing the landscape for the better by planting much needed shade trees at elementary schools and installing educational gardens as part of their Living Schoolyards Initiative. Typically, most schools relegate their trees to the outer boundaries of the school, where children aren't allowed to play. GT understands that children need greenery where they congregate and, therefore, they advocate for schools to design green spaces better.

GT brought children, parents, and educators into the planting process with to complete major garden implementations and restorations at ten schools. They planted new trees, removed asphalt to build gardens, and worked with school maintenance, teachers, and administrators to care for the trees and gardens appropriately, long term. GT also provided outdoor education activities to educate, inspire, and seed the next generation of urban forest stewards.



*Growing Together plants fruit trees in urban neighborhoods in order to improve the environment, build community, and create a long-term source of local healthy food in neighborhoods with a lack of tree cover, and classified as "food deserts."*



# Growing Together

## RICHMOND

- 285 trees planted and 113 plants
- 1615 volunteers donated 3964 hours
- Created 4 jobs & provided 36 youth stipends
- Passed Living Schoolyards Resolution
- Collaborated with Oakland Zoo to do a planting with youth
- Partners:
  - Oakland Unified School District
  - Castlemont High School
  - Trust for Public Land
  - West Contra Costa Unified School District



*Growing Together plants fruit trees in urban neighborhoods in order to improve the environment, build community, and create a long-term source of local healthy food in neighborhoods with a lack of tree cover, and classified as “food deserts.”*

# Victoria Avenue Forever

## EASTSIDE

Victoria Avenue in Riverside is a 7.5 mile long historic street that was planted in 1892 as the gateway to California's citrus belt. Grand and gorgeous, Victoria Avenue is recognized as a cultural heritage landmark and historic place by the National Park Service. Residents walk, bike, and enjoy many trails and recreation paths alongside the avenue, too. The nonprofit, Victoria Avenue Forever, is concerned about reforestation efforts of the parkway due to infestations, disease, and lack of a dependable water source. With a Social Equity grant, they invested in two disadvantaged wards along Victoria avenue: Casa Blanca and Eastside. Each ward is home to large Hispanic and Latino populations.

A focal point of the project was community engagement within those communities to support the newly planted trees and revitalization efforts. Planting days along with an outreach campaign with educational materials helped create excitement amongst residents. A "Walk with the Mayor" event stretched over 1.5 miles and brought the entire community of residents, volunteers, and local government to explore, learn, and deepen Riverside's commitment to Victoria Avenue and a flourishing tree canopy.



*Victoria Avenue Forever's mission is to preserve, restore and beautify historic Victoria Avenue through community volunteer efforts, education, and advocacy.*

# Victoria Avenue Forever

## EASTSIDE

- 230 trees planted
- 192 volunteers donated 375.25 hours
- Brought residents, volunteers, and city officials together with “Walk with the Mayor” event.
- Engaged Hispanic and Latino communities in urban forestry
- Partners:
  - City of Riverside
  - Casa Blanca Home of Neighborly Services
  - Kiwanis Clubs



*Victoria Avenue Forever's mission is to preserve, restore and beautify historic Victoria Avenue through community volunteer efforts, education, and advocacy.*

# Tree Fresno

## FRESNO

Tree Fresno is striving to achieve big goals in the San Joaquin valley, including teaching the art of green living to every resident while demonstrating how trees, trails, and greenways can positively impact overall health outcomes. Partnering with two school districts, Tree Fresno invested in twelve public schools to plant much needed shade trees in areas that suffer from poor air quality. With an eye toward design and function, Tree Fresno collaborated with district administration, staff, teachers, and students to find places to plant the trees that would help mitigate noise pollution, deflect wind, improve aesthetics, assist with energy conservation, and sequester carbon.

A focus on finding innovative ways to save on water, improve stormwater management, and reduce erosion was important to the overall irrigation system that Tree Fresno designed and installed at the different schools. Also, a suite of environmental education tools were adapted and taught to students to teach them on the benefits of tree planting, care, and maintenance. Lastly, Tree Fresno hired a youth intern from the Fresno EOC Conservation Corps to help care for the trees at the new schools.



*Tree Fresno transforms the San Joaquin Valley with trees, greenways and beautiful landscapes.*



# Tree Fresno

## FRESNO

- 234 trees planted
- 267 volunteers donated 1207 hours
- Partnered with two school districts to work on twelve campuses.
- Worked with school district landscape staff and custodians to create water efficiency solutions.
- Partners:
  - Washington Unified School District
  - Fresno Unified School District
  - Fresno Conservation Corps



*Tree Fresno transforms the San Joaquin Valley with trees, greenways and beautiful landscapes.*

# Amigos de los Rios

## WHITTIER

Collaborating with service organizations, colleges and universities, elected officials, city staff, youth groups, parents, and educators, Amigos de Los Rios (ADLR) serves to empower and mobilize a stewardship network of volunteers to enhance green infrastructure from land to sea in Los Angeles County. ADLR's network descended upon the Whittier Narrows Recreation Area (WNRA), a 1500-acre regional park whose trees suffer from drought, pests, and disease. Despite soaring summer heat, WNRA is a haven for neighboring disadvantaged community... and a lack of shade and a withering tree canopy does not help support those who wish to recreate there.

Reforestation of WNRA is an enormous task and ADLR was ready to implement a series of planting days that brought together community to rejuvenate this beloved area. They fostered a love of "citizen science" throughout the project, reaching out broadly to the community with social media, literature, and information about how to plant, care for, and maintain trees.



*Amigos de los Rios works to create an "Emerald Necklace" natural infrastructure network of green spaces (parks and trails) in underserved areas throughout the Los Angeles Basin, connecting the Mountains to the Sea and protecting urban communities from the threats of climate change.*

# Amigos de los Rios

## WHITTIER

- 1218 trees planted
- 1319 volunteers donated thousands of hours
- Partners:
  - Cal State Fullerton, Pasadena Community College, Cal Poly Pomona, and more
  - Vida, Heal the Bay, Rotary, and other service organizations
  - Assemblywoman Christina Garcia's Office



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# Cal State Northridge

## PACOIMA

Pacoima residents are exposed to heavy environmental pollutants from heavy traffic, clean up sites, and groundwater. Located in the San Fernando Valley, people also frequently experience high temperature days. A university professor and charter school principal collaborated to work on bringing much needed shade trees to several public charter school campuses to help students. In addition, teachers and educators were provided a two-day training course at the university to help care for the trees and incorporate the project into their classroom using relevant STEM curricula.

The University's Institute of Sustainability oversaw the grant and reached out across the campus to various groups to provide volunteer labor for the tree planting events, and development of STEM curricula materials and trainings for school staff. For tree planting days, both the charter school and university partnered with TreePeople and City Plants to help remove asphalt to plant trees, create awareness and education about the importance of caring for an urban forest, and to give away free trees to parents, families, and residents who attended.



Sustainability is a *key priority* at California State University, Northridge, integrated into all aspects of the university from operations and infrastructure to outreach, education and research. Everyone at the university – administrators, staff, faculty and students – is an integral part of these efforts



# Cal State Northridge

## PACOIMA

- 60 trees planted
- 200 volunteers donated 200 hours
- Hosted two-day teacher training workshop on how to care for trees and incorporate STEM curricula
- Engaged several departments on campus for coordinated volunteer efforts
- Partners:
  - TreePeople
  - Vaughn G3 Charter School
  - Vaughn Visa High school
  - City Plants



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Funding for this California climate Investments grant project has been provided through California ReLeaf, and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Urban and Community Forestry Program.



*Empowering grassroots efforts and building strategic partnerships that preserve, protect, and enhance California's urban and community forests.*