

Fruit & Other Good Things Grow on a SUN School's Trees

Anna Sommo of Catholic Charities' El Programa Hispano tries to make learning fun for the high school students at Gresham's Fir Ridge Campus, an alternative school in the David Douglas School District.

When she learned that the school's principal, Ron Knight, was stepping down, and that he'd wanted trees at the school for many years, she decided it was time to plant. Because of Friends of Trees' bargain prices, she had enough grant money for the school's garden project to order eight fruit trees.



"A big bonus of planting with Friends of Trees is that not only do you get the trees, but you get help planting them," Anna said.

Led by a trained crew leader, Anna and some of her Fir Ridge colleagues and students planted the school's eight trees as well as trees at other locations in the Mill Park neighborhood this past March.

"It was great to be on a crew that planted trees in the Mill Park neighborhood," she said. "It was a pretty rainy day, but it was really fun."

Now the school's garden has two plum trees, two cherry trees, two pear trees, and two apple trees. This summer Anna taught a month-long class that integrated science, gardening and cooking, and part of the class involved taking care of the trees.

"We've been watering them, and we even have Friends of Trees watering bags on them," she said.

In addition to fruit, other good things grow on trees.

- **Conservation.** Tree shade can help cut your energy costs by 35% during the summer.
- **Health.** Trees clean our air, water, and soil for an all-around healthier city.
- **Community.** Tree-lined streets calm and slow traffic. This creates safer neighborhoods and happier people.
- **Money.** Each tree in your front yard or planting strip can increase the price you'll be able to sell your house for by \$7,000.



You can sign up now for trees to plant at your home during the Argay, Parkrose, Parkrose Heights, Russell and Sumner planting this coming March. It's simple and fun. Just go to FriendsOfTrees.org/BuyTrees and add your name to the growing list of people who want trees!

Photo of Fir Ridge student Carla Toledano installing a Friends of Trees watering bag at the base of one of the school's eight new fruit trees. Photo credit: Anna Sommo

Photo of Fir Ridge planters Anna Sommo, Brady Lang and Tracy Braun on planting day. Photo credit: Thomas Cole