

A New Forest Grows

I Have a Dream Foundation



Project Description

A three-year community-wide effort among ODOT, Friends of Trees and Metro to green the I-205 Multi-Use Path with thousands of native trees and shrubs.

Benefits

- Improved neighborhood livability
- Enhanced experience for path users
- Increased wildlife habitat
- Decreased stormwater runoff
- Increased environmental equity among communities

Project Funding

- \$410,000 from the Metro Natural Areas Bond Measure's Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grant Program
- \$80,000 from East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District
- \$25,000 from Spirit Mountain Community Fund
- Generous support from:
 - J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co.
 - IKEA
 - Cantel Sweeping
 - Collier Arbor Care
 - HSBC Bank USA, N.A.
 - Portland General Electric
 - Portland Bureau of Environmental Services
 - REI
 - Portland Timbers

On October 22, 2011, ODOT and Friends of Trees kicked off the first tree planting of the third season on the I-205 Multi-Use Path. The planting in the Parkrose Centennial area of Portland along the path took place near TriMet's Park and Ride facility and along the east side of I-84 just north of Sandy Boulevard. It was an overcast day with patches of blue sky and no sign of rain. Volunteers helped put 100 trees in the ground to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Parkrose.

The "I Have a Dream" Foundation-Oregon, an organization whose mission is to help children succeed in school and college, brought twelve people including two staff, one of their own volunteers and nine young Dreamers. Becca Wolf, a Program Coordinator for the foundation, began her work with the Class 10 Dreamers, a group of 58 kids, four years ago when they were in the third grade. They are now seventh graders at Vernon School and are the 10th group of youth to benefit from the "I Have a Dream" Foundation program in Oregon. All 58 kids in Class 10 will receive an \$8,000 scholarship when they graduate from high school and go on to college or trade school.



Students from the "I Have a Dream" Foundation plant trees along the I-205 MUP as part of a community service project. For many, this was their first time planting trees.

"We work with kids to provide long-term academic support and to provide them with opportunities and enrichments in life to be successful," explained Wolf.

The "I Have a Dream" Foundation-Oregon will follow the Class 10 Dreamers for over ten years – from third grade to college – and provide them with support. This includes academic support, tutoring, after school programming and more. The program also works to build a culture of college and helps the Dreamers with college access.

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Of the participants in the “I Have a Dream” Foundation – Oregon programs, the Dreamers are from schools where 80 percent are eligible for the free-or-reduced school lunch program, and many of them are not meeting academic benchmarks; they are kids who benefit greatly from long-term support in school and life.



The “I Have a Dream” Class 10 Dreamers have begun to emphasize the importance of young people’s service to the community. “We want our kids to have the opportunity to plant trees,” said Wolf. “They will later drive by with their families and see the trees they planted. There is a pride that comes with that for people who take part in helping their community.”

One of the Dreamers who participated in the planting was Michelle Martinez, who lives in the Cully neighborhood. Martinez is twelve and wants to be an obstetrician when she grows up. “I like doing this,” she said, referring to the tree planting. “We are helping the community and helping Portland be better.”

Jazmin Torres-Barrios is thirteen years old and dreams of also be coming an obstetrician and attending college in California. As she was digging in the dirt planting trees, she explained, “I like it. We are helping the community.”

Diana Sanchez is twelve years old and aspires to become an optometrist. As she was planting trees, she said “It’s fun!”

Thirteen-year-old cousins Abdi Hassan and Hassan Sharif hail from West Africa and were planting trees. Abdi wants to be an engineer and said, “I didn’t really know how to plant trees until today.” Hassan, who wants to be a professional basketball player said, “It’s fun. I drive by it and will see the trees I planted with my family.”



www.facebook.com/I205MultiUsePath
www.facebook.com/friendoftrees

To learn more about the people contributing to this project, visit:
www.oregon.gov/odot/hwy/region1/i205_mup/profiles.shtml

