



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Reser grant boosts youth-led restoration of Columbia Children's Arboretum

Portland, Ore. — A \$10,000 grant from the Reser Family Foundation will support work-study opportunities for high school students while restoring a natural gem in Northeast Portland—the Columbia Children's Arboretum.

Since 2012, 12 students from Rosemary Anderson High School have been trained to lead every aspect of restoring the arboretum, supervised by Friends of Trees, Portland Parks & Recreation, and the Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center (POIC). The students learn about native plants, design planting layouts to increase habitat value, canvass to recruit volunteers, lead crews of volunteers to remove invasive species, replant native trees and shrubs, and monitor which plants succeed.

The experience adds real-world, hands-on experience to the students' classroom studies in natural resources.

"As these students are often the first in their family to graduate high school and attend college, it's important they have a path to a professional future. Our goal is to foster a life-long connection to the natural world and possible natural resources careers, while at the same time restoring a natural slice of Columbia River floodplain forest right in their backyard," said Logan Lauvray, Green Space Initiative Manager for Friends of Trees.

The Reser Grant will accelerate the program and serve future classes of students in the coming years.

To date, the students have lead five restoration events at the Columbia Children's Arboretum involving more than 214 volunteers, including 20 youth from Woodlawn Elementary in Portland. During the events volunteers planted more than 1,000 new native trees, shrubs, ferns and flowers and removed several cubic yards of invasive Himalayan Blackberry, Reed Canary Grass, and English ivy from the arboretum.

The Columbia Children's Arboretum is reaping the benefits of the beautification efforts and restored natural habitats. Tucked between industrial areas, golf courses, houses and farms, the arboretum is a little-discovered green space owned by Portland Parks and Recreation. Its 28 acres of trees, meadows and waterways provide some of the only places to play and walk amidst natural habitat in the East Columbia Neighborhood. The property includes a spectacular meadow framed by towering cottonwood trees, wetlands and waterways—perfect for picnicking, hiking and learning about the natural world.

In addition to the Reser Family Foundation, funding for Friends of Trees' Columbia Children's Arboretum Revitalization Project has also been provided by the Jubitz Family Foundation, Portland Parks and Recreation, the East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District's Partners In Conservation program and Port of Portland's Airport Futures grant program.

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About Friends of Trees

Friends of Trees empowers people to improve the natural world around them through a simple solution: plant trees. Together. FoT operates in Portland, Vancouver, Eugene and Salem. Through its Green Space Initiative, trained crew leaders guide volunteers at weekend events to restore green spaces, including the Columbia Children's Arboretum. The Neighborhood Trees program provides homeowners with affordable trees to plant at their homes with their neighbors. www.friendsoftrees.org

About POIC

POIC reconnects alienated, at-risk youth affected by poverty, family instability and homelessness; with high school education through Rosemary Anderson High School (RAHS), and with career training through POIC Work Opportunity Training programs (WOT). <http://www.portlandoic.org/>