

# Pennsylvania

## Program Overview

Pennsylvania's Urban Forestry Program faces many hurdles, ranging from educational challenges in local volunteer training to physical challenges in the lack of space and degraded soils within highly urbanized areas. The Urban Forestry Program is bringing new hope to communities across the State, enabling them to reclaim their pride by beautifying their communities. The program is a partnership between the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry, Pennsylvania State University State Extension, and Pennsylvania Community Forestry Council. Together, they provide the knowledge and means to establish and maintain the urban forest and improve environmental, cultural, and biological health.

## Program Accomplishments

Residents in the oldest neighborhood in Erie have banded together to create a model of community participation in planting and caring for trees and community open spaces. The project in the city's Little Italy section is a partnership between Erie and Trinity Center, Penn State Extension, Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry, Erie County Environmental Coalition, Mercyhurst College, Erie County Conservation District, and local volunteers. A tree inventory completed by the partnership recommended planting sites to the city, which responded with 80 trees during a 2-year period. Members of the Trinity Center provided an additional 17 trees and labor. Trained youth from the center then inventoried existing trees for recommended maintenance. A local artist coordinated a landscape garden and activity area in a vacant lot. Other neighborhood groups that have been replicating these activities include the Bayfront East Side Task Force, Snoops Neighborhood Watch, Central City Neighborhood Watch, and Glenwood Neighborhood Association.

Following 7 months of leadership preparation, Trinity Center youth who had earned the privilege became ambassadors across the State. They named their organization the 18th Street Community Builders. The youth prepared an art mural and presentations to illustrate their activities and understanding of community forestry in preparation for a trip to Philadelphia. Nine neighborhood high school youth and four adults took a 3-day study trip to Philadelphia, funded by the USDA Forest Service, Allegheny Earth Force, Mercyhurst College Watershed Art Project, and French Creek Project. The Erie youth participated in lectures and activities, toured the Village of Arts and



Northeastern Area-High School students from Erie, PA, visit Philadelphia and admire outdoor greenscape at Village of Arts and Humanities.

Humanities Inner City Revitalization Program, and assisted in the Village annual cleanup. The youth culminated their trip by presenting their lectures and mural to the Youth Conservation Corps at Cobbs Creek Environmental Center. New mural projects incorporated in their Erie neighborhood will illustrate the hope and understanding these youth derived from that trip.

## Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 915  
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 628  
Number of training hours provided: 25,569  
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 4,205  
Number of trees planted: 1,253  
Number of Tree City USA communities: 81  
Number of Tree City USA Growth Awards: 11

## Contact

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