



**PROVIDENCE  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
PLANTING  
PROGRAM**

**YEAR IN REVIEW**

**2024**

Now more than ever—as our communities continue to face record-breaking summer heat, severe flooding, and soaring asthma rates—we need to ensure that everyone in Providence can enjoy the benefits of healthy trees where they live, work, learn, and play. 2024 was a year of internal growth, transition, and new beginnings for the Providence Neighborhood Planting Program as we rise to meet this moment, growing into the hub for city-wide collaboration that our urban forest needs.

This year, we worked hard to strengthen the roots of our organization, onboarding more full-time staff, building out internal systems, and welcoming a new City Forester. We mourned the loss of Peggy Sharpe and celebrated her legacy of more than 30 years of partnership with residents and the City. We kept planting trees, providing urban forestry training, building awareness of the value of our urban forest, and supporting community-based models of tree stewardship.

As 2024 comes to a close, we want to celebrate everything we accomplished together, and the many people who made it all happen.

# PLANTING

In 2024, PNPP volunteers and community members came together to plant **525 trees**, including **41 species** through **26 neighborhood plantings** in **15 neighborhoods** across Providence!

Thank you to the incredible Tree Leaders who organized their neighbors to make this happen, the Forestry Division and Canopy Crew who made sure each planting day ran smoothly, and everyone who showed up to help plant!

“Hanover Street now looks so much greener and better than 10 years ago. Big thanks to all of you and PNPP.”  
- Fall 2024 Tree Leader



Say hello to your newest tree neighbors!

Highlights of our planting seasons this year included working with different nurseries to bring more diverse tree species and native shrubs to the streets of Providence, partnering with Groundwork RI and Weber/RENEW to install stormwater and green infrastructure at their new Overdose Prevention Center, and collaborating with the Partnership for Providence Parks to organize community plantings at recreation centers each season—we had an amazing time planting at Joslin in the spring and Davey Lopes in the fall!



# STEWARDSHIP

Throughout the year, we worked with folks across the city to build skills within our community to help Providence's young trees thrive through their first years of life and beyond.



We collaborated with partners to develop new advanced young tree care training curriculum for integration within existing youth education and workforce development programs across the city.



We trained and certified **48 new Providence Community Tree Keepers**, who are now ready to prune and maintain young trees in parks and on streets throughout the city.

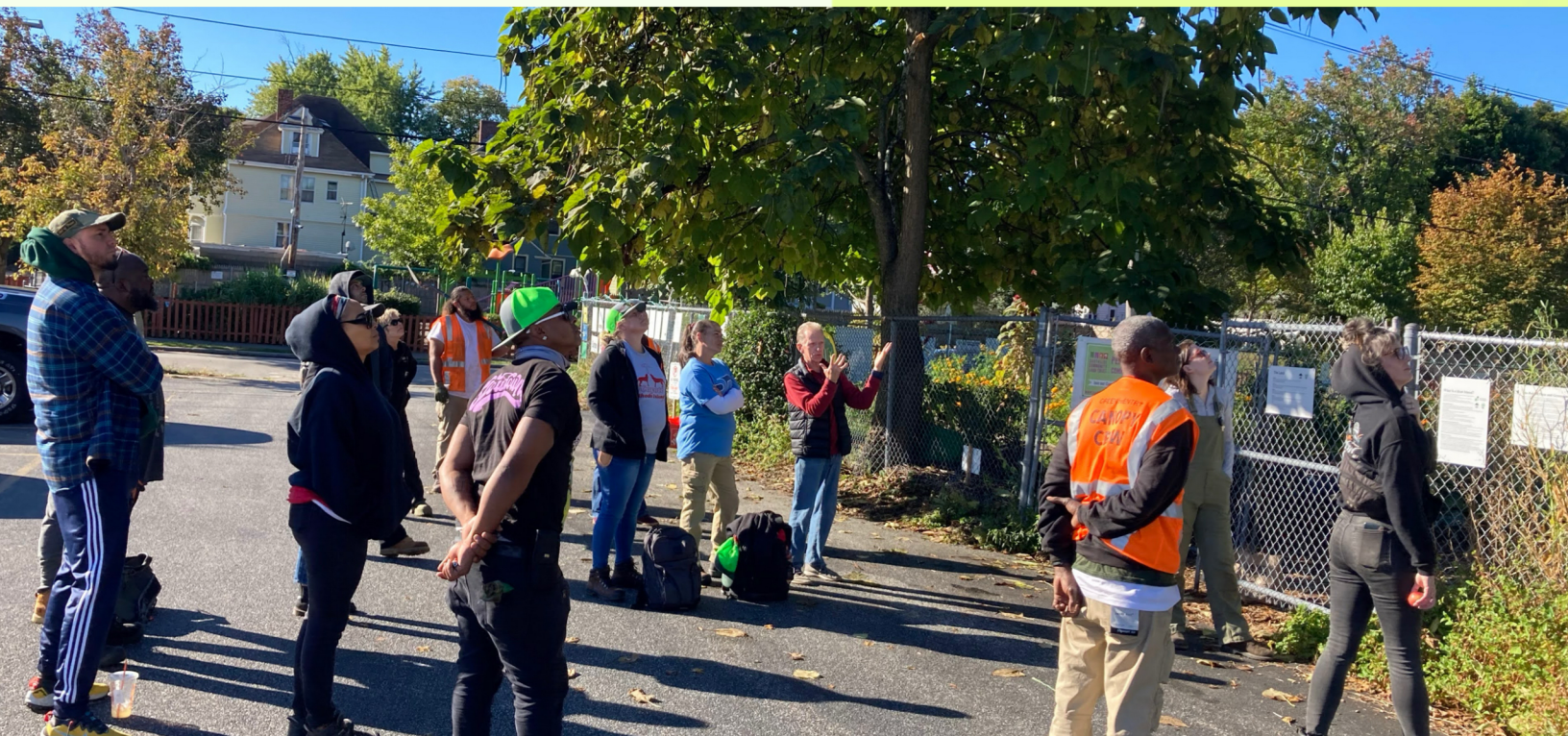


We led urban forestry skills trainings with Garden Time's Green Reentry program, Groundwork RI's Adult Jobs Training and Youth Green Team programs, Movement Education Outdoors' West End Raíces cohort, and Forestry Division staff.

PNPP also played a key role this year in ensuring that young trees across the city got the water they needed! In a tricky year of drought and other obstacles, we coordinated community partners to water **more than 546 young trees** throughout the summer—and successfully kept alive almost all of the trees we planted across the South Side.

## SPECIAL FEATURE: CANOPY CREW

Canopy Crew is a paid advanced training internship for recently incarcerated community members working towards green employment, housed at Garden Time and co-administered by PNPP. After piloting the program last year, we've spent much of this year refining and expanding it...and the Canopy Crew team has quickly become a pillar of urban forest stewardship in Providence, providing skilled street tree structural pruning, sidewalk pit maintenance, and watering services across the city. Huge shoutout to Liz Haviland, PNPP's Community Stewardship Coordinator and Canopy Crew Co-Lead!



In the fall, we worked with the Providence Commemoration Lab to co-host a community workday at the park formerly known as Columbus Square. Together, we tended to the grove of London Plane trees on site—acknowledging the land and traditional ecological knowledge that predates the colonization of this land and dreaming together about further plantings, healing, and growth.



Through 2024, we've worked with the Central Providence Health Equity Zone and residents of 02908/02909 to plan a new community fruit and food tree orchard, to be planted next spring! Community members voted to complete this project through the CPO-HEZ's Nine Neighborhood Fund participatory budgeting process—and we're looking forward to replicating this process to plant more food forests across the city.



This year, we also partnered with the Community Engaged Data and Evaluation Collaborative at Brown University on several projects, including aggregating and cleaning 35 years of planting data, which will help us continue to track our city-wide progress toward tree equity and allocate resources where they are most needed!



# URBAN FOREST COLLABORATION

An urban forest is an interconnected network strengthened by the many relationships within it. Tree roots interlock to create a natural support system, as the roots of one tree essentially reinforce the roots of nearby trees, providing greater stability and preventing uprooting during strong winds and storms.

We're following the wisdom of the trees as we work to strengthen the network of residents and community organizations that sustain our urban forest, collaboratively implementing the vision for tree equity outlined by the PVD Tree Plan and cultivating a resilient and equitable future for Providence.





**Jordan Schmolka**  
Director of Operations & Urban Forest Collaboration

**Liz Haviland**  
Community Stewardship Coordinator

**Candace Powning**  
Director of Programs

**Cassie Tharinger**  
Executive Director

**Tonay Gooday-Ervin**  
Community Arborist & Planting Coordinator

# TEAM PNPP 2024

The PNPP team is now bigger than ever before! We've been working hard to strengthen our internal systems—from fund development and grant management to program evaluation and communications—so we can build from a strong foundation as we deepen and expand community-driven tree plantings and stewardship across the city.

Our core planting program is funded through a 50/50 match with the City of Providence. Thank you also to the following funders for supporting us in cultivating Providence's urban forest this year:

Mary Elizabeth Sharpe  
PNPP Endowment

Raleigh-Providence Tree  
Care Trust of the Rhode  
Island Foundation

CPO-HEZ Nine  
Neighborhood Fund

Arbor Day Foundation  
Enterprise Mobility

The Nature  
Conservancy in RI

Thank you to the many partner organizations who joined us this year in growing a greener and healthier city, and to all of you—whether you donated to support our work, followed us online, shared social media content, attended a training, organized a planting, or watered a young tree, we're so grateful for the support of our community of dedicated tree lovers.

As we look ahead to next year, we're excited to grow from the strong roots we've been nourishing. Stay tuned for exciting updates on the next chapter for PNPP—and join us in the shared work of growing a robust and equitable urban forest for all of Providence!

**HELP US SUSTAIN THIS  
WORK THROUGH 2025  
AND BEYOND:**



[pnpp.org/donate](https://pnpp.org/donate)



We planted 41 different tree species on the streets this year...  
 See how many you can find as you move throughout the city!

