



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Growing Futures Teams & volunteers plant 80 trees along Grand Avenue Third and final phase of planting project**

**DES MOINES, Iowa (May 2, 2019)** — Young adults employed through a new youth employment program will dig in during Saturday morning's tree planting on Grand Avenue in Des Moines.

Trees Forever is launching its new Growing Futures program this Spring. Through Growing Futures, teams of teenagers and young adults will plant, water and care for the City's trees. While Growing Futures Teammates (GFTs) build job experience, they will explore green job careers and learn other life skills, such as financial literacy and conflict resolution.

"Growing Futures is a great opportunity to foster growth for the next generation of young people and the next generation of trees, side-by-side," said David Jahn, City Forester for Des Moines. "Working with Trees Forever has helped the City grow and care for Des Moines' urban tree canopy, and Growing Futures provides the perfect opportunity to engage a new generation of tree-loving residents."

"Over the past 30 years, Trees Forever has engaged and trained more than 6,500 volunteers in the Des Moines area, including our dedicated TreeKeeper volunteers," said Leslie Berckes, Trees Forever Program Development and Innovation Director. "Growing Futures expands this training to a younger audience. We're excited to have volunteers of every age come together for this planting on Grand Avenue."

"Growing Futures has been many years in the making, and I'm thrilled to be on hand to congratulate our first participants," said Shannon Ramsay, Trees Forever Founding President and CEO. "These young people will lead the next generation of tree planters and advocates for our urban forests."

Growing Future Teammates and volunteers will meet at Des Moines University Campus on 3200 Grand Avenue at 9 a.m. on Saturday, May 4. Trees Forever will hold a brief tree planting demonstration before everyone splits off into groups to plant 80 trees along Grand Avenue between 31st and 42nd Streets. This is phase three of a three-pronged planting.

The public is invited to volunteer. Volunteers are asked to register at:

<http://www.treesforever.org/volunteer>

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*Trees Forever is a nonprofit organization nationally headquartered in Marion, Iowa. We are dedicated to planting trees, encouraging volunteer and youth involvement and environmental stewardship. For 30 years, we've been planting a better tomorrow. For more information, visit [www.treesforever.org](http://www.treesforever.org) or call 800-369-1269.*