



Annual Report 2025



Prepared by
**MELISSA HINTEN &
RILEY DOUGLAS**

Letter from the Executive Director



MELISSA HINTEN

Executive Director, Trees Knoxville

As we reflect on 2025, we are grateful for a year of meaningful growth in both our tree canopy and in our capacity to serve Knoxville. With your support, Trees Knoxville planted 895 trees, including 361 planted by 564 volunteers across 17 events, contributing more than 1,692 hours of service. We also provided 450 trees to residents through free adoption events, expanding the canopy in neighborhoods across the city, and planted 51 trees at four Knox County Schools.

This year, we strengthened our team by welcoming Riley Douglas as our full-time Community Engagement Manager. Through a grant from the Tennessee Division of Forestry, we also added a part-time Community Forestry Coordinator, Amelia Hollingsworth, who focuses on neighborhood-level planting and tree adoptions. These positions directly support priorities identified in the Knoxville Urban Forest Master Plan, which calls for increasing canopy cover in residential areas where it is most needed.

We also celebrated 70 Volunteer Forester graduates and supported 22 arborists in earning the Tree Risk Assessment Qualification, building long-term capacity to care for our urban forest. None of this work is possible without you. Together, we are growing a healthier, more resilient Knoxville, one tree at a time.



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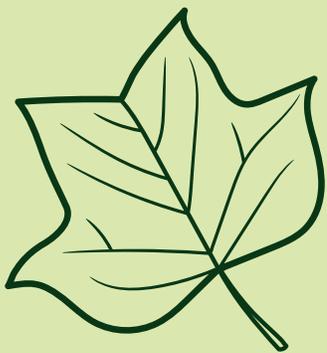
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895 TREES PLANTED

In 2025, 895 trees were planted, 361 by volunteers across 17 events with the help of 564 volunteers. That's over 1,692 hours of volunteer participation!!!



450 TREES ADOPTED



Our planting events occur on public property, but we want trees in the hands of homeowners too! We provided 450 saplings to Knoxville residents through free tree giveaways.

51 TREES AT 4 SCHOOLS

51 trees of the 895 planted went to Knox County Schools.

- Bearden Middle School
- Inskip Elementary
- Sunnyview Primary School
- Vine Middle School



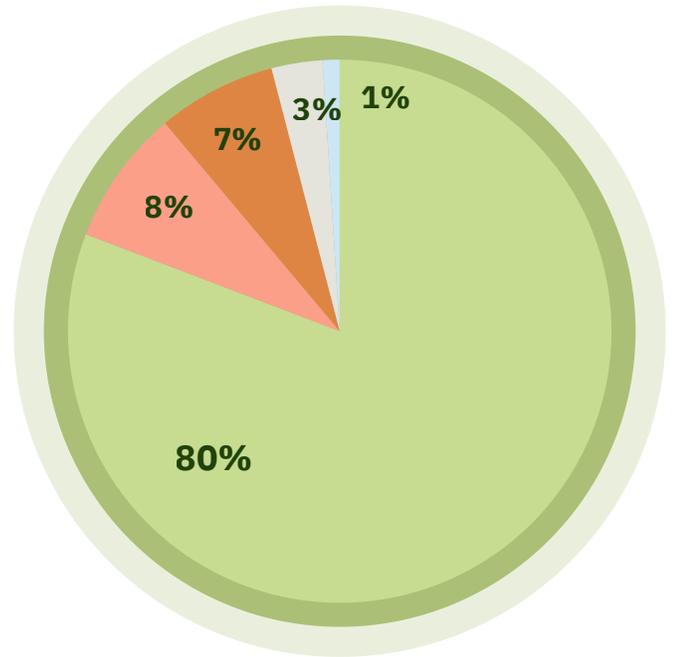
22 ARBORISTS

In collaboration with the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), 22 certified arborists took an intensive training course to earn ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualification

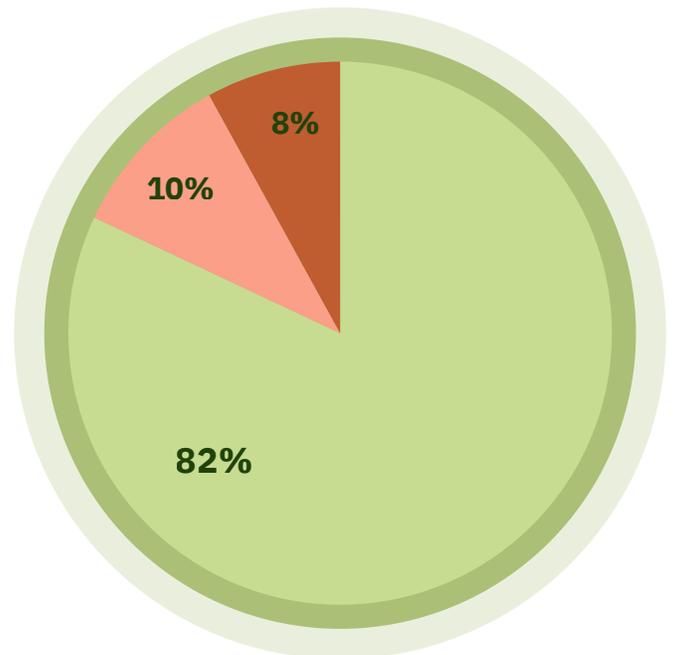
70 VOLUNTEER FORESTER GRADUATES

Our Volunteer Forester Program was offered in the fall and spring of 2025. The program trains Knoxville residents in urban forestry. Local tree experts teach participants how to plant, prune, mulch, and water trees properly. They learn to identify tree-health risks, and identify and remove invasive species. Volunteer Foresters then become leaders at our tree planting events.

2025 INCOME



2025 EXPENSES



TREES KNOXVILLE PROGRAMS

Through the **Community Tree Planting** program, Trees Knoxville partners with local governments, faith organizations, businesses, and neighborhood groups to plant trees where they are needed most; at parks, campuses, greenways, streetscapes, bus stops, and community spaces. Each planting is volunteer-driven, professionally guided, and focused on long-term establishment and survival. Our plantings improve shade, reduce heat, beautify neighborhoods, and create healthier urban environments for generations to come.



Tree Adoptions provides Knoxville residents with free trees to plant on their own property, expanding the urban canopy one household at a time. Participants receive guidance on species selection, planting, and care, which improves survival rates and encourages long-term stewardship. This program empowers residents to actively shape Knoxville's urban forest. We distribute over 500 trees per year directly into the community.

Tree Walks, Talks & Workshops offers interactive learning experiences through guided Tree Walks, engaging Tree Talks, and hands-on workshops. These programs educate participants on tree identification, planting and care practices, ecological benefits, and urban forest science. Led by staff, arborists, and local experts, these sessions engage the community, build environmental literacy, and inspire residents to become active stewards of Knoxville's tree canopy.



The **Volunteer Forester Program** trains community members to plant, care for, and manage trees while fostering environmental leadership across Knoxville. Offered each fall and spring, the free program equips volunteers with hands-on skills to lead planting events and support Trees Knoxville's tree planting goals. Participants gain practical experience, connect with fellow tree enthusiasts, and help grow a healthier, greener community.

TREES KNOXVILLE PROGRAMS

The **Canopies for Campuses** program brings the proven benefits of trees to Knox County Schools by providing free trees and hands-on planting experiences for students, parents, and teachers. Research shows that trees in schoolyards improve student focus, behavior, and academic performance. Through this program, Trees Knoxville collaborates with schools to create shaded, healthy learning environments that inspire a lifelong connection to nature.



Tree Fest 2026 invites the Knoxville community to celebrate nature, sustainability, and the power of trees. This free, family-friendly event offers hands-on tree planting, free tree giveaways, educational booths, games, local vendors, and eco-friendly crafts. Tree Fest is more than a celebration; it is a community gathering that connects people of all ages to the benefits of a greener, healthier Knoxville



New Programs for 2025

Our **Volunteer Canopy program** empowers neighborhood Tree Ambassadors to help plant, mulch, water, prune, and care for young trees to ensure their long-term success. They serve as neighborhood champions for urban forestry, helping educate residents, connect residents to resources, and supporting community outreach events.

2025 Highlights

Together we grow Knoxville's urban canopy and a better, greener tomorrow!



Volunteers Forester Graduates

"The Volunteer Forester program deepened our team's understanding of tree planting, maintenance, and ecology while aligning perfectly with our company's values. It strengthened our connection to the community—and it was a lot of fun!"

- Volunteer Forester Grad 2025



INVASIVE REMOVAL FOR THE COMMUNITY AT LENNON SENNEY CHURCH

"So glad to have Tree Knoxville out here helping us out. They got all of the technical names for it. We really appreciate it, because we're gonna make our community and our church look a whole lot better. And anytime anything looks good, it makes the spirits rise. So I want to thank you guys for helping us out. So please come back, and we're gonna keep having fun today."

- Mr. Johnson church member

WE WON ANOTHER KKB ORCHID AWARD

The Oakwood-Lincoln Park neighborhood recently launched ReOak, a collaborative reforestation project with Keep Knoxville Beautiful that brought residents together to restore their neighborhood's historic oak canopy.

The project earned a 2025 Orchid Award for Environmental Stewardship and showcases how local partnerships can strengthen community identity while improving environmental health.





Partnerships

Thank you for partnering with us

- Keep Knoxville Beautiful
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- Knoxville Utilities Board
- City of Knoxville Urban Forestry
- City of Knoxville Parks and Rec
- Knox County Schools
- TN Division of Forestry
- Knoxville Garden Club
- Davey Tree Specialists



Organizational Donors

Thank you for your vital support

- USDA Forest Service
- Tennessee Division of Forestry
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- City of Knoxville
- Davey Tree
- Knoxville Utilities Board
- Cherokee Distributing Co Inc
- Oak Ridge Associated Universities
- The Garden Study Club
- The Knoxville Garden Club
- Clayton Family Foundation
- Cultivate Sourcing Group
- TVAMP
- Clayton Homes Appalachia
- Carex Design Group
- Earthadelic
- First Neighborhoods Realty
- Sierra Club - Harvey Broome Group



Individual Donors

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Shannon Whitt

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Stephen Cox

Vinee Kulkarni

Wade Jenkins



Trees
Knoxville



Get In Touch

Trees Knoxville is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to preserve and increase the urban tree canopy on the private and public land of Knoxville and Knox County. We fulfill our mission through tree planting, tree preservation, and education. We choose trees to plant that will maximize beauty, function, longevity, and ecosystem health.

CONTACT US



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