

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES CANOPY IMPACT REPORT

HEALTHY TREES HEALTHY



"Canopy plays a key role in addressing climate change and creating healthier communities – communities that are greener, more equitable, more connected, and more resilient."

> – Joe Simitian President, Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors

Resilient Trees, Resilient Communities

Dear Friends,

Have you noticed an increase in talk about trees lately? With new research, and the need for climate solutions, trees and nature seem to be getting more public airtime. As we say around the office, "trees are in!"

For you and for us, of course, trees have always been "in." The Canopy family has long recognized the critical role that trees play in our communities; it's why we've worked together to grow and protect the urban forest for almost 25 years.

Climate change has reminded all of us how much we need trees. But trees need us, too. As we plan for climate-resilient communities, investing in our urban forests is essential.

For Canopy, planning for resilience means addressing questions like:

- Which planting and tree care strategies will help urban trees thrive into the future?
- Where do we need more trees to protect people from climate impacts like extreme heat?
- How can we multiply our impact by empowering tree champions in every neighborhood?
- What can we do to embrace the energy and amplify the voices of the next generation?
- How can we ensure that our work supports equitable, inclusive, and diverse communities?

With your help, we're finding answers and taking action. Read on to learn how, together, we are growing resilient trees and resilient communities.

With gratitude,

Ally

Sally O'Neil Board Chair

Catherine Martineau Executive Director



Canopy by the Numbers 2019

424 trees planted across 9 community sites



861 young trees surveyed for the Young Tree Care Survey and 547 native oaks surveyed and mapped in Palo Alto neighborhoods

2,234 students explored in the students environmental science through hands-on lessons with trees

39 paid Teen Urban Forester positions

5 Oxford Day Academy student interns

Growing Resilience with Native Oaks

Oaks are a cornerstone of local ecosystems, but their numbers have declined. Canopy's Great Oak Count survey applies, and adds to, the latest science on landscape resilience in order to protect and grow native oak populations.

Elise Willis has looked at a lot of oak trees this year."Yes, probably at least a hundred," she laughs, "but I never get bored because each one is unique!"

Elise spearheads The Great Oak Count, Canopy's comprehensive survey of four native oak species in Palo Alto. In addition to surveying trees herself, Elise trains volunteer "Oak Spotters" and "Tree Plotters" to walk neighborhood routes, map and measure oaks, and educate homeowners about proper oak tree care.

The program is part of a larger initiative to "re-oak" local landscapes. The idea was crystallized by San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) in their report Re-Oaking Silicon Valley: Building Vibrant Cities with Nature.

"Oaks used to dominate 80% of the valley floor," explains Elise, citing the report. "Now they're only about 4% of our urban forest. Replanting native oaks in our cities promises big benefits for wildlife and people."

Oaks are drought-tolerant and tough, she says, so they're more likely to survive in a changing climate. They capture more carbon, intercept more rain water, and offer more shade than smaller urban trees. And they support an exceptional diversity of native wildlife and understory plants. "Oaks evolved in this land," Elise says, "they've always played a key role and they still do."

The first step in re-oaking is re-mapping. Canopy's original OakWell Survey from 20 years ago was a key data point for SFEI's Re-Oaking report. The Great Oak Count tracks how oak populations have changed over two decades, and helps identify where new oaks will have maximum ecological benefit.



"We're planting the urban forest of the future right now. By incorporating more oaks, we'll make sure it stays vibrant and resilient for decades to come." – Elise Willis



Canopy Teens Lead the Way to a Greener East Palo Alto

Green space is key to community health, but many neighborhoods lack inviting parks or the shade of a flourishing canopy. Canopy's Teen Urban Foresters are transforming one empty lot into a vibrant green space — and growing into confident environmental leaders in the process.

Kelly Cortez and Paola Maciel waited in anticipation as folks began to trickle into the "Design Charrette" that Canopy's Teen Urban Foresters were hosting at Bayshore Christian Ministries (BCM). After weeks of preparation and practice, they were ready to gather community input for the design of a new green space in East Palo Alto.

Growing East Palo Alto's urban forest is a priority for Canopy and residents alike. Together with local residents and volunteers, Canopy's Teen Urban Foresters (TUFs) played a tremendous part in planting over 228 trees and caring for thousands more in East Palo Alto this year alone.

When an opportunity arose to design a park out of an empty field at the BCM property in East Palo Alto, it was clear that the TUFs were the perfect team to lead the project. In partnership with BCM and PlaceWorks, a landscape design firm, the TUFs diligently conducted outreach, workshops, and a design charrette to co-create a design based on the community's vision.

"I was excited to be a part of something beneficial to everyone," shares Paola, Teen Urban Forester. "The well-being of our community is perhaps the most important and prevalent focus of our work. At the design charrette we received some amazing input from people passionate about the wellness of their community, just like us."

Why Hospitals Invest in Parks

Canopy was honored to receive a grant from Kaiser Permanente to fund this project.

"Providing safe and welcoming public spaces supports community health, safety, and social cohesion. Canopy's project does this and more — it brings the community together to create a green and healthy public space for rest, recreation, and community connection."

– Stacey Wagner, Public Affairs Director, Kaiser Permanente Redwood City Medical Center



Kelly Cortes (center right), Paola Maciel (far right), and their fellow Teen Urban Foresters at Bayshore Christian Ministries' Design Charette. Below, the final design based on the community input they gathered.



Equipping Residents to Take Action in Their Community

Because a healthy and thriving urban forest is one of the most effective ways to combat climate pressures on a local level, passionate residents are coming to Canopy seeking the skills and knowledge they need to advocate for trees in their community.

In response to this demand, Canopy launched Community Forestry School. This 8-week course covers topics in tree selection and placement; tree planting methods; tree care and pruning techniques; and how to advocate for tree-friendly policies, resources, and master plans that support a thriving urban forest.

This year's cohort drew students from across the region, from Fremont to San Jose, San Carlos to Sunnyvale, and many Midpeninsula cities in between. By equipping and connecting residents from different cities, Canopy can catalyze and assist urban forest action, even in communities where we don't offer programs directly.

"Organizations like Canopy give residents a voice in their urban forest," said student, Geoffrey Walne. Another student agreed, "The classes, the experts, and the experiences made me see trees in a whole new way! I leave the class excited to make a difference in our urban forest, and inspire others to do the same."



Canopy's 2019 Community Forestry School cohort. They are already taking action, and we can't wait to see what they make possible in their communities!



2020 and Beyond: Advocating for a Resilient Urban Forest

At a time when urban development is accelerating and climate change threatens trees' very survival, advocacy is crucial to ensure that our urban forests are maintained, renewed, and grown.

"We can plant more trees with a pen than with a shovel." Coined by a longtime board member, this has become Canopy's advocacy motto. Indeed, advocacy extends and leverages the impact of Canopy's Tree and Education programs by addressing systemic issues – influencing policies, practices, and regulations, at the scale of cities, counties, and even the state.

Advocacy is a "long haul" activity. From time to time, however, a quick victory on a localized issue provides all the encouragement we need to carry on. Protecting a beautiful avocado tree threatened by a redevelopment in East Palo Alto, or rallying the community to save a historic dawn redwood at the Palo Alto post office as we did this year – these wins not only feel right, they also bring attention to trees and help with other advocacy efforts.

With your support, we'll continue to focus our efforts on impactful action at every level. In 2020, you'll find us:

- Engaging the East Palo Alto community to create their first-ever Urban Forest Master Plan, while working to prevent unlawful tree removals.
- Partnering with the City of Menlo Park to educate residents and decision-makers on the newly updated heritage tree protection ordinance.
- Challenging the City of Palo Alto to strengthen its tree protection ordinance by adding more native species and valuable large trees to the protected tree list.
- Assisting the City of Mountain View with implementing and updating its Community Forest Master Plan, especially as it relates to development.
- Training a corps of volunteer advocates to amplify the advocacy work of our board and staff.
- Mentoring and advising emerging regional tree groups such as Green Town Los Altos, Fremont Trees, and Sunnyvale Urban Forest Advocates in their missions to grow the urban forest.

Thank you for being part of our community's voice for trees!

"Trees are so valuable, but without us, they have no voice."

– Brooke Schryver Canopy Community Forestry School Graduate 2019

Board of Directors and Staff



CANOPY BOARD from left: Kirsten Mouradian, David Armstrong, Laura Martinez, Geoff Paulsen, Mary Dateo, Marty Deggeller, Kammy Lo, Shelley Ratay, Holly Pearson, Sally O'Neil. Not pictured: Jane Jones and Marilyn Keller



CANOPY STAFF from left: Elise Willis, Katie Rummel, Jack Dorsey, Natalie Brubaker, Michael Hawkins, Maya Briones, Shannon McDonald, Catherine Martineau, Maika Horjus. Not pictured: Vanessa Wyns

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Yancy Ariza

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GRAFTING AND GROWING WITH MOUNTAIN VIEW TREES

Canopy and Mountain View Trees have merged! We're thrilled to "graft and grow" together.

Canopy and Mountain View Trees had been proud partners for several years; it was clear we could accomplish more together. We're eager to grow our planting, education, and advocacy programs in Mountain View, and look forward to deepening our partnership with the city and community.

Volunteers

ARBORISTS, TREE EXPERTS, LANDSCAPE DESIGNERS, AND TREE WALK LEADERS

lose Luis Abalos Kathy Alford MaryRuth Bafrali Dave Dockter Deanne Ecklund John Erving Laura Fanger Matthew Feisthamel Herb Fong Matthew Fried Peter Gollinger Michael Gladden Dedra Hauser Uriel Hernandez Kris lensen Peter Jensen Ted Kipping Igor Lacan Carole Langston Elizabeth Lanham John McClenahan Ray Morneau Dave Muffly Katherine Naegele luan Ortiz Walter Passmore Sairus Patel Kevin Raftery Chris Regan Matt Ritter Leo Rivera Peter Ruddock Ioni Sare Natalia Schoorl Ellyn Shea Jason Shirar Jakob Trconic Blake Watkins

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DIGGING IN TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Thao Ngo and her team at the Silicon Valley Volunteers have joined dozens of Canopy events over the last five years. The hard work of volunteers like them makes Canopy's work possible!

"In addition to making our community look safer and beautiful, Canopy has brought individuals together to show we are responsible, kind, and accountable. I feel very privileged to be part of such an important organization. Thank you for all you do for our community and planet!"-Thao Ngo, Silicon Valley Volunteers

OUR GENEROUS DONORS

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SPECIAL THANKS

Kathy Alford Dave Muffly Joe Simitian



SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT: PLANNING FOR A LASTING LEGACY

Karen Holman is a long-time Canopy friend and urban forest champion. We are honored that she has elected to include Canopy in her estate plans and leave a lasting legacy of trees.

"When thinking about how best to make legacy gifts, Canopy was on my short list. There are few things that endure over generations and also support our well being and happiness. Trees are just that: our steadfast friends."

- Karen Holman, Vice President, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District; Former Mayor, City of Palo Alto

TREE GIFTS AND DEDICATIONS

GIFTS IN HONOR

Tony Cadena In honor of Doug and Pam Wong Carolyn Compton and Patricia Jo Morrissey Elise Willis and the volunteers who have been so supportive Nathan Conant-Wulff To celebrate life of trees and people Kyuri Doeden Laura Teksler for her dedication to LAEF Keith and Samantha Elliott Mr. and Mrs. JJ Mulvey Len and Mary Ely , David Collins Louis Fried Rosalind Hyman Suzanne Garadis John Erving (2) Allison Gee Sally O'Neil Betsy Gifford Marty Deggeller Michael Grove His father, Mike Grove Claire Hayes . Mary Hayes Kimo and Annie Hempstead Sari Aizley Sharon Hudak and Lee Marshall lim and Heather Hudak Bill and Jess Hudak

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We do our very best to create an accurate list of Canopy's generous supporters and volunteers. Should there be any error or omission, please email info@canopy.org.



TOGETHER, WE'VE PLANTED 5,000 TREES – AND COUNTING!

In May 2019, the Canopy community celebrated a milestone: the planting of 5,000 trees since our founding in 1996. The real story, however, is how we've grown our impact together. It took 24 years to plant (and tend) our first 5,000 trees. Thanks to the commitment of our volunteers, donors, and community, the next 5,000 will be planted in half that time.

Thank you for helping us get there!

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Canopy

An inclusive community has always been important to Canopy. But we know that advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion ("DEI") takes more than good intentions. Over the past year and a half, we've taken big steps to ensure that we live out our values in concrete and meaningful ways. Here's a taste of our journey:

- Kicked off with a full-day reflection as a staff and board, guided by a trained facilitator, to examine our existing practices and evaluate where we needed to improve.
- Participated in a 9-month Cultural Relevancy cohort with Youth Outside to dive deeper into the meaning of cultural relevancy and how it applies to our work.
- Crafted a new DEI policy and action plan to articulate our commitments and goals for infusing these values into every facet of our programs and operations.
- Identified metrics to keep ourselves accountable. One key commitment we've made: to devote no less than 65% of Canopy's resources, including staff and volunteer time and funding, to our work in communities with fewer resources.

This has been a transformative year, and we know it's only the beginning. We hope that, as our supporters and partners, you'll join us in this journey, push us to improve, and keep us accountable to our goals.

Our deepest thanks to Youth Outside for their leadership, wisdom, and guidance in this process.

"Canopy prioritizes tree planting, stewardship, education and advocacy in communities where people do not have a thriving urban forest...We bring people together, regardless of age, ability, and background to participate in environmental stewardship. We strive to provide meaningful access to urban nature for each community we serve."

Read Canopy's full DEI statement and action plan at: canopy.org/DEI

Canopy's Values

EXCELLENCE:

We value evidence-based practice and continual innovation. To work effectively and maintain community trust, we invest in passionate, hard-working staff and board members who embrace and promote a culture of excellence in every aspect of our work.

EQUITY:

We actively seek to engage and reflect the diversity of people living on the Midpeninsula, and to remedy local inequities in access to tree canopy and urban nature.

COLLABORATION:

We actively share knowledge, experience, and resources with public, private, and other nonprofit agencies, investing in strong partnerships to achieve greater collective impact.

GRATITUDE:

We value, recognize, and celebrate the diverse contributions of staff, board, volunteers, donors, and partners who power Canopy's success and create long-lasting impact.

Fiscal Year 2019* Financial Summary

Operating revenues totaled \$975,177 and operating expenses totaled \$936,149.

Our many dedicated volunteers make our tree plantings, tree care, education, and other programs possible. The total value of their incredible work (more than 6,000 hours) is an estimated \$176,000. The pie charts below take this special resource into account.

*Canopy's fiscal year: July I to June 30.

10% 15% 20% 24%

SOURCES OF SUPPORT

- Individual contributions
- Government contracts and program revenues
- Foundation and corporate grants
- Value of volunteer work
- Fundraiser event net proceeds
- Other (1%)



OPERATING EXPENSES

- Programs
- Fundraising
- Administration

Canopy's mission is to grow urban tree canopy in Midpeninsula communities for the benefit of all.

We envision a day when every resident of the Midpeninsula can step outside to walk, play, and thrive under the shade of healthy trees.



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PHOTOS BY CANOPY STAFF, CHRIS CASSELL, AND JACK OWICKI OF PRO BRONO PHOTOGRAPHY













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