

The Faces of Urban Forestry



Celia Garcia
Crew Supervisor, Los Angeles
Conservation Corps



**Los Angeles,
California**

A single mom found a good-paying job planting trees for the City of Los Angeles.

Planting trees changed Celia Garcia's life. A high school drop-out and single mom with two children, she faced bleak career prospects and worried about paying her bills before she connected with the Los Angeles Conservation Corps.

It was not a passion for trees that brought Celia to the Corps, a city jobs training program aimed at struggling young adults. Rather, Celia was drawn to the possibility of completing her high-school education and finding meaningful work.

Celia not only found a job, she began building a career. After finishing her coursework, she gained valuable experience in the Corps' tree nursery. Later, she started working on the Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's Million Trees LA project, contacting residents to gauge their interest in new trees along their property and then following through with the planting herself.

"You can see your work grow," Celia said, with pride. "Once we plant a tree in a school or a parkway, I can go back in the future and say, 'I planted that tree.'"

Since 1986, more than 1,300 young adults each year have benefited from the Corps' job training and educational opportunities.

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A joint project of U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry, the National Association of State Foresters, and the Arbor Day Foundation. For more information visit arborday.org/faces