

The Faces of Urban Forestry



Earl Fechter
Student



**Montpelier,
Vermont**

Trees Enhance Community Spirit

Earl Fechter is only 11 years old, but already he has gained an appreciation for what trees can do for his hometown of Montpelier, Vermont. “If we didn’t have trees, there’s not much to look at,” he says. “People’s spirits wouldn’t be livened up.”

Earl learned at an early age that the Montpelier Tree Board plants street trees. Despite being surrounded by the heavily forested Green Mountains, some of Montpelier’s downtown streets were completely barren. Now, with critical support from Vermont Division of Forestry, volunteers have helped to bring green space and much-needed shade to the formerly barren downtown streets.

As Earl points out, the trees are softening the city environment and providing a sense of pride and practical benefits to the city’s residents. Were it not for funding from the state of Vermont, residents would continue to feel their own city and the surrounding landscape were disconnected.

There is often wisdom in the words of the young, and Earl sums up Montpelier’s situation nicely.

“Trees are the best place for living things, including us,” he says. “Having trees makes the town livelier and literally a better place to be alive.”

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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