



Access Your Human Right to Green Spaces. This project is best suited for urban or suburban communities. Dr. Jane reminds us to "think locally and act locally." If you feel there are other issues more pressing in your area, consider using the [Roots & Shoots 4-step Formula](#) to design a service project with your community in mind. Or, take the quiz on our [homepage](#) to observe your community and discover issues that matter to you.



Project-in-a-Box: I Dream of Green

"Statistically, low-income communities have far less access to green spaces and fewer resources to take care of the green spaces they do have. These conditions can occur for several reasons: in The Bronx a history of redlining (loan refusal) and governmental neglect lead to its current conditions."

-Victor Davila, Youth Activist



GET ENGAGED

1. Be inspired ... Meet Victor

Victor Davila is a young activist and community organizer from the South Bronx. He is also a skater and painter. Victor's community project, [Eco Ryders](#), uses skateboarding to **inspire peers** and other young people to engage with their community politically and structurally. At his community center, Victor educates his neighborhood about the origins of their city and the root causes of social and environmental justice issues they see every day. Victor **acted with a purpose** and in 2018 he was chosen as a Roots & Shoots USA Fund II Fellow. Read the full story [here](#).



Learn More DID YOU KNOW?

Trees reduce the blazing heat felt by many communities acting as a natural air conditioner and help to create habitat. (Victor Davila) Trees are also an important part of fighting climate change, taking in CO2 released and giving out oxygen in its place.
(1t.org)

Throughout this resource you'll notice terms and phrases that are **bolded in orange**, these are the Roots & Shoots compassionate traits, [click here](#) to learn more.

GET ENGAGED



GET INSPIRED MINI - STORY:

Richie Cabo, also from the Bronx, N.Y., is a horticulturist in Citywide Nursery. He was responsible for nursing the only surviving tree from September 11th. Today, 'Survivor Tree' lives and thrives at the 9/11 Memorial and is one of Dr. Jane's stories of hope representing the resilience of nature and the indomitable human spirit. Read more [here!](#)



ACTION GLOSSARY

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE - Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. (EPA)

GREEN SPACE - Areas of plants (trees, shrubs, or other vegetation) that is visually pleasing and/or used recreationally and/or serves a function to the local ecosystem (plants, animals, water, and natural resources).

FOOD DESERT OR FOOD SCARCITY SITE - An area with little to no access to fresh fruits and vegetables.



TIP:

Your story can be used to inspire others and ignite change! Think **introspectively** about the reason you and/or your group are taking action. Share this message when you create a project profile on rootsandshoots.org

OBSERVE

2. Explore the green spaces in your local community

FOCUS ON A 1-MILE RADIUS WHEREVER YOU ARE.

Mark on a drawn or printed map of your 1-mile radius (does not need to be exact) the following things:

- * All public green spaces you find. Write down what they are (I.e: a park, side of the road, school, etc.)
- * Count how many trees you find in the green spaces marked above.
- * Place a star on your map of locations where you could plant new trees. Rate the locations based on:

- * Do you have or could you get permission?

- * Is there regular sunlight in the space?

- * Check for a water source for you to water the tree while it grows?



TIP: Explore your community like an expert with [Community Mapping: 101](#)

3. Next, **think critically** to determine what type of green space project might be the best fit for your community:



Question 1) Is there a place in your neighborhood/community where you have permission to plant a tree and do you think you have, could find, or borrow the tools you need to plant it?

- * If yes, [click here](#) for Tree Planting. If no, keep reading!

Question 2) If you do not have access to a place in your neighborhood/community to plant, do you have access to space on your patio or yard where you could plant some smaller greenery?

- * If yes, [click here](#) for Greening Your Space. If no, keep reading!



Question 3) If you do not have access to a place in your neighborhood/ around your home to plant, can you use the power of your voice to share why you care about green space?

- * If YES, [click here](#) for Protecting Green Space.

TAKE ACTION

4. CHOOSE YOUR CHANGE

The best change-makers are **adaptable** and **hopeful/optimistic** about their community's needs and strengths! Each option presented below is equally powerful and important! Choose the change you will make by thinking about which action plan seems like the best fit for YOU.



TIP:

Use the power of your voice! If you are hoping to get items donated for your projects, it can be much more effective to make the request yourself. Be sure to get a parent or guardians permission and check out one of our templates below!

Tree Planting

If you don't already have permission to plant in your chosen location, get that first! Try thinking about those responsible for public spaces in your community and reaching out to them – in some places that's the city and you can request materials and trees for free!

Next, pick the right tree for the location. Evaluate your planting location to make sure it has the needed qualities for a tree to grow (light, soil, and water).

Below are some ways to obtain the trees you will plant. In each case, evaluate the trees you find to assess their compatibility with your planting location.

- * [Click here](#) to find native trees for your zip-code.
- * Find FREE trees- do an online search for "free tree program + your city name."
(ex. <http://www.cityoforlando.net/trees/programs/>)
- * Get trees donated- visit local nurseries and request a donation or other types of support.
- * Use [this](#) donation letter template and adjust it for your needs.

Make a plan for caring for the trees until they are fully established. Who will water them? How? How often? [Watch this video](#) from our community collaborators at Tree People for the best way to plant a tree.



TIP:

If you choose a tree that is native to your area, it will naturally do well and be better for local animals and water conditions.

TAKE ACTION

"Never forget that the tree in the city does the same work as the tree in the forest, creating homes for native species."

—VICTOR DAVILA



Green your own space

Find a location in your residence to plant some green! This could be a patio, front yard, back yard, or a sunny location inside your home. The goal here is to plant some green in whatever way is possible! For example:

Did you know you can grow new plants indoors from some produce? Carrots, celery, potatoes and lettuce are all examples. Use our blog below to learn how to grow and regrow.

* [Grow from Home](#)

Many trees, shrubs, veggies, and fruits will do well in a patio pot. Search online for plants that might grow well in containers!

Native plants don't just want to grow in the wild! They like your yards too.

* [Click here](#) to find native plants using your zip-code.



Learn More **DID YOU KNOW?**

Many areas that experience environmental injustice are also Food Deserts. This drives up obesity rates and diet-related health issues.
(ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)



Learn More **DID YOU KNOW?**

"One fantastic way to fight against the food deserts is with community gardens. In the 70s large parts of the Bronx were being fed by a network of community gardens."
- Victor Davila



TAKE ACTION



TIP: Your community is your first and best resource. Be a **team player** and invite others to **collaborate** on your I Dream of Green project for a bigger impact.

Protecting Green Space

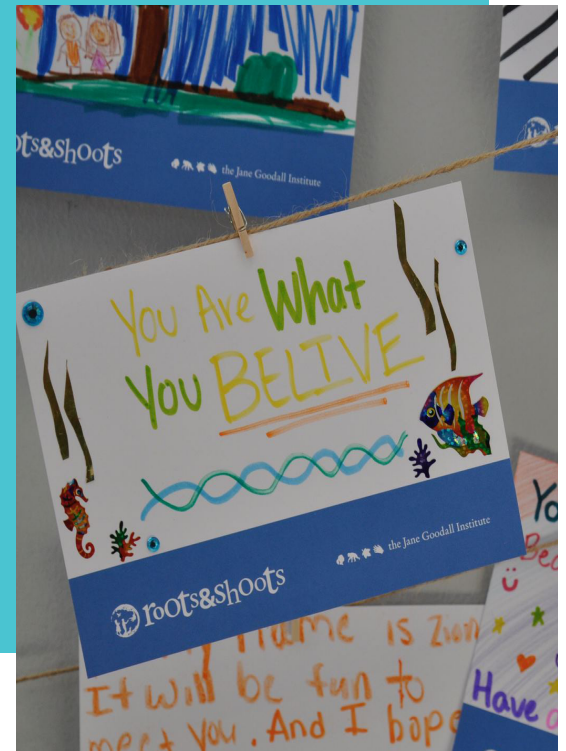
Use the power of your story to motivate people in a position of power to protect green spaces by writing to your representatives!

Click the link below to find a list of your house representatives. View each representative's page and use their contact information to email them about the urgent need to protect our world's green spaces today.

* Write your own message or feel free to use [this](#) template.

* [Find your representatives.](#)

Looking for collaborators? [Visit](#) the Community Collaboration page for ideas on involving the community!



Learn More DID YOU KNOW?

Latest science suggests that restoration and reforestation can provide up to one-third of the emissions reductions required by 2030. (1t.org)



TIP: Inspire others by sharing your project! Include the keyword **TEAM GREEN** in your project title when adding your project on the Roots & Shoots project database.
Example: **TEAM GREEN – Reforest the Bronx**

5. INSPIRE OTHERS WITH YOUR IMPACT

MAKE YOUR MARK

Tell the rest of the Roots & Shoots global community about your project. This helps us measure the collective impact of our members around the world and show off your success to inspire others.

* Not a member yet? Sign up for FREE at rootsandshoots.org/register

Already a member? Login to rootsandshoots.org and navigate to your project profile to edit, update, and report on your story.

Use the keyword **TEAM GREEN** in your project title to be exclusively counted as part of this Project in a Box.

Communicate the good you are doing to your online community! Share pictures of your green space, or the actions you took to protect it on social media and tag @rootsandshoots #rschangemaker. You have the chance to be featured across our channels for millions to see!



TIP:

People connect **empathetically** to images and stories. While working on your project, try to take photos of you and your group in action. Use those photos and the stories from your experience when you share your project on social media, on our website, and to collect or scrapbook.

