LIFE HACKS

Tree Corps Has the Perfect Green Job: Planting Trees in Low Income Neighbourhoods

By bestfolkmedicine · 16/03/2021 · 2 min read



Without doubt, trees are essential for neighbourhoods' resiliency, health, and temperature. Sadly, they're not equally distributed everywhere.

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But, this new initiative wants to improve things.

Namely, some US neighbourhoods that were redlined in the past, that is, racist maps marked them as risky for home loans because of the people of color living there, still live in poverty.

They differ from the richer neighbourhoods in many ways, including the number of trees they have.

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Unequal Tree Distribution between Rich & Poor Neighbourhoods in the US

According to Sarah Anderson from the non-profit, American Forests, if we were to look at a map of the most cities in the US, we can see the tree cover tracks along the income lines.

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And, wealthier areas have more trees while the lower-income parts have fewer.

Anderson explains that this is a consequence of the years and years of discriminatory house planning.

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The Dream of Tree Equity

The non-profit, among other programs, is focused on increasing the number of trees where they're low, especially in the busier cities.

Knowing their advantages like cleaner air, cooler temperatures, reduced air-conditioning bills, reduced floods, and better mental health, they partnered with the Tazo Tea company to work on this issue.

Together, they created the Tazo Tree Corps-they plant and care for trees in neighbourhoods in Detroit, Mminneapolis, the Bronx, the Bay Area, and Richmond in Virginia.

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The employees are people from these communities, mostly black, indigenous, and people of color. They're also the ones who're most affected by the climate change challenges too, explains Anderson.

After undergoing several weeks of training, these employees are hired and start working full-time. And, they get a permanent job, something which isn't that common in such programs.

Now, the jobs for 25 individuals throughout 5 cities will also involve subsidies for childcare and transit.

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In the long-term, they hope it will also help create careers. Anderson explains that around ¼ of the tree trimmers have been self-employed in the last three years.

Therefore, there's not just a chance for environmental and climate justice, but a chance to build economic justice too.

A Program Anderson Hoped to Create for Years

Anderson notes that this program is something she strived to accomplish for years.

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Today, the administration of Biden is also planning similar work with the Civilian Climate Corps that will offer job places for young people. They will plant trees and help in the fight against climate change.

And, there's no better moment than now, believes Anderson.

Today, more than ever before, people are aware of the connection of climate change and community justice, especially ones who've been hit by pollution and climate the most.

Sources:

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