

**Press Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Waterbury Launches First Local Tree-Growing Initiative with “Foster a Tree” Program**

Ribbon cutting and seedling exchange at Wilby High School marks a major step toward expanding the city’s urban forest

**Waterbury, CT – March 13, 2025** — NEST will host a ribbon cutting ceremony and seedling exchange on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, to celebrate the launch of the *Foster a Tree Program*, a new initiative designed to grow and cultivate trees locally while strengthening Waterbury’s urban forest for generations to come. The event will bring together city leaders, educators, environmental advocates, and community partners to mark a historic milestone in Waterbury’s environmental and community development efforts.

The *Foster a Tree Program* represents the first organized tree-growing initiative in Waterbury’s history, creating a sustainable pipeline for cultivating trees locally before they are planted across neighborhoods throughout the city. By growing trees within the community, the program aims to support long-term canopy expansion while helping address urban heat and environmental inequities.

According to NEST’s tree canopy study, the Crownbrook neighborhood contains nearly 15% less canopy than the rest of Waterbury, highlighting the importance of expanding tree coverage to help cool neighborhoods, improve air quality, and strengthen climate resilience.

The initiative builds upon the work of the Waterbury Tree Coalition, originally formed in 2021 by NEST to expand tree planting and environmental stewardship throughout the city. Since its founding, the coalition has supported ongoing tree planting efforts across Waterbury. The *Foster a Tree Program* represents the next phase of that work by ensuring trees are not only planted but also grown locally and sustainably.

“We are excited to launch a program that empowers our community to take part in growing the future of Waterbury’s urban forest,” said Kevin Taylor, Executive Director of NEST. “Through partnerships with our schools and community organizations, we are cultivating environmental stewardship and giving young people the opportunity to lead in building a healthier, cooler city.”

The program is made possible through support from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) and reflects a strong partnership between community organizations, education leaders, and environmental advocates.



[nestct.org](http://nestct.org)

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During the event, a ceremonial seedling exchange will recognize key community partners participating in the program:

- Brass City Harvest will receive 50 seedlings to support community growing initiatives.
- Wilby High School's Agriculture Program will receive 75 seedlings, allowing students to participate directly in cultivating and caring for trees that will contribute to Waterbury's future canopy.

By integrating youth education with urban forestry efforts, the *Foster a Tree Program* provides students with hands-on experience in environmental stewardship while contributing to long-term climate solutions within their own city.

Media members are invited to attend the ceremony, which will include brief remarks from program leaders and partners, a ribbon cutting, and the official seedling exchange.

Residents interested in participating in the Foster a Tree Program or learning more about future opportunities can [click here](#).

### **Event Details**

**What:** Foster a Tree Program Launch & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

**When:** Tuesday, March 17, 2026 | 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**Where:** Wilby High School, Waterbury, Connecticut

**Hosted by:** NEST

**The event is not open to the public, given the space constraints.**

### **About NEST**

NEST is a non-profit, HUD certified, NeighborWorks America affiliate organization with a passion for creating homeowners, supporting individuals in achieving financial stability, and revitalizing communities.

[www.nestct.org](http://www.nestct.org).