



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Elizabeth River Trail Foundation Announces Nature For All Program

NORFOLK, Va. – The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation was awarded a \$10,000 grant through the Hampton Roads Community Foundation Gary Fund. The Julian Haden Gary and Margaret Savage Gary Fund support organizations that promote horticulture education. Through this grant, the Foundation has expanded existing environmental education and beautification opportunities to create the Nature For All Program. The Foundation will work with existing partners like the Norfolk Master Gardeners and new partners like Ecological Gardening Services of Hampton Roads (Eco Gardens).

The trail has been host to many nature-inspired events such as botanical walking and biking tours and beautification days that offer opportunities to learn about their local environment and get hands-on experience caring for green spaces along the 10.5-mile Elizabeth River Trail. The Nature For All program will expand on these existing opportunities by bringing in new partners to provide education on wetlands, river ecology, shoreline restoration, and local wildlife and habitats.

“We are so honored to receive this grant on behalf of the Gary Fund. We have a real opportunity to not only beautify the trail as a destination, but to educate trail users and volunteers on the wonders of horticulture and hopefully steward a love of working with plants in people of all ages,” said Kindra Greene executive director of the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation.

Their newest partner, Eco Gardens, is a local landscaping team committed to sustainability, natural landscaping, native plants, and education. This partnership will also support the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation’s Green Team by providing training days to gain or grow their plant knowledge to support ongoing volunteer maintenance efforts along the trail.

The Norfolk Master Gardeners lead the Trail Beautification Days and Botanical Tours. Beautification Days occur regularly on the fourth Friday of each month, March - November from 9 AM to 11 AM, rotating locations along the trail. No gardening skills are needed and anyone is welcome to join, learn, and meet fellow volunteers. On the fourth Saturday of each

month, April - November, from 9 AM to 10:30, the Norfolk Master Gardeners host Botanical Walking or Biking Tours. Free and open to anyone, these tours highlight different areas on, or just off, the trail and cover topics like spring blooms, tree identification, urban agriculture, and more.

All dates for the Botanical Tours, Trail Beautification Days, and other Nature For All opportunities can be found on the Elizabeth River Trail website, www.elizabethrivertrail.org as well as on Facebook where they post regular event updates. The ERT hosts over one hundred events each year and offers something for everyone!

If you would like to host an event on the trail, partner with the Elizabeth River Trail Foundation, or sponsor an ERT program, please email hello@elizabethrivertrail.org.

The Elizabeth River Trail Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that provides the planning, program, and advocacy for the Elizabeth River Trail connecting Naval Station Norfolk to the Virginia Beach Trail. The Elizabeth River Trail runs 10.5 miles through businesses, historic attractions and is within a 5-minute walk of 28 neighborhoods. The multi-use trail is designed for walking, running, and biking. It comprises 11 sections from Norfolk State University, through Downtown Norfolk and Old Dominion University to NIT Terminals along the Elizabeth River. The Foundation has completed multiple new unique and award-winning amenities, including kayak launches, play sculpture, and a double turbo challenge course in Plum Point Park, and most recently, the installation of the first ERT hydration station. Major sponsors include CHKD, Downtown Norfolk Council, PRA Group, and the City of Norfolk.

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