

A green rectangular graphic with a repeating pattern of stylized leaves. In the center, there is a white rectangular box containing the text "FOREST RELEAF OF MISSOURI IMPACT STORIES" in a green, serif font.

## FOREST RELEAF OF MISSOURI IMPACT STORIES

**"I want to be able to walk down the street and have tree canopy everywhere; that coolness, beauty, and coverage."**

**-Jared Irby**

## **Generational Joys**

Jarred Irby frequently visits Marquette Park with his children. While the family spends time in this green space, Jarred dreams of making it greener. As a member of his neighborhood business district board, Jarred found out that the Treesilience program run by Forest ReLeaf was a natural fit for Marquette Park's beautification projects. The park already had established trees, but was in need of succession plantings of younger trees for future generations to enjoy.

Jarred worked with the business district and Forest ReLeaf to host a tree planting event in September of 2022. On the day of the planting, Jarred was joined by 20 Forest ReLeaf and community volunteers to plant thirty trees donated by Forest ReLeaf. The group chose six species native to Missouri\_\_Tulip Trees, Sycamores, White Oaks, Willow Oaks, Nuttall's Oaks, and Shumard Oaks\_\_ and planted five of each.

Community volunteers who usually did trash pick-up at Marquette Park were thrilled to take a break from litter collection to plant a tree. To add to the fun, Marquette Park also held a neighborhood party that day, so roughly 150 people were in the park and got to see the planting efforts. "That was probably one of my favorite days last year," Jarred reminisced as he described how he watched the community come together.

Jarred wanted to plant trees to ensure a full and healthy green canopy for the future. "I would really love to see that park be a place where my kids and other neighborhood kids can see that

narrative come to fruition. I want that generational approach to be something that people really enjoy so they can say, 'I played in this park. It was kind of gross, but it's improved.'"

