

Martin Robinson Delany Opportunity Learning Center

16 Trees – 17 Volunteers – 59 Hours Volunteered

Carla Hardy WV Project CommuniTree Planting at the Opportunity Learning Center

“Where Learning Continues and Students are Achievers!”

This is the motto of the Martin Robinson Delany Opportunity Learning Center (OLC) in Charles Town.

We're proud to report that the learning continued throughout this project and that the students achieved the noteworthy goal of planting 16 new trees on their campus on Friday, May 11.

The learning began in earnest a week before the tree planting when Cacapon Institute's Watershed Education Specialist, Connor Roessler, visited the OLC and spent two class periods educating the students about trees. Connor had hands-on activities to teach the

benefits of trees as well as all of the tree parts and their functions.

Planting day started at 7:00am when three Jefferson County Schools maintenance department staff augured the holes using a walk-behind hand augur.

Seven students and nine adults began planting the trees around the OLC at 8:30am.

The students learned to fluff the root balls and level them with the holes, leaving the root collar exposed. They filled the holes with soil around the root balls, placed mulch in a donut shape, put sleeves around the tree trunks to protect the bark from damage by mowers, and pounded stakes in the ground that were strapped to the trees to support them and ensure they



grow straight.

Over the span of three hours, the students planted all 16 trees.

Seven sugar maples, three flowering cherries, three redbuds and three Japanese tree lilacs now surround the grounds of the OLC.

The planting was highlighted on the front page of the Spirit of Jefferson on May 16.

A word from the Project Leader, Thomasa Vandell:

“The most memorable moment for all of the OLC staff was seeing our students work hard at something without complaint. They really enjoyed themselves. For that, I am extremely grateful to...Cacapon Institute for the opportunity.”



For more information, contact the Urban Watershed Forester at ctree@cacaponinstitute.org or by calling 540-335-0687.