



For Immediate Release

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Mayor Leclerc Celebrates Arbor Day with Tree Planting, Ceremony at Anna E. Norris School (PHOTOS ATTACHED) Town Celebrates 20th Year as Tree City USA

(April 29, 2016) **East Hartford, CT** – Mayor Marcia A. Leclerc joined students at Anna E. Norris Elementary School for an Arbor Day Celebration this morning. Mayor Leclerc officially proclaimed Arbor Day, and kicked off a program of speaking and performances by the students, culminating in a tree planting ceremony. Officials from the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection presented East Hartford with a special 20th Anniversary Tree City Flag, which the Norris School students will fly proudly from their flagpole. It is the Town's 20th year receiving this prestigious recognition.

“Arbor Day is very important to our town,” said Mayor Marcia A. Leclerc. “It is a great opportunity to recognize our commitment to the environment and to making our town a beautiful and healthy place to live and work, and to teach children about the importance of trees and forests. I am very proud that our town is a Tree City USA, and proud of the dedicated residents and town staff who make this possible.”

“This is East Hartford's 20th year as a Tree City USA and I am so proud that we are one of the few towns in the state with that designation,” said Pat Sirois, Chair of the East Hartford Beautification Commission, the organizers of the event. “We really enjoy celebrating Arbor Day each year with the children and the schools.”

Arbor Day was first celebrated in the US in Nebraska in 1872. Each year, around the world, people plant millions of trees and recognize the importance of trees and leafy shrubs to clean air, good health, and wholesome communities.

East Hartford earned its Tree City USA designation by having an official tree board (the Beautification Commission), a tree-care ordinance, and dedicating a budget of at least \$2 dollars per capita to community forestry. Our town is dedicated to providing a safe, healthy and attractive community for our residents, workers, and guests by fostering and protecting our trees and urban forests.

MEDIA:

-0001.jpg: L-R: Principal Dr. Ed Orszulak, Norris School; Mayor Marcia A. Leclerc; Representative Jeff Currey, D-11th Assembly District; Pat Sirois, Chair, East Hartford Beautification Commission; Assistant Superintendent Cynthia Ritchie, East Hartford Board of Education; and Anna E. Norris students with the Tree City USA Flag.

-0013.jpg: Mayor Leclerc placing the ceremonial first shovel of dirt on a new Pink Dogwood Tree.

-0913.jpg: Mayor Leclerc proclaims Friday, April 29, 2016 Arbor Day in the Town of East Hartford

-0961.jpg: Public Works Director Tim Bockus and Beautification Commission Chair Pat Sirois, and Norris School Students receive the Arbor Day Flag from DEEP Division of Urban Forestry representative Hannah Reichle.

-0988.jpg: Norris School Students perform a reading from Shel Silverstein's book, *The Giving Tree*.

-0995.jpg: Norris School Fourth and Fifth Grade students perform a musical performance as part of the Arbor Day Celebration at Norris School.

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