

## **Keep the Midlands Beautiful**

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KEEP THE MIDLANDS  
**BEAUTIFUL**  
KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **Keep the Midlands Beautiful awarded \$50,000 from Arbor Day Foundation's Community Resilience Grant program in partnership with Bank of America**

Today, Keep the Midlands Beautiful, a non-profit organization serving Lexington and Richland counties in South Carolina, announced it received \$50,000 from the Arbor Day Foundation's Community Resilience Grant program in partnership with Bank of America. This grant will strengthen vulnerable neighborhoods against the impacts of a changing climate.

Keep the Midlands Beautiful plans to use the grant to develop a new generation of environmental justice leaders while helping to beautify the North Main Street corridor in Columbia. Keep the Midlands Beautiful was one of four organizations across the U.S. selected to receive the grant.

"Our goal with this grant program is to help communities enrich not only their green spaces but also enrich lives," said Dan Lambe, President, Arbor Day Foundation. "We're supporting Keep the Midlands Beautiful in its effort to build awareness about the benefits of trees, educate residents on proper tree care, and lay the groundwork for a greener future."

"Columbia, South Carolina, has been an active Tree City for over 41 years and has invested more than \$10,000 on urban forestry management," said Councilwoman Tameka Isaac Devine. "This local collaboration between the Department of Juvenile Justice Teen Afterschool Center, KMB and community residents, supports the larger vision. Everyone deserves to live a healthy life, in a safe and protected environment."

Urban trees have numerous benefits, but the U.S. Forest Service has found that urban forests are shrinking in many U.S. cities. As the climate changes, the environmental impact of trees is particularly important. Cities increasingly face more frequent and intense ecological disturbances, including heat waves, coastal flooding, extreme storms, and poor air quality. Urban trees can alleviate these challenges. Tree coverage has been linked to cooler cities, improved air and water quality, more effective stormwater control, and better health outcomes. Research has shown urban trees also increase property values and reduce energy costs.

"We are thrilled to partner with Keep the Midlands Beautiful on this important initiative to improve our local neighborhoods," said Kim Wilkerson, Bank of America South Carolina President. "Arbor Day's program is an important step toward more sustainable cities. This effort will make a positive difference in Columbia and for its residents."

The grant program enables the design and implementation of projects that utilize trees and other green infrastructure to build resilience in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods in Columbia, and these other

grant recipients: Mesa, Arizona; Grand Rapids, Michigan; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

For more information, visit <https://www.arborday.org/programs/BankofAmericaGrant/>

### **About the Arbor Day Foundation**

Founded in 1972, the Arbor Day Foundation has grown to become the largest nonprofit membership organization dedicated to planting trees, with more than one million members, supporters, and valued partners. During the last 45 years, more than 350 million Arbor Day Foundation trees have been planted in neighborhoods, communities, cities and forests throughout the world. Our vision is to help others understand and use trees as a solution to many of the global issues we face today, including air quality, water quality, climate change, deforestation, poverty, and hunger.

### **About Bank of America**

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