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NAACP Arlington Branch donates \$60,000 to EcoAction Arlington to further tree equity in historically underserved neighborhoods.

Arlington, Virginia 05/18/23 -- Today the local branch of the oldest and largest civil rights organization in America announced a \$60,000 charitable contribution to EcoAction Arlington, which was founded in 1978 and whose mission focuses on encouraging environmentally-friendly behaviors, ensuring environmental justice, and addressing the climate crisis. The NAACP selected EcoAction Arlington through a strategic grant and partnership from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which has more than 17 million members and churches in over 30,000 locations across 160 countries and territories. While Arlington is the smallest self-governing county in America, disparities continue to impact communities of color in disparate ways. "Arlington has a 10 year life expectancy difference amongst its neighborhoods, and this donation will create focus and provide much needed tree canopy in places that have, for decades, been left out of the conversation," said Branch President Michael Hemminger.

The NAACP Arlington Branch is one of the most active branches in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Branch takes a comprehensive equity approach towards supporting disadvantaged neighborhoods through transitioning to green environments. "For years, EcoAction Arlington has been a committed partner in the furtherance of our mission, making them a natural fit for why we selected this non-profit as the recipient," said Hemminger in a statement. The donation helps leverage additional resources with the goal of increasing the number of trees planted from current levels by approximately 500 trees a year for the next five years in Arlington's historically disadvantaged communities.

Research demonstrates that trees act as natural filters by absorbing pollutants and harmful particles from the air, and their absence can result in higher levels of air pollution, leading to respiratory illnesses such as asthma. Black communities are almost three times more likely to die from asthma related causes and this donation is an important step forward in helping to right many wrongs of the past.

The NAACP will continue to fight for the achievement of equity, political rights, and social inclusion by advancing policies and practices that expand human and civil rights, eliminates discrimination, and accelerate the well-being, education, and economic security of Black people and all persons of color.

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