

## Students Branching Out

[mostcenter.org/casestories](https://mostcenter.org/casestories)

### Challenge:

Howard County has affirmed a commitment to planting trees throughout the county, given the many benefits of urban forests and tree canopies including noise reduction, improved air quality, temperature regulation, augmented aesthetics, higher property values, and stormwater management (reduced erosion, flooding, and water pollution).

### Solution:

To augment tree canopy, encourage volunteerism, and support environmental education, Howard County created the Students Branching Out program, which engages students to plant trees on school grounds. To date, fifteen schools throughout the county have participated, improving school health and aesthetics while enhancing water quality in local streams.



### Key Project Facts

**Type of Project:** Bioretention

**Scale:** 15 schools involved in program.

**Funding Sources:** Chesapeake Bay Trust , Howard County General Fund

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### What is Polluted Runoff?

The growth of our cities has resulted in too many paved surfaces, which prevent rain water from being absorbed by the ground. Instead, the water runs off streets and buildings, collecting trash and dangerous chemicals on its way. This contaminated water overflows into our streams and rivers, creating public health hazards and toxic waters.

Storm water projects create safe paths for polluted runoff to be captured and filtered before it reaches our waterways. They keep communities healthy and the environment clean.

**When communities and their local governments work together to solve big problems like stormwater runoff, that's a story worth telling!**