

Bright Lights:
Lieutenant Governor Celebrates Bright Environmental Students at Tree Lighting Ceremony

Toronto, ON (December 10, 2019) – Tidings of comfort and joy filled the Vice-Regal Suite at Queen’s Park on December 6th for the annual Lieutenant Governor’s Tree Lighting Ceremony. The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell lit the tree, a Balsam Fir donated by Forests Ontario and Somerville Nursery, in celebration of students who have excelled in environmental education competitions.

“Forests Ontario has been delivering environmental education programs for more than 65 years,” said Allison Hands, Education Manager at the non-profit charity. “We believe that instilling an appreciation for forests in today’s youth grows the next generation of environmental stewards.”

The Lieutenant Governor Tree Ceremony credits the shining accomplishments of the students who triumphed in the Ontario Envirothon and Tree Bee competitions.

University of Toronto Schools was recognized as the 2019 Ontario Envirothon Champions for the sixth year in a row. The Ontario Envirothon offers high-school students the opportunity to experience nature firsthand, work with environmental professionals, and test their skills in sustainable resource management.

The Durham-Toronto Tree Bee Champions hailed from St. Monica Catholic School, while the York Tree Bee Champions were from Redstone Public School. Tree Bee introduces grades four to six students to Ontario’s flora, culminating in a tree-identification competition. Each of the recognized students has displayed a commitment to Ontario’s natural resources.

“The Lieutenant Governor’s Tree Ceremony holds a very special place in our hearts,” explained Rob Keen, Forests Ontario’s CEO. “Forests Ontario has been honoured to provide the Lieutenant Governor’s official Christmas tree for two decades now.”

The five-meter, Balsam Fir chosen to illuminate the suite this year was grown by Somerville Seedlings in Alliston, Ontario.

Real, locally-grown Christmas trees, like the one provided to Her Honour, are an environmentally sound alternative to artificial trees. Real trees sequester carbon throughout their lives and may be recycled and reused as mulch after the holidays. A real tree is also a socially responsible decision, as each tree supports the economy of the



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community where it grows. Forests Ontario encourages anyone celebrating the holidays to consider a real, locally-grown tree.

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About Forests Ontario

Forests Ontario is a not-for-profit charity dedicated to re-greening the province through the support of forest restoration, stewardship, education and awareness. We promote Canada's greatest natural resource – our forests – because healthy forests sustain healthy communities and healthy economies. Forests Ontario is the voice of our forests. Visit www.forestsontario.ca or follow us @Forests_Ontario to find out more.

For more information, photos, or to arrange an interview please contact:

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