

Honoring the Life and Work of Professor Wangari Maathai

Professor Wangari Maathai was so much more than the first African woman to win the Nobel Prize. On her birthday, April 01, she will be remembered for her vast achievements and the impact she made on the lives of so many people.

She is revered by many and even after her death in 2011; she remains a role model and leader in the battle for democracy, human rights and environmental conservation. Professor Maathai was the force behind The Greenbelt Movement, which inspired the creation of the United Nations Billion Tree Campaign (now called Plant for the Planet), which by the end of December 2011, had planted more than 12,000,000 trees around the world. She was an avid promoter and defender of women's rights, creating programs that empowered women in many nations.

Just a year before she passed on, her work and influence gave rise to the creation of the Wangari Maathai Institute of Peace and Environmental Studies on the grounds of the University of Nairobi, with a vision for holistic, transformative experiential learning and community outreach for sustainability.

“It is the people who must save the environment. It is the people who must make their leaders change.” ~ Professor Wangari Maathai

This belief has spread around the world and is seen in the environmental and human rights protests that have erupted and continue around the world today.

Happy 73rd Birthday, Wangari Maathai.