**Who Are We and How Can We Help You?**

The California Urban Forests Council (CaUFC) and the Local Government Commission (LGC) have partnered to provide support to local governments in the San Joaquin Valley in preparation for the release of the 2015/2016 CalFire community forestry funding. Healthy urban forests make for more livable cities; they clean our air, filter our water, inspire active transport, increase property values, stimulate business, save energy, reduce crime and make us happier! This partnership is designed to improve or implement urban forestry programs in the San Joaquin Valley.

Our innovative approach includes educational outreach as well as free direct support for interested local governments and agencies in the San Joaquin Valley. Training and assistance will be provided through LGC’s new Governor’s Initiative, the CivicSpark AmeriCorps program.

**Meet our Team**

**Jessie Rudd** Before joining CivicSpark, Jessie spent three years traveling and working in diverse communities in Southeast Asia, Australia, Canada and Central America. Jessie is a graduate of University of California, Santa Cruz where she obtained a BA from their interdisciplinary environmental studies department with a concentration in law and policy.

**Jennifer Alvarez** Jennifer attended California State University Stanislaus in Turlock, finishing with a Bachelor’s degree in Biological Sciences with a concentration in ecology. While in school Jennifer worked on a multiple research projects including studying the genetic composition and physiological characteristics of the aspen tree population, and compiling a scientific review of ecosystem services found in urban areas.

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**Tommy Ta** Tommy Ta received a Bachelor’s degree in Environmental Sciences at University of California Riverside, and a Master’s degree at Chapman University in the same discipline. With an interest in sustainability, Tommy hopes to bring his skills and knowledge to help the San Joaquin Valley deal with problems of water resources, energy consumption, and air quality issues.

**What Kind of Assistance Can We Provide Your City and Community?**

The 3-member CivicSpark Cal Fire team is able to provide customized support that includes:

* Train staff on CalEnviroScreen
* Increase municipalities capacity to quantify the benefits of their urban forest
* Assist staff on urban forestry tools such as the Urban Forest Management Toolkit, iTree and the Tree Carbon Calculator
* Review existing inventories, policies and plans
* Host workshops, webinars and provide educational outreach in your community
* Determine best fit Cal Fire grant categories and application strategies
* Coordinate and leverage collaborative partnerships

The San Joaquin Valley is environmentally and economically positioned to benefit Cal Fire grants - our objective is to maximize the number of State dollars invested in our Valley.

More information on CivicSpark can be found at [www.civicsparkca.org](http://www.civicsparkca.org/)

