CAREER PATHS IN URBAN FORESTRY AND ARBORICULTURE

Linking Higher Education and Professional Advancement

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SPEAKERS

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ABOUT THIS SESSION

As urban sustainability and green infrastructure gain prominence across the United States, urban forestry and arboriculture are poised for tremendous opportunities. Are we advancing our professions to capitalize on these opportunities? What roles do higher education and workforce development play in professional advancement? In this session, our speakers will share their perspectives on these topics and take part in discussion that involves questions and comments from the audience.

SESSION FORMAT

(Each theme will have 10 min. remarks followed by 15 min. Q&A)

Opening Remarks: Eric Wiseman

Theme 1 ~ Urban Forestry as a Profession: Rich Hauer and Keith O'Herrin

Theme 2 ~ Urban Forestry Workforce Development: Brigitte Orrick and David Sivyer

Theme 3 ~ Trends in Urban Forestry Higher Education: Rich Hauer and Paul Ries

Closing Remarks: Eric Wiseman

KEY MESSAGES

- Sustaining and advancing the urban forestry and arboriculture professions is a complex matter and requires coordinated efforts of multiple stakeholder groups.

- Numerous structural changes are occurring in higher education, workforce demographics, markets, and societal expectations for urban forest management.

- The status quo of how we recruit, train, educate, and develop talent may impede both the career growth of individual professionals and advancement of the professions collectively.

ASK A QUESTION, SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

- Eric Wiseman will moderate the Q&A after the prepared remarks for each theme. You may present a question or comment to the panelists by:
  - Raising your hand and waiting to speak
  - Posting your question/comment on Twitter with the hashtag #ISAUF2020
  - Direct messaging your question/comment on Twitter to @vtarborist

- To ensure that all of the session themes are covered, we will limit Q&A to 15 min. per theme.

- If you have follow-up questions or comments for the panelists, please use our post-session survey available at https://tinyurl.com/ISAUF2020.

ABOUT URBAN FORESTRY 2020

- Urban Forestry 2020 is a multi-university project funded by the US Forest Service on the recommendation of the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council (NUCFAC). Collaborators include faculty and graduate students at Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, West Virginia University, and University of Maryland. A national steering committee comprising representatives from over 20 stakeholder groups has provided guidance throughout the project. For an overview, visit http://urbanforestry.frec.vt.edu/2020.

- The project has examined several facets of the urban forestry profession and its higher education underpinnings. Topics of study have included college student perceptions of an urban forestry career, skills and qualifications desired of entry-level urban foresters, structure of the urban forestry career ladder, professional preparation and career status of practicing urban foresters, and perceptions of urban forestry by allied professionals. We investigated these topics at a national scale through literature research, focus groups, interviews, and surveys. Our findings will support recommendations to NUCFAC for strategic action to advance the urban forestry profession nationwide.

- Five national surveys have been conducted during the research phase of this project. A summary for each survey can be found at http://urbanforestry.frec.vt.edu/2020/findings.html.

- We have discussed this project with the urban forestry community of practice at several major conferences and in trade journals. Our articles and posters are available for download at http://urbanforestry.frec.vt.edu/2020/publications.html.

- Several scientific papers on our research are in preparation for peer review and publication in scholarly journals. We will be releasing a comprehensive final report for the project in fall 2017. Visit our project homepage to stay up to date on our findings and final products.