The New University of Georgia Community Forestry & Arboriculture Emphasis: Bringing Community Forestry to the Next Generation of Professionals

Jason Gordon, Assistant Professor, UGA  
jason.gordon@uga.edu

Kim D. Coder, Professor, UGA
Georgia Urban Forestry Direct & indirect economic activity (2017)

• 46,209 jobs
• $1.7 billion wages & salaries
• $4 billion in economic output

### Tree Care Sector Employment in Georgia (May 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Mean Annual Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37-1012</td>
<td>First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping Workers</td>
<td>3,460</td>
<td>$46,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-3012</td>
<td>Pesticide Handlers, Sprayers, and Applicators, Vegetation</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>$36,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-3011</td>
<td>Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers</td>
<td>23,030</td>
<td>$28,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-3013</td>
<td><strong>Tree Trimmers and Pruners</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,080</strong></td>
<td><strong>$30,020</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-3019</td>
<td>Grounds Maintenance Workers, All Other</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>$47,100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annual mean wage of first-line supervisors of landscaping, lawn service, and groundskeeping workers by state, May 2018

Blank areas indicate data not available.

Common Knowledge

• Shortage of skilled workers in the tree care industry
• Need for increased awareness of the career path

Source: TCIA

TCIA Workforce Development
Locations:

Greater Atlanta Tree Care Sector Partnership

Source: TCIA
Looking towards the future
Introduction

The “Great Acceleration” is upon us, an era of rapid and transformative change (Steffen et al. 2015). According to some observers, we have reached a historic inflection point in which multiple mega-trends—such as technological disruption, economic globalization, and climate change—are accelerating and interacting at the same time. Rapid social, technological, environmental, economic, and political change is the broad context for arboriculture in the 21st century. The recent past and business-as-usual thinking may not be good guides for navigating this turbulent future.

Faced with rapid, widespread, and accelerating change, what can we do to thrive and build resilience in our organizations and professional lives? The Forest Futures Horizon Scanning Project at the US Forest Service is an effort to proactively respond to the increasing pace and complexity of change, to “look beyond the headlights” in order to help the Forest Service and its partners better anticipate and prepare for change. Horizon scanning is a process for identifying early indicators of change in the external environment of an organization or field. The focus is on external change because most of us are already aware of internal developments through reading newsletters, magazines like Arborist News, and attending conferences. But external developments can blindside us if we’re not paying attention.

Horizon scanning is one of the core tools of Futures Research (Bengston 2013) and is widely practiced in many corporations, every branch of the US military, and throughout the intelligence community. The basic idea is that although we can’t predict the long-term future because of fundamental uncertainties, there are clues out there—indicators of change—if we search for them. Indicators of change include emerging issues, trends, counter-trends, and broad driving forces that could shape the future. Effective horizon scanning serves as an early warning system to identify potential opportunities and threats, enables decision makers to plan accordingly and take timely action, and fosters a forward-looking culture throughout an organization.

The Forest Service’s Forest Futures Horizon Scanning Project was designed in collaboration with futurists at the
Signals of change
A professional view

- Environmentally friendly equipment
- Professionalism
- Training
- Youth education
- Diversity
- Recruiting
- Collaborations
Connecting the dots
UGA Warnell School of Forestry & Natural Resources

Community Forestry & Arboriculture
Backstory...

- Tree management class (Coder, Morris)
- Certificate
- Supportive administration
- Stakeholder support
- Accepted as program by UGA: March 2018
- COFA starting date: Fall 2019
• First two years are non-professional courses

• Area of Emphasis within the Natural Resource Management & Sustainability undergraduate major

• Degree: Bachelor of Science in Forest Resources

• Prepares students for careers in community natural resources management.
Graduates may work as:

- Tree, forest, and environmental advocates for interest groups and nongovernmental organizations
- Municipal foresters
- Commercial forest health care providers
- Community planners, designers, and consultants
- Commercial tree health care and estate management firms
- Municipal governments
- Non-governmental organizations
- Utility providers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental soil science minor</th>
<th>Geography minor</th>
<th>Horticulture minor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental design minor</td>
<td>Water resources certificate</td>
<td>Environmental education certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability certificate</td>
<td>Urban and metropolitan studies certificate</td>
<td>GIS certificate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of Options/Electives

- Sociology of urban life
- Informatics and data analysis
- Computational plant science
- Urban ecology
- Introduction to business management
- History of urban planning
- Intermediate microeconomics
- Environmental design uses of GIS
- Integrated pest management
- Land use planning
- Plants of the South
- Designing healthy places
- Business Spanish
Community soils & site development

- Climate, microclimate impacts of development
- Characteristics & classification of urban soils
- Correction of soil physical limitations
- Soil chemistry and biology
- Pesticides and contaminants
- Planning and site development
- Tree protection
- Tree production and transplanting
- Root management
- Fertilization and irrigation
Practicum (3 weeks)

Tree measurements
Site assessment and landscape design
Working with stakeholders/clients (Atlanta)
Tree production & selection
Site preparation
Large tree installation
Tree inventory
Health and vigor assessment
Working in trees/ safety (Atlanta)
Utility right-of-way management (Atlanta)
Large equipment
Residential tree care (training, cable, soils) (Charlotte, NC)
Internship

• Must be approved and students must receive permission to enroll in course before starting work experience (1 credit hour for each 100 work hours)

• Internship approved by internship coordinator for COFA

• Generally 8 weeks, full time, paid

• YouTube Videos: https://www.warnell.uga.edu/undergraduate/alternative-study/internships
How can you help?

• Students
• Internships
• Funding for teaching equipment
• Demonstrations
• Guest speaking in classes
• Be advocates!
Please take a brochure

Thanks

warnell.uga.edu