

Outstanding Professional

Todd DeJesus

Southern Tree Farm (Tim Shaw)

*(*printed copy to be reviewed at meeting *)*

GUIDELINES

- Nominate your own work, the work of your organization or the work of another.
- Each application must be typed and presented in a standard three-ring binder (no larger than ½ inch capacity). The completed awards entry form must be the first page of the application. The second page of the application should be a 200-word overview of the nomination. (Note: *For winning nominations, the overview of the nomination will be used for presentation purposes and to highlight the individual, project or program in The Council Quarterly newsletter.*) Following the brief overview should be a summary of not more than three typewritten pages that describe the project's, program's or individual's contribution to urban and community forestry as outlined in the Award Categories.
- Support documentation such as photographs, press clippings, printed pieces, and letters of commendation are encouraged, but shall be limited to 12 additional pages. All supporting documents must be attached or secured inside the application. Please, no loose documentation such as videotapes. Each application must include at least three digital photos in order to be considered. Examples include photos of the individual recipient, project logo, etc.
- Deadline for entry is **October 28, 2016**. Submit the original, one full copy and the three digital photos to:

Friends of Our Urban Forest Awards Program
Florida Urban Forestry Council
Post Office Box 547993
Orlando, FL 32854-7993

All submitted materials become property of the Florida Urban Forestry Council. **Please note:** The Awards Committee reserves the right to reassign the entry to another category if deemed appropriate. For questions or additional entry forms, please contact Sandy Temple, Florida Urban Forestry Council Executive Director at (407) 872-1738.



Todd DeJesus

NAME OF ENTRY, INDIVIDUAL OR PROJECT

Todd DeJesus

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON FOR THE ENTRY

City of Wilton Manors

COMPANY/AGENCY

2020 Wilton Drive

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Wilton Manors

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NOMINATED BY (IF DIFFERENT)

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE

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E-MAIL

AWARD CATEGORY (please check one):

- Outstanding Professional
- Outstanding Tree Advocate or Tree Advocacy Group
- Outstanding Project
- Outstanding Urban Forestry Program
- Lifetime Achievement Award

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ENTRY FORM
Deadline for Submission - October 28, 2016

October 2016 Florida Urban Forestry Council Urban Forestry Awards Program Summary

Outstanding Professional:

Todd DeJesus, Capital Projects and Grants Manager, City of Wilton Manors, Florida

Todd DeJesus has been with the City of Wilton Manors for two years. Wilton Manors is a small city with just under 12,000 residents and two schools. Over the past year, Todd has accomplished several projects/programs which have contributed to the community.

His first project was to take over the former NatureScape committee. This committee consisted of a group of environmentally conscious residents who helped the City become a Community Wildlife Habitat through the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) program. When Todd took over, he “rebranded” the organization, recruited new members, and it is now the Wilton Manors Environmental and Sustainability Committee. Through this group he was able to create two new programs. The first is a “Nature in Art” photo contest, allowing residents to submit photographs of nature in the City. The second program initiated is a “Birding for Non-birders” quarterly tour. This group is led by an avid birder and the president of the local Audubon Society Chapter and leads residents through forested parks in the City, identifying local and migratory bird species.

In January of 2016 the City had its first annual Free Tree Giveaway. Todd researched alternative funding sources and was able to fund the event entirely through grants. He created the tree list (natives and Florida-friendly species), obtained a vendor, and organized the entire event. Each resident who came to the event was required to go through four educational booths prior to receiving any free trees. The booths consisted of (proper maintenance and pruning, right tree/right place, NWF, and tree selection). Approximately 300 trees were given out to over 125 residents. He has already gotten additional grant funding for the second event to be held in January, 2017. With almost double the amount of grant funding acquired, over 400 trees will be given away and additional educational booths will be created.

Throughout the year, Todd has been working with local residents to enhance the City’s street tree program. He has partnered with a few residents and they have reached out by going door-to-door in neighborhoods in need of additional canopy. Over the next few months it is anticipated that approximately 100 new street trees will be installed as a result of this effort.

Todd has also been successful in working with the two local schools. At Wilton Manors Elementary, he is in the process of designing a butterfly garden, utilizing native and Florida-friendly plants in order to attract local wildlife (butterflies, birds). At Somerset Academy he created an educational program for a group of students. They learned the concepts of planning and designing a school garden and researched native plants. Todd requested funding (and received it) from a local committee and personally retrieved the necessary plants and installed them with the help of the students.

Todd DeJesus
Wilton Manors 2016 Tree Giveaway





Outstanding Tree Advocate

David Fischer

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David Fischer

NAME OF ENTRY, INDIVIDUAL OR PROJECT

Linda Seufert

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON FOR THE ENTRY

City of St. Petersburg

COMPANY/AGENCY

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Friends of Our Urban Forest Awards Program 2016
Florida Urban Forestry Council

Outstanding Tree Advocate
David Fischer
St. Petersburg Mayor 1991-2000

It has been said that former Mayor Fischer is fanatical about trees. For 25 years, he has been aggressively promoting tree planting within St. Petersburg. He initiated "Operation Greenscape/Arterial Roadways Program" provided trees for major roadways throughout the city. By the end of his terms, Mayor Fischer had planted over 18,000 trees. "As the oaks grow, somebody is going to look around and say, 100 years from now Somebody once got in their craw that this city should be beautiful" he said. At his farewell dinner, his final words to the well-wishers were to urge them to plant more trees.

Though retired as Mayor of the city, Mayor Fischer continues to drive the streets of St. Petersburg searching for areas for trees to be planted. He would frequently take city administrators and officials around town pointing out treeless areas. What he started became a catalyst for the programs initiated by his successor Mayor Richard Baker. Along with continuing the "Operation Greenscape/Arterial Roadways Program," Mayor Baker added the "Mayor's Flowering Tree" and "Mayor's Interstate Flowering Tree Program." About the tree plantings Mayor Fischer completed, Mayor Baker said "Without a doubt they have enhanced the quality of life for people who live in our city. St Petersburg trees will provide shade, beauty, and comfort for many generations to come."

In April, 2015, Mayor Fischer was named the city's volunteer "Tree Czar" by Mayor Rick Kriseman. He was said to have found his second life as a modern day Johnny Appleseed. One year later, Mayor Fischer went before City Council successfully urging them to appropriate \$500,000 to plant up to 500 trees throughout the city. The funding would also pay for a tree canopy study.

Mayor Fischer continues to educate new administrations on the importance of an urban forest and the need to plant more trees. His voice has been heard and has had an impact on many city policies. St. Petersburg supports being designated a "Green City" through programming to conserve water, plant trees, preserve estuaries and sensitive lands, provide earth-friendly recycling programs, and reduce its carbon footprint. The city recognizes that well-managed trees are a vital part of the urban environment and enhance the quality of life in our cities, towns, and communities.

The City of St. Petersburg has been a "Tree City USA" recipient for 30 years and is committed to receiving that designation in future years. Much of the credit for this designation is attributed to Mayor Fischer's efforts. Since leaving his Mayoral post, over 31,000 trees have been planted throughout the city streets, parks and preservation areas.

Submitted by: Linda Seufert, Park Operations Manager
Parks and Recreation Department
City of St. Petersburg
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Honorary Urban Forest Advisor (Tree Czar)

Nature of Advisory Work

The City of St Petersburg understands that well-managed trees are a vital part of the urban environment and enhance the quality of life for the residents and visitors of our city. The City is committed in creating awareness and appreciation for trees among all the residents of this community.

This honorary position is an advocate for the urban forest and promotes the importance of trees, including their benefits, as well as the best methods to plant, maintain, manage, preserve, and sustain the urban forest.

Advisory work includes promoting a healthy urban ecosystems nurtured through community stewardship. Assist in establishing relationships with other agencies, local businesses, civic associations, neighborhood associations, related community groups and organizations and community leaders to educate the community on the benefits of trees.

Illustrative Examples of Volunteer Work

Serve as a local ambassador for the urban forest.

Increase awareness of the benefits of trees through community outreach and the media

Network with potential local business partners, community leaders, and donors who support urban forest.

Appear before City Council, various boards and commissions of the City and neighborhood associations promoting the benefits of trees.

Prepares recommendations of tree plantings and educational opportunities to city staff.

Promote and/or attend local fundraising efforts to support funding of urban forest projects in the community.

Attend events and programs that support a healthy urban forest.

Have fun!

Desirable Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

Knowledge of charter provisions, ordinances and laws governing the administration of City government.

Ability to communicate clearly and concisely, orally and in writing.

Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with public officials, peers, subordinates, representatives of community and neighborhood interest groups and the general public and to gain their cooperation and support of programs.

Desirable Trainings and Experience

Experience working with a municipal government and has a passion for the urban forest.