

Student Leadership Apprentice Award Program Launched in Fall 2020

Four urban forestry students - Aaliyah Royston, Jordan Davis, Nick Pryor, and Detrick White are selected as the first group of students for the Leadership Apprentice Award in fall 2020. This is the highest honor at the Urban Forestry and Natural Resources Department supported by the 2020 Career Readiness project. Each awardee will receive a \$1,500 stipend per semester while participating in the project leadership and career readiness training activities. Each Apprentice will make a presentation and submit a report at the end of the semester.



Leadership Apprentice Award recipients (from left to right): Jordan Davis, Aaliyah Royston Nick Pryor, and Detrick White.

The Department Chair Dr. Zhu Hua Ning and Vice Chancellor & Associate Dean Dr. Renita Marshall are the lead persons of the project/program. Ms. Beattria Wilson, Assistant Director for Urban and Communitate Forestry at the US Forest Service, secured the fund for the project. Dr. Ray Lawson, Director of Park Operation at Baton Rouge Recreation and Park Commission (BREC) and Assistant Director Dr. Brain Watkins are the project team members. The project serves as a vehicle to formalize the partnership and collaboration between the Urban Forestry, Environment, and Natural Resources Department and BREC. Being the Urban Forestry alumni, Ms. Wilson, Dr. Lawson and Dr. Watkins are committed to the partnership and student training.

Leadership Apprentice Jordan is a graduating senior who is mentored by Ms. Wilson for exposure at the national level that benefits him in post-graduation employment. Aaliyah is a senior and the president of the SU student chapter of the Society of American Foresters (SAF). She has already started to work under the direction of Dr. Watkins to set up green project for the Baton Rouge community. Nick is a junior who shadows Dr. Lawson and learn from an outstanding role model. Detrick is a first-year master's degree student. He is seeking leadership tips and guidance from Dr. Marshall. He has aspirations of leadership and merging his educational and professional goals in a way that helps the students, community, and the College. For more information about the project and to apply for the spring 2021 award, please contact Dr. Ning at zhu_ning@subr.edu.

Six Urban Forestry Freshmen Awarded 2020 JAG STARS Scholarship

The Department is excited to announce that among 10 new urban forestry freshmen, six received the 2020 JAG STARS USDA 1890 Scholarship at \$10,000 each. They are Jamir Baptiste, Kolin

T. Bilbrew, Massey Jones, Shamar M. Nelson, Jonathan Perry, and Heaven S. Britton. "I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to follow my interests in nature as an urban forester," said Jamir Nelson.

In the Fall 2020 semester, all six awardees are actively engaged in urban forestry studies by enrolling in UFOR 151 Urban Forestry class. Kolins expressed, "The class is very interesting and contains a lot of information about management and planning. I also love that urban forestry can expand into other majors in a wide variety. I love the class and I would love to talk about how architecture and urban forestry can correlate into the creations of buildings and stadiums." Massey has been enjoying the learning experience, "I learned the different uses of vegetation, like architecture or engineering. Those ways in particular are great for surrounding suburban communities. I have also learned better leadership skills and observational skills. The class assignments improved my observational skills by describing the different trees and documenting certain features of different trees. Learning things like the difference between greenways and parks highly influence me to keep working and to be a better student." Miss. Britton wrote, "During this class, I have learned land management, basic concepts of urban forestry, how "we" use urban forest, inventory of vegetation, planning for and management vegetation, and land use planning. I have gained knowledge about the different factors that correspond to urban forestry such as; landscaping, tree planting, determining how and when is a good time to plant a tree, and in what areas I should plant trees. There are several qualities that trees bring to communities, for example, their beauty, health improvements, the reduction of air pollution and they conserve water and reduce soil erosion. I have also gained knowledge through the assignments and exercises. Two specific assignments that caught my interest are the outdoor learning engagement and the leadership development assignment. The first assignment sparks my level of interest because it was a hands-on experience. I explored the campus and the beauty of each tree. It gave me insight on tree management and how it is conducted. This task allowed me to do my own research and apply it to the different examples of trees. The second assignment was informative, allowed me to conduct an interview while gaining information on what questions to ask, how to ask these questions, and overall, how to make a report after the interview."

To qualify for the JAG STAR Scholarship, freshmen students must be enrolled as a full-time student (12 hours) majoring in Urban Forestry. Student must maintain at least a 2.8 GPA on a semester and cumulative basis while receiving the scholarship support. Student must also be actively engaged in CAFCS organizations, JAG STARS events, and outreach efforts. To apply for next year's award, please contact Dr. Yaw - departmental assistantship/scholarship/stipend committee chair at Yaw_Twumasi@subr.edu for application form.

Fall 2020 USDA Forest Service Undergraduate Research and Training Stipend Awards









With the funding support from the USDA Forest Service, the Department awarded 15 students with total \$17,500 of Undergraduate Research and Training Stipend ranging \$1,500-\$1,000 per student based on their qualifications including GPA. The recipients participate in research and training under their faculty advisors/mentors to enhance their research skills and professional competency. The \$1,500 stipend award recipients are Terrell Lewis, Ricker Carter, Valeria Smart, Jada Walden, and Nelvin Sellers. The \$1,000 stipend award recipients: Rodney Purdy, Kyla

Bryant, Bria Rudison, MarKenize Rose, Sarah Neal, Tess Brown, Deron Isom, Omari Philips, Isaiah Smith, Korey Dotson. Congratulations to the awardees! To apply for the stipend award, please contact Dr. Yaw - departmental assistantship/scholarship/stipend committee chair at Yaw_Twumasi@subr.edu for application form.

Fall 2020 USDA NIFA CBGP Student Training Stipend Awards

With the funding support from the USDA NIFA CBGP, the Modeling Approach in Climate Change and Natural Resources Education project at Southern University selected 5 students for stipend award totaling \$10,000 at \$2,000 per student. Represent three colleges at SU, the awardees receive training through active participation in the project activities. Odell Kimble, Calvonta Ard, and Hermisha Mosby are Urban Forestry students at College of Agricultural Family and Consumer Sciences. Tywin Tate is in College of Science and Engineering, and DeAnquanique Jackson is from SU Law School. Congratulations to the awardees! To apply for next year, please contact Project Director Dr. Zhu Hua Ning at zhu_ning@subr.edu for application form and award criteria.

2020 Urban Forestry Student Achievement Highlights

-  Darrell Street was selected as the winner of the Baton Rouge Garden Club Scholarship of \$1,500.
-  Simbrey Major was selected as the Student Ambassador of the Coalition to Restore Louisiana Coast.
-  Asija Rice and Simbrey Majors were among the 13 in the nation who were selected to receive the Society of American Foresters Diversity Scholar Award - a nationally competitive honor.
-  A video of biochar research and technology produced by the graduate students Simbrey Majors, Derrell Street, Hande Suslu, and Uday Buma were selected and sponsored by the National Science Foundation for innovative showcase at the Advancement of Science National Conference in Washington, DC. Team faculty advisor: Dr. Kamran Abdollahi.
-  The successful stories of Kalaia Tripeaux and Derrell Street were featured by the Forestry Source - a periodical published by the Society of American Foresters.
-  Terrell Lewis, Rodney Purdy, Asija Rice, Kyla Bryant, Tess Brown, Ke'Shae Brumfield, Nichols Pryor, and Tywin Tate were awarded \$600 scholarship each from the Louisiana Forestry Foundation in spring 2020 and additional \$600 in fall 2020.
-  Urban Forestry Quiz Bowl Team won overall 1st place at the 26th Annual SU Ag Center/CAFCS Black History Quiz Bowl. The team's name is "Team Forestnsic" Team Captain is Terrell Lewis and members are Brooke McFarland, Rodeny Purdy, Aaliyah Royston, and Asija Rice.
-  Urban Forestry students got new jobs and job offers! Brittany Benjamin - US Forest Service Portland, OR, Conan Escajeda - Bartlett Company New Orleans, Emma Thomas - LA Oakdall Community College, D'Micheal Lucas - Louisiana State University Arborist, Asija Rice - North Carolina State University Graduate Assistant, Rodney Purdy - USDA-NRCS (offer), Terrell Lewis - Georgia Power (offer).

Congratulations to Miss Asija Rice - the May 2020 B.S. Degree in Urban Forestry Recipient!



Asija Rice is a native of New Orleans, LA. Majoring in Urban forestry, she received her diploma in May 2020. She served as the President of Society of American Forester (SAF) Southern University Chapter, led the SAF membership drive, and organized a series of fundraising activities supporting the SU Chapter students to attend the SAF National Conventions. In 2019, she was awarded the SAF Diversity Scholar Award. Asija served as the Parliamentarian of Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) SU Chapter, Vice President of the Urban Forestry Club, Vice President of the Student Leadership and Engagement Council at SU, and a volunteer for the Big Buddy Mentor Program & Baton Roots in Baton Rouge. She presented her research at conferences and won a research poster award. She is the recipient of the Rockefeller Scholarship, Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) Scholar award, and Louisiana Forestry Foundation Scholarship. Asija had three internships and gained valuable governmental and research experiences at USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, LSU EXPLORE internship program, and LSU Hammond research station. She also participated in Kansas State University KSRE Summer Research Fellowship program. She has made a decision to pursue an advanced degree in North Carolina State University after graduating in May 2020. (Photo caption: Asija Rice (center) honored for the SAF Diversity Scholar Award at the SAF Convention. Left: SAF CEO Terry Baker; right: Asija's academic advisor Dr. Zhu Ning, Professor and Department Chair at SU, also the SAF Diversity and Inclusion Chair.)

Congratulations to Mr. Conan Escajeda- the May 2020 B.S. Degree in Urban Forestry Recipient!



Conan Escajeda is a native of California and a veteran. He came to Louisiana to attend Southern University in fall 2015 as a transfer student. With a cumulative GPA of 3.38, he has reached his goal in getting a B.S. Degree in Urban Forestry

Sciences in May 2020. He credits years of course work and academic preparation at Southern University's Urban Forestry and Natural Resources Program, plus two internships at Louisiana State University for his success. Five years of college studies at SU and two internships at LSU helped him to gain experience in the arboriculture industry plus networking skills. The LSU EXPLORE internship (Experiential Professional Leadership Opportunities in Research and Extension) offered him opportunities to work at the LSU Burden research station and to develop a passion for the tree care industry. The SU-LSU learning experiences helped him to gain a great confidence in his abilities as an aspiring arborist and land him a job with the renowned Bartlett Tree Experts Company right after college. As a man of faith, Conan believes that God has pointed him toward a career path in urban forestry and arboriculture. (Photo caption: Conan - the arborist - removing a damaged tree.)

Congratulations to Mr. Tevin Hudson - the May 2020 Master Degree in Urban Forestry Recipient!



Tevin Hudson is from the historic town of Fayette, Mississippi. In 2017, he obtained his Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture from Alcorn State University with a cumulative GPA of 3.04. During his time at Alcorn, Tevin was part of numerous organizations including: Alcorn State University Sounds of Dyno-Mite Marching Band, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated (Delta Kappa Chapter), Future Farmers of America, Agriculture Business and Economics Club, and First Year Experience Student Orientation Leader. In 2017, Tevin was awarded Alcorn State University Senior of the Year. After graduating from Alcorn, he decided to further his education and attend Southern University A&M College to major in Urban Forestry/Natural Resources. Tevin has always maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher during his academic career at Southern. In the summer of 2019, Tevin received an internship offer from The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. LDEQ has helped him gained valuable governmental and research experiences. During his internship experience, Tevin has assisted with air, water, and waste quality inspections, performed laboratory testing on collected water samples, prepared inspection reports for field inspectors and assisted with the collection and analysis of environmental samples. Tevin has a strong passion for environmental research and working with underserved communities. His career goal is to become an Environmental Scientist for the United States Departmental of Agriculture. As time proceeds, he plans to pursue his Doctoral Degree in Higher Education Administration and become a Dean of Agriculture at a Historical Black College and University. (Photo caption: Tevin (right) collect data for biochar research as a class project)

Congratulations to Mr. Joshua Tate- the May 2020 Master Degree in Urban Forestry Recipient!

Joshua Tate is a native of Memphis, TN. He will receive his Master of Sciences in Urban Forestry degree in May 2020. Joshua previously received his Bachelor of Sciences degree in biology from Clark Atlanta University. He began his matriculation at Southern University and A&M College in the fall 2018 semester. Since then he has served as the President of the Urban Forestry and Natural Resources Graduate Students Association (UFORGA) Southern University Chapter. He also served as an assistant coach for the Southern University football team. He was a graduate assistant to his advisor Dr. Yaw Twumasi and orchestrated events such as the UFORGA headshot day for the graduate association. In 2019, the association was presented with the Service and Achievement award during the Blue and Gold Student Awards and Recognition Banquet for outstanding service to the community and campus. As a scholar, Joshua has publications including peer-reviewed articles in journals such as Advances in Remote Sensing, Journal of Geographic Information System, Atmospheric and Climate Sciences and International Journal of Geosciences. Joshua presented his research at the 2019 Louisiana Academy of Sciences at Southern University and A&M College and, also at the 2019 ARD National Symposium in Jacksonville, Florida. In the fall 2019, Joshua also presented a paper at the Society of American Foresters (SAF) National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. During the summer of 2019, Joshua completed an internship with one of the top-tier colleges of the environment at the University of Washington within their GIS/Remote Sensing department. Joshua has excelled in his coursework and research and he graduates with a 3.95 GPA. He plans to pursue PhD opportunities to continue his academic endeavors in the near future after enhancing knowledge and working within the forestry field.