



Summer Momentum

As the season unfolds, explore the insights, connections, and leadership that move keep the profession growing.

PGMS[®] GROUND MANAGEMENT FORUM



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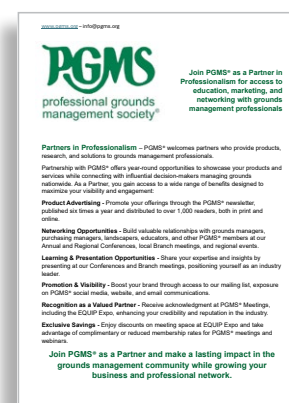
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President's Message

Michael Gildea, CGM



As president of PGMS, I am fortunate to regularly connect with members, suppliers, and colleagues across the industry. These conversations continually remind me of the knowledge, experience, and professionalism within our association and field.

On June 17 and 18, I attended the **Big Ten & Friends Landscape Managers Conference** at the University of Iowa. Although I work for a private club and many attendees represent large universities, we shared many of the same challenges and opportunities. That common ground extends beyond landscape management professionals to landscape architects, academics, and manufacturers, each of whom offers valuable perspectives for PGMS members. For example, I recently met with Sue Breitkopf, executive director of **the Olmsted Network**, which honors the legacy of the Olmsted Firm by preserving the historic landscapes designed by the Olmsted Firm. While many of their members are landscape architects and historians who can teach us about design and history, we can offer practical insight into maintaining and preserving these spaces.

We also benefit from engaging with colleagues in academia, who bring current research and theory to the students who will shape the future of our profession. In turn, we can broaden their understanding of our field by showing that our work extends beyond plants to hardscapes, lighting, trash and recycling, and, most importantly, people. Likewise, our equipment partners rely on our perspective to understand how equipment should perform and which features are most useful in practice.

Our **Regional Conference** in Philadelphia on August 3 and 4 will offer an opportunity to network with colleagues, learn from industry leaders, and celebrate our nation's 250th anniversary in its founding city. Registration is closing soon, so I encourage you to sign up today.

Our **Annual Conference** will take place in Tampa, Florida, from November 8 to 11. Held in conjunction with ELEVATE, the conference will connect you with leaders from across the country while offering new ways to lead teams, improve operations, and adapt to changing expectations. Through insightful sessions and discussions, you will

leave with ideas and perspectives you can put to work immediately. The decisions you make now will help shape next year's success.

In the spirit of collaboration, both our Regional and Annual Conferences bring together landscape architects, arborists, academics, and leaders from related professions. I encourage you to reach beyond your usual circles and connect with peers across the green industry. We have much in common, and through meaningful conversations, we gain a fresh perspective on our future.

I look forward to seeing everyone soon!



Michael Gildea, along with Michael Weikamp and Phil Richey, at the Big Ten & Friends Conference.

Call for Content: Share Your Expertise and Achievements with PGMS

We encourage PGMS members and supporters to submit their professional accomplishments, research, articles, and photos for consideration in this publication. Sharing your work helps showcase the depth of expertise across our community and supports meaningful membership engagement. Your contributions provide valuable insights, inspire peers, and strengthen the collective voice of the grounds management profession. By submitting content, you help enrich this publication and advance the mission of PGMS. Submit your content or ideas to info@pgms.org.

PGMS® NOMINATION AND ELECTIONS REPORT

Important Information for Voting Members

As required by the PGMS® Bylaws, once the Board of Directors has accepted and endorsed nominees for open Board positions, their names will be presented to the voting members of PGMS along with information on how additional nominations may be offered.

Additional nominations may be made provided that they are made in writing, endorsed by at least ten (10) voting Members in good standing, with the written consent of the nominee and received by the Secretary of the Society not less than thirty (30) days in advance of the annual meeting.

The Secretary shall be responsible for seeing that all those members with the privilege of voting are notified of any additional nominations, in writing immediately.

There shall be no nominations on the floor unless an unopposed and announced candidate should withdraw his or her name from consideration.

The Board-endorsed nominees for the open Board positions will be shared with the membership in early August, following the Board of Directors meeting.



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The Oak Death Spiral
and What Grounds
Managers Can Do

by Rainbow Ecoscience

Legacy oaks, those stately giants that grace university campuses, hospitals, and large properties, are more than just trees. They're living landmarks that anchor landscapes, sustain wildlife, and embody the values of strength, endurance, and continuity. In many cases, these oaks have been around as long as the campus and buildings around them. But these icons are in trouble. Across North America, legacy and mature oaks are declining at an alarming rate, caught in what arborists call the "oak death spiral."

The Value of Legacy Oaks

Legacy oaks quietly connect people to place through time, offering shade, memory, and meaning. The Battle Oaks at the University of Texas at Austin, which survived a Civil War, stand as symbols of resilience. At Florida State, the James P. Love Oak predates the campus itself and remains a beloved gathering point. Meanwhile, Texas A&M's Century Tree

anchors generations of student traditions. These trees do more than beautify their surroundings—they hold stories, mark continuity, and remind us of the importance of preserving living landmarks that grow alongside our communities.

Understanding the Oak Death Spiral

The oak death spiral isn't caused by a single issue; rather, it's the result of compounding stressors. Oaks, especially as they age, become susceptible to a sequence of challenges:

- Predisposing factors such as poor site conditions, limited root zones, or unsuitable soils reduce their natural defenses.
- Inciting events such as drought, extreme temperatures, or construction injury further deplete the tree's energy reserves.

(continued on next page)



- Contributing factors, mainly secondary pests and diseases, exploit these weaknesses, accelerating decline.

Climate Extremes: The Silent Stressor

Climate change is dramatically altering the environment for oaks. Drought is particularly damaging, stressing trees and reducing their ability to fight off pests and pathogens. Excessive heat, periods of prolonged precipitation, and rapid weather shifts can all force a tree to expend critical energy just to survive, leaving it vulnerable to further decline.

Secondary Problems: Insects and Disease

Once weakened, oaks become magnets for opportunistic insects and diseases. Borers, scale insects, and aphids can infest stressed trees. Diseases like anthracnose, root rot, and cankers quickly take hold. These secondary problems rarely kill a healthy oak but can be fatal to one already in decline.

Action Steps for Grounds Managers: Good, Better, Best

Protecting legacy oaks requires a proactive, tiered strategy:

- Good:**
- Address immediate threats by identifying and treating active insect or disease issues with targeted, environmentally responsible interventions.
 - Practice proper mulching, 2-4 inches deep, away from the trunk, and deep, infrequent watering, especially during drought.

- Better:**
- Build tree vitality by supplementing basic care with plant growth regulators (to encourage strong roots and stress tolerance) and tailored fertilization based on soil or foliar analysis.

- Best:**
- Commit to long-term system health by improving the soil itself. Use biological inoculants, biochar, and organic matter to restore soil life and structure. Address compaction with decompaction tools and consider permanent subsurface aeration for chronically wet or compacted sites.

The Bottom Line

Legacy oaks are irreplaceable cultural and ecological assets. Their decline is not inevitable; grounds managers can slow or reverse the death spiral by combining immediate care with a focus on long-term soil and tree health. By adopting a "good, better, best" framework, you not only address urgent problems but also create resilient landscapes for generations to come.



Excellence in Action: Highlighting PGMS Green Star Awards® Recipients

The annual **PGMS Green Star Awards** recognize more than beautiful landscapes—they celebrate the planning, stewardship, innovation, and teamwork required to sustain exceptional environments year after year. The 2025 awards recipients demonstrated how grounds professionals respond to operational challenges, elevate visitor experiences, and strengthen organizational missions through thoughtful landscape management. As PGMS prepares to announce the 2026 honorees this November at the PGMS 2026 Annual Conference, the accomplishments of Mission Point Resort, Texas Christian University, and Dawes Arboretum continue to offer meaningful inspiration for the profession.

Grand Award recipient **Mission Point Resort** on Mackinac Island exemplifies how grounds management can shape the guest experience while balancing environmental realities and logistical

constraints. Located on 18 acres along the shoreline, the resort's landscape program blends horticultural excellence with hospitality, incorporating seasonal displays, native plantings, edible gardens, and carefully curated visitor spaces. The property includes more than 50,000 flowering bulbs, 15,000 annuals, themed gardens, miles of walkways, and gathering areas designed to invite reflection and connection.

As Grounds Manager Steven L. Frank explained, Mission Point's work begins with a clear service philosophy: "Our brand promise to our guests, visitors and staff members is extraordinary Mackinac Island experiences." That commitment extends beyond aesthetics. Operating on an island without cars presents unique transportation and **supply-chain challenges, requiring long-term planning, careful inventory management, and creative problem-solving.** From composting green waste



Mission Point Resort

and supporting “Farm to Ferry” food initiatives to restoring screening after herbicide damage and managing turf stress from high-profile events, the resort demonstrated how resilience and attention to detail underpin successful landscape operations.

Honor Award recipient **Texas Christian University** (TCU) highlighted another dimension of grounds management excellence: **maintaining safe, visually exceptional athletic environments under constant pressure**. TCU’s natural football, baseball, and soccer surfaces support Division I competition while accommodating practices, camps, televised events, bowl games, and even concerts. The responsibility extends well beyond visual presentation to include athlete safety, performance, and recovery.

“Our mission is to provide the safest playing surfaces for any athlete that sets foot on our fields while being known for world class quality and appearance,” shared Sports Turf Manager Andrew Siegel. Achieving that mission requires technical expertise, adaptability, and disciplined maintenance schedules. From rapid in-season resodding after

pythium blight to recovering heavily worn practice fields following camps involving thousands of athletes, the TCU team illustrates how strategic planning and responsive management protect both field performance and player safety. Sustainability also plays a role in their approach, with soil moisture sensors helping the team apply water more precisely while promoting environmental stewardship.

At **Dawes Arboretum**, an Honor Award recipient, landscape management is framed through the lens of education, conservation, and long-term ecological care. Spanning 2,000 acres and home to more than 15,000 living plants, the Arboretum balances cultivated gardens, native ecosystems, historic preservation, and public engagement. Visitors experience everything from expansive meadows and oak collections to seasonal events and interpretive learning opportunities that reinforce the organization’s mission.

“The Dawes Arboretum Landscape Operations Team is dedicated to creating accessible, vibrant and healthy landscapes while fostering environmental stewardship to contribute to a more sustainable future,” noted the team. That commitment is reflected in practices ranging from **prescribed prairie burns and sustainable aquatic management to staff training, drainage improvements, and accessible visitor infrastructure**. Programs such as the annual Winter Wonders Walk demonstrate how landscape operations



Texas Christian University

can simultaneously support visitor enjoyment, environmental sensitivity, and organizational storytelling.

Taken together, the accomplishments of Mission Point Resort, Texas Christian University, and Dawes Arboretum illustrate the broad reach of the grounds management profession. Whether supporting hospitality, athletics, or environmental education, each team demonstrates that exceptional landscapes are sustained through



Dawes Arboretum

expertise, adaptability, and a commitment to service.

The Green Star Awards continue to showcase the people and practices advancing the profession, and we look forward to announcing and celebrating the 2026 recipients. Their stories—like those recognized in 2025—will remind us that behind every thriving landscape is a team dedicated to excellence.

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Learn more





August 3–4, 2026 | Philadelphia, PA Hilton Philadelphia at Penn's Landing

From practical management strategies to candid conversations with industry leaders, the PGMS 2026 Regional Conference delivers ideas you can put to work right away.

Registration is open for the **PGMS 2026 Regional Conference**, where this year's theme, *Honoring Our Roots. Growing Our Future.*, sets the stage for two days of practical education, valuable networking, and inspiring experiences. Along with visits to Chanticleer Garden, the Liberty Bell, and more, attendees will gain fresh ideas they can put to work immediately.

Don't miss engaging education sessions such as "Reprioritize Your Efforts," presented by Vince Marrocco. Explore how to focus resources on the spaces that make the greatest impression—entrances, walkways, and other high-visibility areas—while creating realistic service levels elsewhere. Learn communication

strategies and practical approaches that help teams achieve greater impact with less strain.

"Groundbreakers — A Candid Conversation With Top Landscape Pros" brings every attendee into a fast-paced discussion moderated by Margaret Pickoff of Penn State Extension. Industry leaders Tony Leonard, Tony Gale, Steve Furmanski, and Brian Collins will share honest insights on emerging technology, proven practices, and the trends shaping the future of grounds management.

Register today at:
pgms.org/regionalconference

Meet the experts behind this year's Regional Conference program, who will share their experience and insights to help you manage today's challenges and prepare for tomorrow's opportunities.



Brent Lewis
Landscape Architect,
University of Pennsylvania



Bruce Crawford
Manager of Horticulture,
Morris County Parks
Commission



Tony Gale
Assistant Director, Grounds
Drexel University Facilities



Lloyd Traven
Owner,
Peace Tree Farms



Sandra Lopez
Landscape Architect,
Roofmeadow Services, Inc.



Steve Furmanski
Manager of Grounds and
Waste Processing, Penn
State Health Milton S.
Hershey Medical Center



Nate Johnson
Founder and President,
Roofmeadow Services, Inc.



Margaret Pickoff
Horticulture Educator,
Penn State Extension
Bucks County



Tony Leonard
Vice President of Grounds,
Philadelphia Eagles



Vince Marrocco
Gayle E. Maloney Director
of Horticulture at Morris
Arboretum & Gardens,
University of Pennsylvania



Jerry Schrack
Associate Director of
Grounds Operations,
Swarthmore College



Chuck Hinkle
Horticulture Supervisor,
Swarthmore College



Leadership Isn't Meant to Be Done Alone

Applications for the 2027 PGMS LEAD cohort are open.

This 10-month leadership development program helps current and emerging leaders succeed by:

- building resilient teams
- fostering positive workplace cultures
- leading with confidence through expert guidance and peer collaboration.

As one 2026 participant shared, *"Overall, I found this information very helpful and practical. It encouraged me to bring this assessment back to my own team so we can better understand how we complement each other."*

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Student Scholarship Spotlight:

Lauren Eberth, 2025 Recipient

Since receiving a **PGMS Student Scholarship** in 2025, **Lauren Eberth** has reached several exciting milestones in her horticultural career. She earned her Master of Science in Horticulture from the University of Georgia in December 2025 and, just one month later, joined the Atlanta History Center as a horticulturist responsible for managing the organization's Georgia native plant gardens.

In her role, Lauren helps steward two collections that celebrate Georgia's botanical diversity. The Quarry Garden, located within a historic 19th-century rock quarry, showcases native plants from across the state, while Swan Woods highlights species native to Georgia's Piedmont region. Her work includes removing invasive species, improving

plant records, and planning new installations that strengthen the Atlanta History Center collections.

Lauren is especially excited about expanding the gardens' living collections. She explained, "We are working to expand our living collections not only to showcase as many of our beautiful native plants as possible, but also as an act of conservation." Through collaborations with organizations such as the Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance, the Atlanta History Center hopes to establish ex-situ populations of rare and imperiled species, helping safeguard them while supporting the broader ecosystems of fungi, insects, birds, and other wildlife that depend on native plant communities. Lauren has also joined colleagues in cataloging the

(continued on next page)



remarkable biodiversity found across the Atlanta History Center campus.

Her academic work continues to flourish as well. Lauren recently celebrated the acceptance of her master's research paper, *Flower Color Inheritance and Intraspecific Hybridization for Improvement of Ornamental Scarlet Sage (Salvia coccinea)*, for publication in the Journal of the American Society for Horticultural Science. It marks the first of several manuscripts she plans to publish from her graduate research.

When asked what issue today's students and young professionals should prioritize, Lauren points to sustainability. "I truly think that most people can find a way to participate in improving the sustainability of our society," she says. She believes sustainability extends far beyond environmental science, encompassing business, architecture, transportation, landscape design, and countless other fields. Whether reducing packaging waste, designing more efficient buildings, or creating resilient landscapes, she encourages professionals

to find opportunities within their own disciplines to make a meaningful impact.

Lauren's passion for plants has also taken her far from home. In 2023, she attended the International Conference on Serpentine Ecology in Italy, where researchers explored the unique plants and ecosystems associated with serpentinite soils. As part of the conference, she toured a long-decommissioned asbestos mine in northern Italy to study its geology, specialized vegetation, and lichens—an experience few people would expect to find on a horticulturist's résumé.

PGMS congratulates Lauren on her accomplishments and looks forward to her continued contributions to horticulture, conservation, and research.

In the next issue, Lauren shares more of her graduate research in "Getting More from Scarlet Sage," exploring Salvia coccinea, commonly known as scarlet sage—a resilient, pollinator-friendly warm-season annual popular in managed landscapes across the Southeast and beyond.



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As the demands on grounds professionals continue to evolve, the **PGMS 2026 Annual Conference: Transform**, held in conjunction with ELEVATE, delivers practical strategies to address today's challenges—from workforce development and sustainability to technology, budgets, and operational efficiency.

Through expert-led education, peer discussions, and valuable networking opportunities, you'll gain actionable ideas and meaningful connections that will strengthen your organization and support your professional growth. Conference registration includes the Opening Welcome Reception, PGMS education sessions, more than 50 NALP educational sessions, the ELEVATE Expo and Show Floor, and more!

Featured Speakers



Dayna Berry
Program Manager,
Arbor Day Foundation

Growing the Next Generation
Through Campus
Tree Programs



Warren Gorowitz
Director, Sustainability
and Social Impact,
Hunter Industries

From Maintenance to
Resilience: Managing Turf in a
Climate-Disrupted Environment



Joseph Fearn, CGM, ISA
Landscape Manager,
University of Kansas

Grounds Management –
An Ecosystem Approach

Visit pgms.org/annualconference to register and explore the full lineup of expert speakers, education sessions, and networking opportunities.



Session Highlight

Maximizing Impact: Delivering High-Quality Grounds with Limited Resources



Kevin Scott Mercer, CGM, CSFM
Director of Grounds,
Salt Lake Community College

I am honored to be presenting alongside Dr. Tyler Carr at the 2026 Annual Conference in Tampa. Our session, “Maximizing Impact: Delivering High-Quality Grounds with Limited Resources,” will address one of the most important challenges facing grounds management professionals today: **maintaining exceptional standards while operating with limited budgets, staffing constraints, and increasing expectations.**

Grounds managers are expected to deliver safe, attractive, and functional landscapes that enhance the image and value of their organizations. Achieving those objectives requires more than technical expertise—it demands effective leadership, operational efficiency, and a commitment to continuous improvement. As resources become increasingly limited, professionals must identify strategies that maximize productivity while maintaining quality and consistency.

Drawing on more than 30 years of experience in grounds and landscape management, I will share three practical principles that have consistently improved productivity, strengthened professionalism, and enhanced operational performance. These proven strategies can be adapted to organizations of all sizes and will provide attendees with actionable ideas that can be implemented immediately.

Whether you manage a university campus, athletic facilities, cemeteries, municipal properties, corporate landscapes, property management portfolios, or commercial landscape accounts, this session will offer practical insights for achieving measurable results with available resources.

Equally important, the presentation will encourage professional dialogue and the exchange of ideas among colleagues. The Annual Conference provides a unique opportunity to learn from industry leaders, discuss common challenges, and share successful practices. I look forward to engaging with fellow professionals and contributing to meaningful conversations that advance our profession and promote excellence in grounds management.

How Grounds Teams Are Using Technology to Transform Operations

Sustainability in grounds management is often discussed—but what does it look like in day-to-day operations?

In a PGMS video feature, board members Mark Baldwin and Phil Richey share **practical, large-scale examples of how green waste is being transformed from a disposal challenge into a valuable resource.**

Across both municipal and university settings, organic material such as leaves, wood chips, plant debris, and excavation soils are being diverted from landfills and redirected into composting systems. These materials are processed, blended, and screened to produce usable topsoil that can be reintroduced directly back into campus and landscape projects.

The benefits go beyond sustainability goals. These systems reduce hauling and tipping costs, decrease fuel usage, and create a more self-sufficient approach

to landscape maintenance. In some operations, the resulting material is even reused across capital projects at a fraction of the cost of externally sourced soil.

The conversation also highlights how sustainability is closely tied to broader landscape health strategies, including integrated pest management (IPM) and thoughtful resource reuse.

What would this look like in your operation?

What are you doing to keep your landscapes clean, efficient, and sustainable?

[Watch the full discussion on YouTube.](#)

Recognizing Our Newly Certified Members

PGMS proudly congratulates its newest credential recipients for achieving an important milestone in their professional development.

Cameron Kastelein, CGM, of SSC Services for Education – Texas A&M University, has become the 198th grounds management professional to earn the Certified Grounds Manager (CGM) designation. **Jenna Sommer, CGM**, of the University of Missouri, is the 197th professional to complete the program, and **Ronaldo Herrera, CGT**, of SSC Services for Education, has become the 288th professional to earn the Certified Grounds Technician (CGT) credential.

Industry credentials such as the CGM® and CGT demonstrate a commitment to excellence, continued learning, and the highest standards of professionalism in grounds management. These respected certifications validate knowledge, technical expertise, and leadership while helping individuals advance their careers and strengthen the organizations and communities they serve.

PGMS applauds Cameron, Jenna, and Ronaldo for their dedication to the profession and this outstanding achievement! Learn more about certification opportunities and how you can advance your professional credentials in grounds management by visiting: pgms.org/certification.



Upcoming Events

*Learning & Networking:
Stay Informed, Stay Connected*

PGMS Webinar Series: Volunteer Recruitment, Management and Retention July 16, 2026 | 1:00 pm EST

Discover how to maximize success in landscape and gardening projects while improving volunteer satisfaction and retention. Drawing on more than 30 years of experience, Mark Dwyer shares practical strategies for recruiting, managing, and leading successful volunteer programs. Register at pgms.org/events.

Presenter:



Mark Dwyer,
Garden Manager,
Edgerton (WI) Hospital
and Health Services, Inc.

Moderator:



Bill Quade,
Director of Horticulture,
Biltmore Company

PGMS 2026 Regional Conference August 3-4, 2026 | Philadelphia, PA

Gather with grounds management professionals from across the Northeast region for tours, education, and networking. Register today at pgms.org/regionalconference.



Partner Webinar: Connect Your Fleet with John Deere Operations Center August 5, 2026 | 2:00 PM EST



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In this free webinar, learn how John Deere Operations Center helps landscape professionals turn equipment data into actionable insights. See real-world examples and a live demo to understand how to simplify fleet management and make smarter decisions. [Register here](#).

PGMS 2026 Annual Conference: Transform November 8-11, 2026 | Tampa, FL



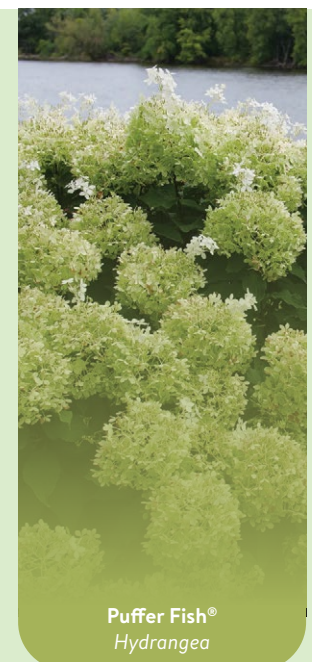
Don't miss Transform, in conjunction with ELEVATE, an energizing opportunity to exchange ideas and gain fresh perspectives shaping the industry. Join the PGMS + NALP community to grow your network and be part of the conversations driving innovation.

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Membership Highlights



PGMS sponsored and attended the **2026 Big Ten & Friends Landscape Managers Conference**, hosted by the University of Iowa Facilities Management Landscape Services. We exchanged ideas and talked all things landscaping with fellow grounds, turfgrass, and landscape professionals.



The **Georgia Branch** gathered in Athens for a successful Summer Meeting, bringing members together in the Classic City for networking, education, and industry insights. Attendees connected with vendors at the GGIA Southeast Green tradeshow, learned about sustainable drought solutions from the UGA Center for Urban Agriculture and explored the latest plant varieties at the UGA Trial Gardens and Georgia State Botanical Gardens.



The **Texas Branch** Summer Conference in Abilene was a great success. Nearly 30 attendees joined from Abilene Christian University (ACU), SMU, Texas A&M, TCU, TWU, Texas Tech, and Southern Botanical. We appreciate ACU for hosting members on their beautiful and well-maintained campus.

Welcoming Our New Members

from April 22 to July 7, 2026

Clem Harris,
Blueline Equipment

Julius Lyons,
Villanova University

Edward Morales,
Richland School District #400

Miguel Palencia,
Richland School District #400

Daryl Parlier,
WNCVAHCS

Ronald O'Bannon,
SSC Services for Education

Jeremiah Orthmann,
Blueline

Saunders Ramsey,
Campus Services, Mississippi State University

Anthony Simmarano,
University of Tampa

Matt Stanich,
Cary Academy

Bryson Stiles,
Harrah's Cherokee Valley River Casino

Mark Valen,
Southwestern College

Timothy Wilder,
City of Mobile Parks and Recreation

Michael Zaic, Harrah's Cherokee Valley River Casino

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Industry News

Building Resilient Landscapes, Growing Future Talent

2026 Olmsted Network Conference Explores Resilient Landscapes

The Olmsted Network is hosting its 2026 Annual Conference in Portland, OR, on September 23-25. *The Power of Connection: Shaping Resilient Public Landscapes* will convene landscape professionals and advocates from across the country to explore how connection drives resilient public landscapes.

The conference offers three days of learning from each other, building new connections, and wrestling with what it really takes to fund and maintain the parks and places that shape our communities. Speakers and topics will include:

- **Keynote speaker** Vivek Shandas, a professor of Earth, Environment, and Society at Portland State University
- **Disaster recovery** with Bill Quade, CGM, Southeast Regional Director, PGMS & Director of Horticulture, Biltmore
- **The Long Game: How Parks Are Built, Sustained, and Evolving Over Time** featuring Christine Abbott, Project Manager, PLA, ASLA, Berger Partnerships; and Jana La Sorte, Board Executive Director, Fort Tryon Park Conservancy
- **Portland area historians and preservation leaders** like Laurence Cotton, Mike Houck, C.N.E. Corbin, Catherine McNeur, and Laurie Matthews, FASLA

Attendees will also tour Portland landscapes, from Laurelhurst Park and Forest Park to the Albina neighborhood, tracing the city's park story from Olmsted-era roots to present-day stewardship and equity work. Local historians, conservancies, and community

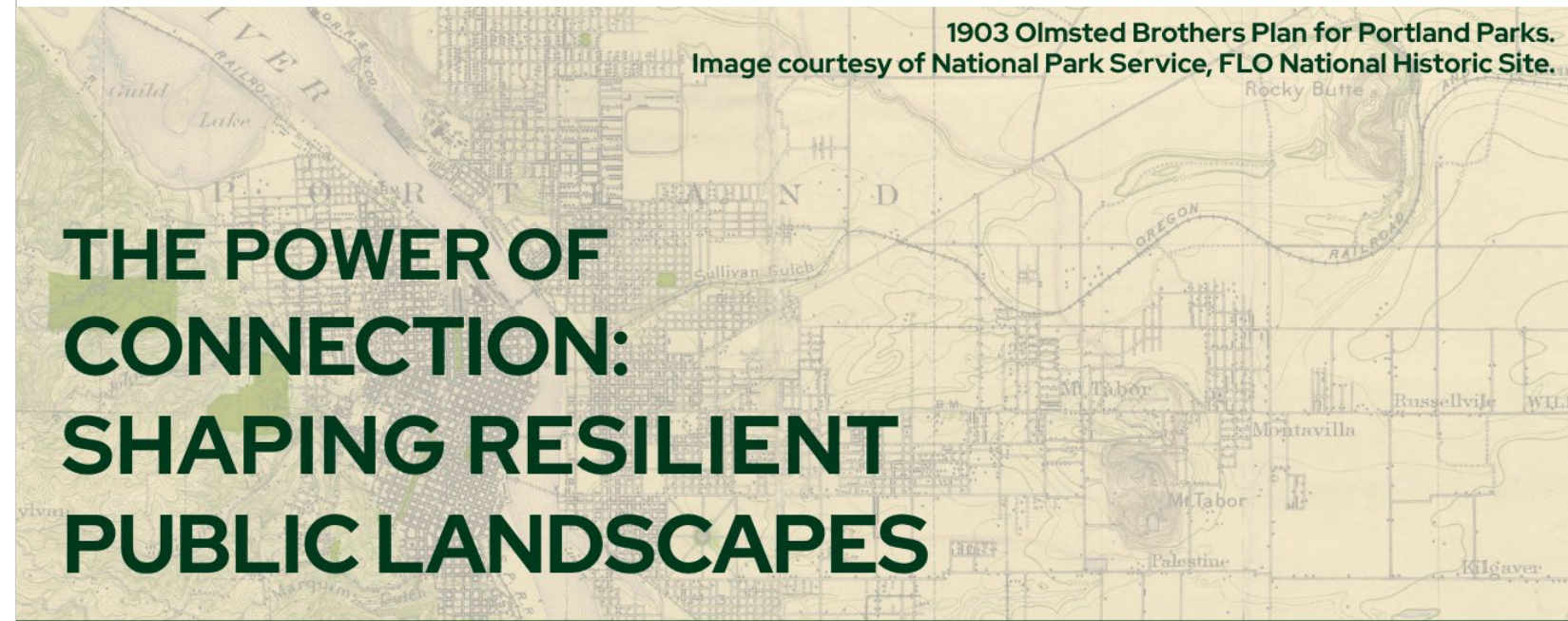
organizations will lead the way, each offering a different lens on how these spaces were built, cared for, and reimagined.

The event will be bookended by Olmsted Salon: Private Designs in the Pacific Northwest, an intimate luncheon focused on Olmsted-design private estates and communities taking place at Elk Rock Garden, and the 2026 Olmsted Network Awards Dinner, a celebration of the individuals and organizations whose work reflects the enduring ideals of the Olmsted legacy—promoting health, beauty, community, and access to nature for all.

The Olmsted Network is the only national organization dedicated to Olmsted parks, places, and principles. For over 40 years, it has advocated for threatened green spaces, educated the organizations that steward them, and championed Olmsted's enduring vision of parks for all people.

Registration is open now through September 15. Regular registration is \$400 with discounted rates available to qualified individuals.

Learn more at olmsted.org/2026conference.



1903 Olmsted Brothers Plan for Portland Parks.
Image courtesy of National Park Service, FLO National Historic Site.

THE POWER OF CONNECTION: SHAPING RESILIENT PUBLIC LANDSCAPES



2026 Annual Conference
September 23-25 | Portland, OR
12 PDH (LA CES/HSW)

Seed to STEM 2026 Immersive Expands Educators' View of Horticulture Careers



The 2026 Seed to STEM immersive program was a tremendous success, bringing together 30 high school horticulture, floral design, and floral business educators, along with four peer mentors, from 17 states for four days of hands-on learning across the horticulture industry. Participants visited five leading industry sites—Longwood Gardens, Lucas Greenhouse, Overdevest Nurseries, DVFlora, and North Creek Nurseries—to explore careers in public horticulture, greenhouse production, nursery operations, and the floral supply chain.

According to Seed Your Future Executive Director Jazmin Albarran, the experience transformed how educators view the industry. Teachers reported arriving with a limited understanding of horticulture and leaving with a broader perspective of career opportunities spanning technology, sustainability, business, research, and environmental solutions. This fall, they will bring those new insights into their classrooms, helping students discover the many pathways available in the green industry.

Seed to STEM is designed to equip high school floral and horticulture educators with industry knowledge, professional connections, and classroom resources that strengthen career exploration for students. By investing in educators who collectively reach hundreds of students each year, the program helps bridge the gap between education and workforce needs while showcasing the innovation and diversity of modern horticulture careers.

As Albarran shared, “By empowering high school educators with industry knowledge and resources, we are creating a ripple effect that inspires the next generation of horticulture professionals.”

Since its inception, Seed to STEM has increased educators’ confidence in teaching horticulture career pathways and strengthened student engagement through career-focused programming, ensuring more young people are introduced to meaningful opportunities in the art, science, technology, and business of horticulture.

Job Opportunities

Explore up-to-date job listings at pgms.org by heading to our Career Center.

Supervisory Facility Operations Specialist - (Director of Facilities Ops.)

Architect of the Capitol

Washington, DC -- The Supervisory Facility Operations Specialist (Director of Facilities Operations) performs planning, estimating, coordination and scheduling for the trades, crafts and labor workforce for construction, renovation and installation projects. The incumbent conducts inspections of construction and renovation work; formulates plans for the most efficient use of staff resources; and performs investigations and exploratory assessments to determine the scope and nature of required solutions, including the use of contractors. Serves as liaison with the Office of the Chief Engineer (OCE), Construction Execution Branch, Safety, Fire and Environmental Programs, U.S. Capitol Police, and other offices and jurisdictions of the AOC. CGA has continued to grow as a level III internationally accredited arboretum

and nationally recognized leader of professional grounds management excellence.

Supervisory and Managerial Responsibilities

- Supervises the staff of the division through subordinate supervisors. Performs administrative and technical supervisory functions for subordinates. Manages the organizational unit’s budget and workload.
- Develops work improvement plans for subordinates. If necessary, recommends appropriate personnel actions. Provides advice and counsel to subordinates on administrative and technical work matters.
- Provides leadership to ensure support for equal employment opportunity (EEO) goals and requirements.

See the job posting for additional supervisory responsibilities.

Recreation/Sports Specialist Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, MI -- This position maintains the general condition and appearance of all indoor and outdoor athletic facilities including outdoor intramural fields and game spaces.

Application must possess of a valid Michigan drivers' license, and must obtain a Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD) Commercial Pesticide License with endorsements for Turf (category 3a), Ornamental (category 3b) and Right-of-Way (category 6) within 40 working days of hire. The University will recognize all MDARD reciprocal agreements.

Groundskeeper Eastern University

St. Davids, PA -- The Groundskeeper, reporting to the Grounds Manager & Small Project Assistant, maintains and cares for the campus grounds with an emphasis on safety and aesthetics in a manner of environmental consciousness and utilizes the best management practices to care for the campus surroundings.

Position Responsibilities:

- Mowing, trimming, weeding, leaf collecting, pruning, fertilization, irrigating/watering and all other duties as assigned to maintain the campus in a manner that is well manicured and

pleasing to those who enter the campus.

- Snow removal and all related aspects such as plowing, salting and shoveling.
- Assists with the maintenance of the athletic fields to ensure the aesthetics, safety and all related aspects including but not limited to: fertilizing, mowing, aerating, slit seeding, top-dressing and dragging and/or grooming the fields.
- Prune and maintain trees, shrubs and plantings in an aesthetic manner to allow for full potential growth.
- General maintenance of the campus grounds landscape as required such as: application of fertilizers and pesticides, trash and litter debris removal and collection.

See the job posting for more responsibilities and job qualifications.

Promote your job openings through PGMS classified postings and connect with qualified professionals across the industry.

PGMS also offers free postings for internship opportunities.

Visit pgms.org/networking for details.



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The Professional Grounds Management Society® (PGMS®) is the leading membership organization for grounds professionals, advancing the field through education, networking, certification, and professional development.

Members enjoy annual conferences, educational resources, branch meetings, awards, and industry publications. PGMS helps professionals grow while connecting individuals across the profession.

Learn more about membership at pgms.org/membership and becoming a PGMS Partner in Professionalism at pgms.org/partners.

Connect with us on social media.

