

# 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL RELEAF CONFERENCE

JULY 13-15, 2017  
ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY  
QUEENS, NEW YORK



**New York  
ReLeaf**

“Strengthening Connections:  
Diversity in our Urban Forests”





## **25<sup>th</sup> Annual ReLeaf Conference for New York State 2017 Conference Sponsors**

NYS Urban Forestry Council  
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

### **London Planetree Sponsors**

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Thank you from New York Region 2!

Welcome to St. John's University,  
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# Conference Program

## Thursday, July 13

**10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Sponsor/Vendor Exhibit Set Up** - D'Angelo Center, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

**2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. New York State Urban Forestry Council Board Meeting** -D'Angelo Center, Room 401

**4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Screening of: *The Trees* followed by a panel discussion**- D'Angelo Center, Room 416

*Scott Elliott, Producer, Director, The Trees*

*Richie Cabo, Horticulturalist, NYC Parks*

*Moderator: Andrew Newman, NYC Parks*

**CNLP = 2.0 CEUs**

**4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Registration and Dorm check-in**- D'Angelo Center, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

**6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Annual Council Members Meeting**- D'Angelo Center, Room 401

**7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Annual Council Members Reception**- D'Angelo Center, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

Light hors d'oeuvres will be served.

For those unable to attend the Reception, Montgoris Dining Hall will be open to the public until 8:00pm. Cash and Credit accepted. Please see Travel Information Page for dining suggestions close to St. John's University. **\*\*DINNER ON YOUR OWN\*\***

## Friday, July 14

**7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast, Montgoris Dining Hall** (overnight guests)

**\*\*Note: Must show StormCard for complimentary breakfast\*\***

**7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Registration and Dorm check-in /meet with Exhibitors**- D'Angelo Center, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

**8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Welcome Remarks**

*David Moore, President, NYS Urban Forestry Council*

*Ken Scarlatelli, Natural Resources Supervisor, Region 2, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

*Conrado "Bobby" Gempesaw, President, St. John's University*

*Vincent Sapienza, Acting Commissioner, NYC Department of Environmental Protection*

*Dorothy Lewandowski, Queens Borough Commissioner, NYC Parks*

*Shola Olatoye, Chair & Chief Executive, NYC Housing Authority*

*Moderator: Mary Kramarchyk, Urban Forestry Program Manager, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

### **9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Keynote: National Perspective of Urban Forestry – 10 Year Plan**

National urban forestry program leaders address the attendees in the Keynote lecture. Priorities, partnerships, success stories and the future of urban forestry will be discussed during the presentations by these distinctive and influential leaders.

*Jan Davis, Assistant Director, Cooperative Forestry Program, USDA Forest Service*

*Dan Lambe, President, Arbor Day Foundation*

*Moderator: Mary Kramarchyk, Urban Forestry Program Manager, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

**ISA Certified Arborist = 0.75 CEUs, CNLP = 0.75 CEUs**

### **9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Plenary: NYC Street Tree Map – NYC Parks and Recreation**

The product of NYC Parks' TreesCount! 2015 Street Tree Census, the New York City Street Tree Map brings New York City's urban Forest to your fingertips. The interactive map allows users to learn about the trees in their community, record and share care activities, and much more.

*Jennifer Greenfeld, Assistant Commissioner for Forestry, Horticulture and Natural Resources, NYC Parks*

*Charles Cochran, Communications and Digital Media Coordinator for Forestry, Horticulture and Natural Resources, NYC Parks*

*Moderator: Danielle Gift, NYC Parks*

**ISA Certified Arborist = 1.0 CEUs, CNLP = 1.0 CEUs**

**10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Introductions:** Sponsors and Exhibitors will introduce themselves and their products/services.

*Moderator: Andrew Newman, NYC Parks*

**11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Break/ Visit Exhibitors – D'Angelo Center, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. (choose between ONE of the 3 WORKSHOPS)**

#### **Workshop – Forest Health Update**

The long term health and productivity of New York's forests are threatened by pests and diseases. This workshop will provide a forest health overview, information on community efforts to prepare and manage infestations as well as raise public awareness. Oak wilt, emerald ash borer, Asian longhorned beetle and southern pine beetle are just some of the many species that have impacted communities across the state.

*Rob Cole, Forest Health Specialist, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

*Moderator: Danielle Gift, NYC Parks*

**DEC Categories 2, 10,3a, 25, 9 = 1.25 CEUs, ISA Certified Arborist = 1.25 CEUs, CNLP = 1.25 CEUs**

#### **Workshop – Green City Force & Young Urban Forester Internship**

Engaging youth is an important part of diversifying the urban forest. Hear from two successful programs in the NYC area, Green City Force and Trees New York. Green City Force is an AmeriCorps program that engages young adults from low income communities in national service related to the environment. They are then prepared for sustainable careers, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and building the green city we want to see. Trees New York's Young Urban Forester Summer Internship is a seven week, 175 hour urban and community forestry paid

internship. The goal of the program is to introduce 15 high school juniors and seniors from low-income households in New York City to the fast-growing field of environmental science careers and the variety of job opportunities in the lab, in the field, at the office or in a classroom.

*Andrew Lewis, Team Leader, Green City Force*

*Nelson Villarrubia, Executive Director, Trees New York*

*Moderator: John Lisbon, NYC Housing Authority*

**ISA Certified Arborist = 1.25 CEUs, CNLP = 1.25 CEUs**

### **Workshop – St. John’s Tree Campus Walking Tour**

Follow Tom Goldsmith on a tour of St. John’s University wonderful urban forest. View St. John’s native tree arboretum and organic garden. Participate in the compost tea workshop and Tree Mapping project. **Limited to 50 participants**

*Tom Goldsmith, Director of Environmental and Energy Conservation, St. John’s University*

*Peter Schmidt, Certified Soil Foodweb Advisor, Certified Arborist, Compostwerks, LLC.*

*Moderator: Tom Panzone, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

**ISA Certified Arborist = 1.25 CEUs, CNLP = 1.25 CEUs**

**1:00 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. Catered Lunch & Visit with Vendors – D’Angelo Center, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Café**

**2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.** (Choose to attend a **Workshop** or **Tour**)

### **Workshop – Stew-Map: Visualizing Civic Stewardship Capacity and Engagement**

STEW-MAP is a mapping tool and database of organizations designed to help understand and strengthen our civic capacity to take care of New York’s neighborhoods. In *One New York: The Plan for a Strong and Just City*, Mayor Bill de Blasio acknowledged that New York City is only as strong as its neighborhoods are – and our civic groups and social networks are a crucial part of the lifeblood of the city and are the stewards of our community resources.

*Erika Svendsen, Research Social Scientist, USDA Forest Service*

*Lindsay Campbell, Research Social Scientist, USDA Forest Service*

*Laura Landau, Project Manager, USDA Forest Service*

*Moderator: Nichole Henderson, NYC Parks*

**ISA Certified Arborist = 2.0 CEUs, CNLP = 2.0 CEUs**

**Tour- NYC Parks Natural Area Bus Tour – Meet at Gate 6 at 1:45pm bus departs at 2:00p.m.**

Formed in 1984, the NYC Parks Natural Resources Group (NRG) manages natural areas of city parks. Learn about NRG’s forest restoration process and tour sites where young forest of native tree and understory canopy have been reintroduced through the Million Trees NYC program. This workshop will be outside, **dress for the weather.** **Limited to 50 participants**

*Kristy King, Director of Natural Areas Restoration and Management in the Forestry, Horticulture, and Natural Resources, NYC Parks*

*Moderator: Tim Wenskus, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

**ISA Certified Arborist = 2.0 CEUs, CNLP = 2.0 CEUs**

**Tour - NYC Green Infrastructure Program Overview and Site Tour** - Meet at Gate 6 at 1:45pm bus departs at 2:00p.m.

New York City's Green Infrastructure Program has constructed thousands of green infrastructure practices all across the city. The session will feature a presentation on how the program works followed by a tour of installations in the area: standard right-of-way rain gardens and green infrastructure retrofits of larger areas. This workshop will be outside, **dress for the weather.**

**Limited to 40 participants**

*Zachary Youngerman, Project Manager, Green Infrastructure Planning & Partnerships, NYC Department of Environmental Protection*

*Moderator: Kim Estes-Fradis, NYC Department of Environmental Protection*

**ISA Certified Arborist = 2.0 CEUs, CNLP = 2.0 CEUs**

**5:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Friday Night Picnic at Fort Totten Park**

**No personal vehicles allowed at Fort Totten. Bus transportation will be provided.**

## Saturday, July 15

**7:00 a.m. - 8:15 a.m. Breakfast, Montgoris Hall** (overnight guests)

**\*\*Note:** Must show StormCard for complimentary breakfast

**7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Registration/meet with Exhibitors-** D'Angelo Center, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

**8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.** (choose to attend the **Workshop** or **Tour**)

### **Workshop - Research Highlights: Urban Tree Selection: Beyond the Native/Exotic Debate and USDA Stress Detection Research**

In the face of changing climates we hear a lot about resilient landscapes those that can take a punch and come back beautifully. How do we make the best plant selections, given climate uncertainty? Moreover, urban landscapes are prone to microclimates that predate the larger issues of climate change. Many feel that using native plants are best; however, the very 'non-native', disturbed nature of the urban environment should play a critical role when deciding which plant will do best.

In addition, the cultural desire for uniformity needs to respond to the need for a more sustainable diverse landscape. Diverse, well-sited trees will inherently provide great resiliency in our urban landscapes.

*Nina Bassuk, Ph D., Professor, Program Leader, Urban Horticultural Institute, Cornell University*

*Dr. Rich Hallett, Research Ecologist, USDA Forest Service*

*Moderator: Novem Auyeung, NYC Parks*

**DEC Categories 10, 25,3a = 1.00 CEUs, ISA Certified Arborist = 1.5 CEUs, CNLP = 1.5 CEUs**

**8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

### **Bus Trip- Visitor Center at the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, Kingsland**

**Wildflowers and Community Engagement** - Meet at Gate 6 at 8:00 a.m. bus departs at 8:30a.m.

Situated on 53-acres in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, the Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant is the largest of New York City's 14 wastewater treatment plants. Serving over one million people, across an area of 25-square miles, it treats approximately 300 million gallons of wastewater each day. Kingsland Wildflowers is committed to expanding natural habitat and green corridors for

wildlife populations. Learn about the wastewater treatment process, stormwater management, and how stewardship activities in Greenpoint, Brooklyn help strengthen our connections to each other and our urban environments. **Dress for the weather.** *Limited to 40 participants*

*Robin Sanchez, Deputy Director of Education, New York City Department of Environmental Protection*

*Sophie Plitt, Greening Greenpoint Coordinator, New York Tree Trust, ISA Certified Arborist*

*Sam Bishop, Director of Education, Trees New York, ISA Board Certified Master Arborist/ Municipal Specialist*

*Niki Jackson, Project Coordinator, Kingsland Wildflowers*

*Moderator: Kim Estes-Fradis, NYC Department of Environmental Protection*

**ISA Certified Arborist = 1.5 CEUs, CNLP = 1.5 CEUs**

**10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Coffee Break, visit with Vendors- D'Angelo Center, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**10:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.** (attend Workshops)

**Workshop – Discovery Agents: 10:15 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

The USDA Forest Service and American Recreation Coalition have teamed up with Discovery Agents, a game developer in Canada, to bring augmented reality mobile games to conservation education. USDA Forest Service partners reached out to NYC Parks and Green-Wood in Brooklyn to collaborate on this exciting opportunity. Discovery Agents is an interactive, location-based mobile game that brings kids out to parks and teaches them about nature.

*Joseph Charap, Director of Horticulture, Green-Wood Cemetery*

*Sara Evans, Green-Wood Cemetery*

*Michael Bohne, Forest Health Program Leader, USDA Forest Service*

*Brady Simmons, Ecologist, Urban Field Station*

*Moderator: Sally Kellogg, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

**CNLP= 0.75 CEUs**

**Workshop – Post-Sandy Lessons Learned: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

Superstorm Sandy was the most devastating hurricane event to hit New York City in recent memory. With further impacts of a changing climate on the horizon, municipalities are working to forge emergency response plans as well as long-term resiliency efforts.

*Vinny Biondo, Bay Management Specialist, Town of Babylon*

*Rebecca McMackin, Director of Horticulture, Brooklyn Bridge Park*

*Navé Strauss, Director of Street Tree Planting, NYC Parks*

*Moderator: Danielle Gift, NYC Parks*

**ISA Certified Arborist – 1.0 CEUs, CNLP = 1.0 CEUs**

**12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. – Box Lunch**

**1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. – (choose between Workshop or Tour)**

**Workshop – Funding Presentation**

A variety of speakers have come together to speak about state, federal or corporate funding sources available throughout the year. It is important to learn each of these funding mechanisms and procedures to determine what funding is available and when the applications are required. Tree planting projects relative to clean water, clean air or community revitalization will be discussed.



### **Environmental Justice Grants**

*Rosa Mendez, Director of Office of Environmental Justice, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

### **Southern Pine Beetle Forest Health Grants**

*Rob Cole, Forest Health Specialist, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

### **New Yorkers 4 Parks**

*Emily Walker, Director of Outreach & Programs, New Yorkers 4 Parks*

### **Partnerships for Parks**

*Leah Worrell, Technical Assistance Manager, Partnerships for Parks*

### **Natural Areas Conservancy**

*Bram Gunther, Director of the NYC Urban Field Station, Cofounder of the Natural Areas Conservancy*

*Moderator: Andrew Newman, NYC Parks*

**ISA Certified Arborist – 2.5 CEUs, CNLP = 2.5 CEUs**

**Tour – Queens Botanical Gardens** – Meet at Gate 6 at 12:45 p.m. bus departs at 1:00p.m.

Trees are not only an integral part of the Garden's botanical collection, they are vastly important for their impact on the quality of life in the surrounding community – the bustling, crowded urban neighborhood of Queens. Nearly 20,000 school children participate in workshops and other educational classes each year besides the annual festivals that draw thousands of people adding to the larger community of visitors to the garden. A recent inventory prioritizing the management of this community forest has been taken. A welcoming discussion by Garden staff will be given.

***Limited to 48 participants.***

*Susan Lacerte, Executive Director, Queens Botanical Garden*

*Morgan Potter, Supervisor of Gardens, Queens Botanical Garden*

*Maria Rodriquez, Queens Botanical Garden, Queens Botanical Garden*

*Moderator: Mary Kramarchyk, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation*

**ISA Certified Arborist – 2.5 CEUs, CNLP = 2.5 CEUs**

**CONFERENCE CLOSE – 3:30pm**

***Don't forget to fill out your surveys!***

# Conference Speakers Biographies

## Keynote Speakers:

**Jan Davis** is Assistant Director in the Cooperative Forestry Program of the USDA Forest Service. As the National Program Leader for the Forest Service's Urban and Community Forestry Program, she works with state forestry agencies, leverages partner resources, and builds coalitions. Prior to coming to the Forest Service, she worked for the Texas Forest Service for 17 years. As a Cum Laude graduate from Stephen F. Austin State University, she holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Forest Management.

**Dan Lambe** is the president of the Arbor Day Foundation, founded in 1972, which has grown to become the largest nonprofit membership organization dedicated to planting trees, with over one million members, supporters, and valued partners. Dan leads the strategic development of programs and partnerships through which the Foundation strives to educate, recognize, and empower people to plant, nurture, and celebrate trees.

## Workshop Speakers:

**Nina Bassuk, Ph D.** has been a professor and program leader of the Urban Horticulture Institute at Cornell University for the past 36 years. She is co-author of "Trees in the Urban Landscape", a text for landscape architects and horticultural practitioners on establishing trees in disturbed and urban landscapes. In addition, Dr. Bassuk has authored over 100 papers on the physiological problems of plants growing in urban environments, including improved plant selections for difficult sites, soil modification including the development of 'CU-Structural Soil' and improved transplanting technology. She works closely with municipalities to help implement best practices in urban forestry management.

**Vinny Biondo** has been Bay Management Specialist in the Town of Babylon's Department of Environmental Control for six years. He leads Babylon's street tree planting program. Vinny is a part of the Long Island ReLeaf group and an New York State Urban Forestry Council Board member.

**Sam Bishop** is Education Director for Trees New York. He is an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist and an ISA Certified Municipal Specialist. Sam is also a pruning instructor for the New York Botanical Garden, has taught Urban Forestry at The New School, and served on the board of directors of ACTrees.

**Michael Bohne** has a Masters in Entomology and Chemical Ecology from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry where he studied pine bark beetles in Minnesota and the Asian longhorned beetle in China. Mike joined the US Forest Service in 2003 working on the Asian longhorned beetle eradication program in New York City and has been the Forest Health group leader at the Durham Field Office in NH since 2008. The Forest Health program provides technical assistance on forest health-related matters across all land ownership, particularly those related to disturbance agents such as native and non-native insects, pathogens, and invasive plants.

**Lindsay Campbell** is a research social scientist with the USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station. She is based at the New York City Urban Field Station, which is a partnership between the Forest Service and the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation. Her current research explores the dynamics of urban politics, natural resource stewardship, and sustainability policymaking. She is joint PI on several long-term, interdisciplinary research projects. These include the Stewardship Mapping and Assessment Project (STEW-MAP), which maps the social networks and spatial turf of civic, government, and private actors working on environmental stewardship in New York City – and has now been replicated in Chicago, Baltimore, Seattle, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and a growing list of international locations. As well, she helps lead the research of the Living Memorials Project, which examines the use and stewardship of open space post-September 11, received the 2007 EDRA/*Places* Award for Research, and now continues longitudinally to look at community stewardship

over time. She is a co-PI of the TKF-foundation funded “Landscapes of Resilience” team examining open spaces and sacred spaces in Joplin, MO and New York City. She jointly leads the Social Assessment of NYC Parks and Natural Areas, a partnership between USDA Forest Service, NYC Parks, and the Natural Areas Conservancy. She was a member of the NSF-funded ULTRA-EX team examining changes in land cover, ecosystem services, and stewardship in New York City’s urban forest. She was also a member of the MillionTreesNYC Advisory Committee and Research and Evaluation Subcommittee. She is the author of *City of Forests*, *City of Farms: Sustainability Planning for New York City’s Nature*, forthcoming from Cornell University Press. In 2015, Dr. Campbell won the Northern Research Station Director’s Award recognizing her accomplishments as an Early Career Scientist. In addition to her research, Lindsay helps direct the Science of the Living City program for the Urban Field Station, including fellows, seminars, and artists in residence. Dr. Campbell holds a BA in Public Policy from Princeton University, a Masters in City Planning from MIT, and a PhD in Geography from Rutgers University.

**Joseph Charap** is the Director of Horticulture and Curator at Green-Wood Cemetery, in Brooklyn, New York. Joe graduated from the New York Botanical Garden's School of Professional Horticulture. He is a certified arborist and has a Masters in English Literature from Brooklyn College.

**Charles Cochren** is the Communications and Digital Media Coordinator for FHNR. He has worked with NYC Parks since 2013 as an outreach coordinator for MillionTreesNYC and later as the coordinator for NYC’s third street tree census. He is currently pursuing a Master’s degree in Environmental Policy at the New School. He grew up on a Christmas Tree farm in Hancock, MA.

**Robert Cole** is a forester and Certified Arborist. He has worked in Forest Health for 10 years and is responsible for running the Southern Pine Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, and Oak Wilt Programs for NYSDEC.

**Sara Evans** is the GIS and Interpretation Intern at Green-Wood Cemetery, in Brooklyn, New York. She graduated with a degree in Urban Sustainability with a concentration in Environmental Science and Sociology from Brooklyn College, in May of 2017.

**Tom Goldsmith** is the Director of Environmental and Energy Conservation at St. John's University. He got a “green job” at St. John’s University back in 2008. At SJU, Tom has had the opportunity to expand his engineering knowledge and experience to include environmental stewardship. Some examples include: reducing carbon emissions, food waste recovery, on-site composting, organic landscaping practices, compost tea brewing and participation in Tree Campus USA since 2012.

**Jennifer Greenfeld** is the Assistant Commissioner of Forestry, Horticulture, and Natural Resources for the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation. In this role, she protects, restores, expands, and manages New York City’s urban forest, natural spaces and green infrastructure. Over the last 20 years at Parks, Jennifer led critical efforts to study the health and mortality of street trees and to quantify the impact of trees on the urban environment. She played an important role in MillionTreesNYC, leading the street tree planting effort, and has overseen the restoration and management of 2,000 acres of natural areas including the completion of the first fish passage in New York City, on the Bronx River; the restoration of salt marshes and the planting of nearly 450,000 trees, shrubs, perennials, and grasses as a part of this management.

**Bram Gunther** is the Director of the Urban Field Station, the science and research hub of Forestry, Horticulture, and Natural Resources of the New York City Parks Department. Bram Gunther was previously Chief of Forestry, Horticulture, and Natural Resources for the New York City Parks Department. Bram holds an MA in Environmental Management from the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies and a BA in American Literature from State University of New York at Purchase.

**Dr. Rich Hallett** has spent his career studying tree and forest health in the northeastern U.S., working towards earlier detection of tree stress caused by acid rain, exotic insects and diseases. In 2009 he shifted his research

focus from ex-urban forests to urban ecosystems. He is continuing to work on tree health assessment, including working with a team to develop remote sensing technology to map urban tree health. He also conducts research on urban forest restoration and afforestation. His most recent project focuses on developing tree health assessment methods that are accessible to citizen scientists. When Rich is not deeply engaged in urban forestry and the science of tree health you may find him judging Timbersports competitions around the world, downhill skiing amongst the trees, or sea kayaking.

**Kristy King** is Director of Natural Areas Restoration and Management in the Forestry, Horticulture, and Natural Resources division of NYC Parks where she develops and implements policy on the management and restoration of the over 10,000 acres of natural habitat under NYC Parks' jurisdiction. Kristy's team of project managers, technical experts, gardeners, and foresters is responsible for improving ecosystem health through invasive plant management, debris removal, native species planting, and trail management. Kristy has been with NYC Parks since 2007, and has also managed street tree planting and published peer-reviewed research on the benefits of the urban forest. Kristy holds a BS in Biology from the College of Charleston and an MA in Conservation Biology from Columbia University. Kristy believes that urban natural areas play a vital role in improving quality of life for New Yorkers and loves to connect people with these spaces through stewardship and education.

**Laura Landau** is the Project Manager for STEW-MAP (the Stewardship Mapping Assessment Project) at the NYC Urban Field Station. Her research focuses on civic groups that work to conserve, manage, transform, monitor, advocate for and educate about the local environment. She holds a B.A. in Urban Studies from Barnard College and an M.S. in City and Regional Planning from Pratt Institute.

**Andrew Lewis** is an alumni and now Team Leader here at Green City Force, was born and raised in New York City. During his six-month term as a Corps Member he received hands-on training in the fields of construction and building science, and also professional and personal development. Upon graduation, he committed to a second AmeriCorps term as one of GCF's first Service Associates, working closely with a team leader where he learned team building and management skills that he put into use while working with Corps Members in the field. "Green City Force has helped me develop myself not only professionally but also on a personal level with transferable skills that I can use in my everyday life. The staff here is amazing and they really strive to help young adults living in public housing excel in life and find a sustainable career path. I am happy to be a part of the team that's helping young people reach success in life while also serving their communities".

**Rebecca McMackin** is the Director of Horticulture for award winning Brooklyn Bridge Park, where she and her team of gardeners manage 85 acres of ornamental beds, forest ecosystems, meadows, greenroofs, turf, and wetlands organically with an emphasis on encouraging wildlife. In her "spare time," Rebecca sits on the board for the Ecological Landscaping Association, the Torrey Botanical Society, and Metro Hort. She is an ISA-certified arborist and a NOFA-accredited organic land care professional. Rebecca holds a MSc in Landscape Design from Columbia University, where she was a 2012 Innovation Scholar, and an MSc in Biology from the University of Victoria, where she was a research fellow. She has studied at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and the New York Botanical Garden and earned her Advanced Master Gardener Certification from the BBG.

**Rosa Mendez** is the Director of the Office of Environmental Justice at New York State Department of Environmental Conservation where she advances the Department's environmental justice initiatives. The program has a particular focus on low-income and minority communities that have historically been burdened by environmental issues. The Department's initiatives include incorporating environmental justice concerns into the environmental permit review process and across other agency operations and providing support to projects addressing disproportionate adverse environmental impacts. Prior to joining the DEC, Rosa was a member of the Coastal Management Program at the New York State Department of State. Rosa grew up in Brooklyn, New York and currently resides in Albany.

**Sophie Plitt** is an Urban Forester with a passion for connecting urban communities to trees and enhancing New York City's local forest. Sophie has worked for the New York Restoration Project, TreeKIT, and the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation planning and managing community tree projects in New York City's Public spaces. She currently works as the coordinator of the Greening Greenpoint initiative with the New York Tree Trust.

**Robin Sanchez** is the Deputy Director for Education for the New York City Department of Environmental Protection. Robin works with educators and students throughout New York City and the watersheds to help them learn all about the New York City water supply system, wastewater treatment, water quality, sound and noise, climate change, stewardship, and many other important environmental topics. Prior to joining DEP's education team in 2014, Robin was the Youth Opportunities Program Coordinator for the Appalachian Mountain Club. Robin earned her Master of Arts from New York University, Environmental Conservation Education program.

**Peter Schmidt** is a founding partner of Compostwerks, LLC. Peter is a Certified Soil Foodweb Advisor with years of experience as an arborist. Together with partner Gregg Twehues, Compostwerks prides itself with assisting ecologically minded growers, transitioning green industry professionals, municipalities, colleges, institutions and composting operations.

**Brady Simmons** an ecologist at Parks' Natural Resources Group, is helping launch the Agents of Discovery game at Alley Pond Park along with collaborators at the USDA Forest Service and NYC Parks Urban Park Rangers. Ms. Simmons has been at NYC Parks since 2009 and is stationed at the NYC Urban Field Station, located in Bayside, NY. Most of her work has focused on studying the forest restorations of NRG, past and present. Ms. Simmons received her M.S. in Ecology from Southern Connecticut State University, and has been working in wildlife research and management since 1997, specifically developing monitoring protocols for endangered species of birds and reptiles in NC and CT.

**Navé Strauss** has worked at NYC Parks for 8 years and is an ISA-Certified Arborist. Navé is currently the director of street tree planting for the agency, and oversees managerial and field staff carry out the reforestation of our city's streets. In addition, he helped develop the Young Street Tree Pruning Program and has trained numerous Parks Department employees as well as stewards. On off-hours, Navé can often be found reading a novel or a book by Alex Shigo, a nursery catalog, or discussing the merits of plants, foods, or music with colleagues. Navé holds a Bachelor's in Environmental Studies from St. Lawrence University.

**Erika Svendsen** is a research social scientist with the USDA Forest Service, Northern Research Station. Erika studies environmental stewardship as it relates to governance, social cohesion, and human well-being. She is the co-author of a recent a book on Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship: How Planting Trees Strengthens the Roots of Democracy. She is a recipient of the Forest Service Chief's Award for engaging urban America and an Early Career Scientist Station Award recognizing her co-development of STEW-Map, a tool for mapping and visualizing stewardship groups in complex social-ecological systems. Erika is also the Team Leader for the NYC Urban Field Station, a unique partnership between the USDA Forest Service, NYC Department of Recreation and Parks and their cooperators. The field station is a space to conduct research, cultivate ideas, and foster collaboration among scientists and practitioners focused on urban ecological and social issues. Erika is a graduate of Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation.

**Nelson Villarrubia** became Executive Director for Trees New York in 2013. As Executive Director, Nelson has introduced a host of innovative new projects and programs, including the Young Urban Forester Internship and FruiTrees New York. Over the last few years, Nelson has made several keen personnel choices, bringing strong and creative new staff and board leaders to the organization. Nelson spearheaded the most successful fundraising effort in the history of the organization. In addition to his aptitude in managing people, projects and fundraising, Nelson is a strong collaborator and has forged fruitful partnerships with groups as diverse as

the New York City Housing Authority and the Gowanus Canal Conservancy. Nelson has an MS in Urban Affairs with a concentration in Environmental Policy.

**Emily Walker** manages New Yorkers for Parks (NY4P) relationships with parks advocates and “friends of parks” groups throughout New York City and oversees The Daffodil Project, as well as NY4P’s government relations work. Prior to joining NY4P, Emily was Research Assistant to Tom Hayden and helped facilitate the incorporation of the Peace and Justice Resource Center, a 501(c)3 research organization founded by Mr. Hayden. Emily had internships at the Eastern Environmental Law Center in Newark, NJ, and in the East Los Angeles office of L.A. County Supervisor Gloria Molina. Originally from Orange, CA, Emily holds an M.S. in Nonprofit Management and a M.S. Certificate in Sustainability Strategies from Milano: The New School for Public Engagement, where she received the 2012 Outstanding Graduate Award in Nonprofit Management. She graduated cum laude from Scripps College in Claremont, CA with a B.A. in Legal Studies. Emily received her Professional Horticulturist Certification from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden in 2014, and became a certified Trees NY Citizen Pruner in 2015.

**Leah Worrel** is the Technical Assistance Manager for Leadership and Group Development at Partnerships for Parks. She manages the Partnerships Academy training program which helps NYC community groups improve their skills in fundraising, social media, working with elected officials, and increasing their membership. Emily studied English Literature and Psychology at Barnard College in Manhattan, and is a student at the Marxe School of International and Public Affairs, working towards a Master's Degree in Public Administration. She is passionate about helping community groups who work with NYC parks and green spaces. Leah enjoys painting, performing stand-up comedy, and gazing at trees.

**Zachary Youngerman** is a city planner with experience working in New York, New Orleans, and Canada. At DEP, Zach is assisting in the planning of future green infrastructure on public agency property and conducting outreach to communities where GI is being planned and constructed. In New Orleans he oversaw the design, construction and maintenance of raingardens for the local chapter of the national non-profit Groundwork. More recently, he advised the City of Mississauga, Canada on the implementation of a new \$40M stormwater fee.

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