

CATHERINE C. LAVIS: ALEX L. SHIGO AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN ARBORICULTURAL EDUCATION, 2014

To explore what arboriculture and landscape maintenance look like beyond the textbook, Cathie Lavis strives for hands-on learning that enables her students to exact positive change in preparation for careers that build meaningful, sustainable environments for their communities. Her enthusiasm and understanding for quality instruction bridges industry needs for educated professionals in arboriculture, horticulture, and water conservation. This past summer, Cathie Lavis received ISA's Alex L. Shigo Award for Excellence in Arboricultural Education.

"Although I never met Dr. Shigo," she begins, "when I started teaching arboriculture over 15 years ago, I found his tree research fascinating and informative. Students in my arboriculture course learn many of the key tree concepts that resulted from Dr. Shigo's research. Therefore, receiving the Excellence in Arboricultural Education Award in his name is truly an honor. Sharing knowledge about the wonder of trees is rewarding because I see firsthand the eagerness students develop for trees and their care."

Lavis is an associate professor and extension specialist in landscape management at Kansas State University's (Manhattan, Kansas, U.S.) Department of Horticulture, Forestry, and Recreation Resources. Her passion is described by many as unparalleled and never-ending, pulling students that are otherwise cautious or hesitant into the far-reaching dynamics of modern arboriculture and landscape management—a tree is not just a tree anymore. Lavis' work inside and out of the classroom have demonstrated the importance of learning the rigors associated with maintaining sustainable practices.

At Kansas State, Lavis has developed a number of courses in horticulture topics that include landscape and irrigation. Of note, she has been teaching irrigation-related curriculum since 1990 and last year received the Irrigation Foundation's Excellence in Education Award. The award celebrates academics that "play a critical role in developing educated professionals with the knowledge and skills to create efficient irrigation solutions that will protect water and the environment." Lavis' reputation for challenging students with real-world scenarios allows her to educate, counsel, and motivate various future professionals on the value of trees, the necessity of water conservation and efficiency, and much more.

Another exciting angle with which to view Lavis' efforts in arboricultural education is to observe the success she and her students have had in obtaining Tree Campus USA® status for Kansas State's Manhattan campus. Tree Campus USA is an Arbor Day Foundation® program that recognizes college campuses around the United States for effectively and properly managing their campus

trees. Lavis guided the hardworking students of her HORT 585: Arboriculture course in their pursuit of this designation. The program requires steadfast community engagement, a flexible campus tree care plan (with annual expenditures), and an appropriate Arbor Day observance. Students contributed mightily to the Arbor Day celebration as well as the service-learning project. The program initially resulted in a new walking path through campus (highlighting particular trees with educational signs), a tree climbing demonstration, and the planting of a *Quercus rubra* (northern red oak). Lavis understands her students' needs to connect with their environment, and she continuously provides them diverse opportunities to build their knowledge and experience through new, relevant perspectives on nature and the green industry.

Lavis has served as co-chair to Kansas State's Faculty Exchange for Teaching Excellence and is chair to the University Landscape Planning Committee. She is a member of the university's Campus Planning and Development Advisory Board and KSU Women's Studies Advisory Board committees. She is a member of numerous professional organizations and honor societies, including the Professional Landscape Network, The American Society of Horticulture, The Kansas Nursery and Landscape Association, The Irrigation Association, and the American Society for Horticultural Science. ▲N

