What do Students Think about a Career in Urban Forestry?

We surveyed over 1,000 U.S. college students enrolled in courses focused on the environment to determine what they seek in a career, to assess their awareness of urban forestry as a career, and to gauge their impression of urban forestry after viewing an informational video.

1 WHO RESPONDED TO OUR SURVEY?
• 1,056 respondents, median age: 20
• 50% Male, 50% Female
• 15% Urban, 65% Suburban, and 20% Rural

Race and ethnicity of respondents were representative of all college students in the US:
- 63% White
- 13% Black or African American
- 13% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 6% Hispanic or Latino
- 4% Other
- 1% Native American or Alaskan Native

2 WHAT DID STUDENTS SAY THEY SEEK IN A CAREER?
• To have PASSION and ENTHUSIASM for the work
• For the work to be MEANINGFUL
• Having OPPORTUNITIES or new challenges
• Having a definable CAREER LADDER

3 HOW AWARE ARE STUDENTS OF URBAN FORESTRY AS A CAREER?
- 16% very aware
- 33% not aware
- 22% moderately aware
- 29% slightly aware

Suburban students are the least aware of urban forestry.

Men are more aware of urban forestry than women.

Students who participate with their families in outdoor nature-based activities are more aware of urban forestry.

4 ONCE STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT URBAN FORESTRY—WHAT DO THEY THINK?
• After watching a brief video about a career in urban forestry, students had a favorable impression overall.
• Race and ethnicity have no influence on impression of urban forestry, but African-American students place greater importance on pay and prestige as well as career support from a professional society.
• Students from high-income families (> $150K per year) and those who care more about pay and prestige have the least favorable impression of urban forestry.

Lack of awareness remains a major challenge for recruiting young people into urban forestry.