

President's Message

Hello, Everyone! As spring approaches (fingers crossed ... in West Virginia, it can go from 65 degrees to 25 degrees in a 24-hour period!), lots of us are thinking about and planning our workforce.

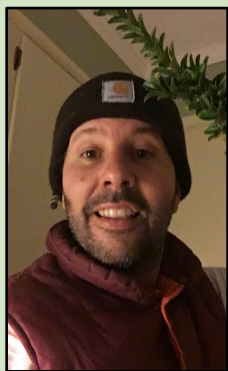
I came across an article the other day that enlightened me a bit about a subject I often think about: workforce development. The primary focus of this very informative article was apprenticeships and the forward-thinking pathway to using them.

Apprenticeship programs have been used in the United States for many years. Generally, apprenticeships have been prevalent for skilled laborers and craftspeople, such as electricians, plumbers, welders, carpenters, etc. This was the traditional pathway for building that workforce and it still is today.

However, more recently, a new trend is happening in the United States. Apprenticeships in other fields unrelated to those previously mentioned are starting to rise as a catalyst for providing employers with well-trained, skilled labor. The U.S. Department of Labor now lists more than 1,000 occupations that can be officially registered as an apprenticeship.

As a result, the number of apprenticeships in the nation has grown substantially in the last few years. Employers have hired more

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David Hill II

2020 Rennix Scholarship Winner Is Grounded in Experience

Described by his professor as a “credit to our landscape architecture program,” Tyler Bailey adds the honor of being named 2020 WVNLA scholarship winner to his credentials. Tyler is a native of Poca working toward his bachelor of science degree in landscape architecture at West Virginia University. He was selected as the 2020 Marcus W. Rennix Scholar based on his impressive work background, professor recommendation, and academic record.

Although Tyler began his college career as a civil engineering major, his experiences working summers for his father, Terry Bailey, who owns a landscape business, L&T Property Solutions in St. Albans, drew him to a landscape architecture major.

“I am excited and dedicated to being able to incorporate sustainable designs and seeing my designs come to life in the field. I think it is extremely awesome to plan a design and watch it come to life. This is the main reason I chose the landscape architecture profession to pursue my career dreams,” Tyler said.

Early on, while working for his father, Tyler learned hands-on how to bid, design, plan, schedule, and build projects in the field. He recalls learning to drive a dump truck when he was 14 years old. Later, as a project manager, he learned to take a project from start to finish. The projects included retaining wall and patio construction, sod installation, and lawn irrigation system installation. He operated skidsteers and excavators, and learned estimating and training techniques.

“Being able to acquire hands-on field experience has provided helpful knowledge that directly relates to my landscape architecture career while studying at WVU. I credit my father with providing me the proper opportunities and experience that directly resulted in being able to decide on my career path,” Tyler said.

Tyler says the guidance of both his father and his mother, Lisa Bailey, has played a key role in shaping him and the career he’s chosen. He watched the example set by his father,



*Tyler Bailey
2020 Marcus W. Rennix
Scholarship Winner*

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than 700,000 apprentices since 2017, about a 300,000-person increase since 2013. There are currently 30 million jobs that are using apprentices and paying an average of \$55k or more a year (without a college degree), proving that this trend is moving forward rapidly.

In addition, statistics show that in a decade, 40 percent of the U.S. workforce will begin to retire. This will potentially create a large gap or void for companies and small businesses that have not taken steps to train and educate, and thereby enhance the skills of the new generation of skilled labor. Indeed, there is a dire need for new skilled labor in the American workforce right now!

Now, to dial it in to our home, West Virginia: The Mountain State, according to the article I read, is starting to implement new programs such as WV Invests, a two-year community or technical college program, and Learn and Earn, a pre-apprenticeship program, that are geared toward students, to get them thinking about the future. (Editor's note: Also see information on the Jobs & Hope WV program on page 6.)

With 26 people on average leaving West

Virginia every week to seek employment elsewhere, I think these programs and others in the works are going to be a potential saving grace for our state. Some companies have already begun to implement federally registered apprenticeships to train the next generation of skilled and technical workers. Solar Holler of Shepherdstown (solarholler.com) is a good example.

The WVNLA board and I are always exploring ways to support our industry throughout our state. I truly believe that these aforementioned programs and others to come can be used to create a viable workforce for our members in the coming years. Perhaps they offer an avenue for us to explore.

Our board members and executive director, Julie Robinson, are always open to hearing suggestions from you, our valued members, on these topics and any other subjects that may help us all out. After all, we are in this together! And, as West Virginians, we aren't afraid to work to get things done.

Until next time, take care, and best wishes to all on your seasonal launch!

David Hill

WVNLA President and owner of Three Trees Design and Landscaping in South Charleston

SCHOLARSHIP

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who started L&T Property Solutions when Tyler was very young.

Tyler's classroom demeanor, leadership, performance, and work ethic impressed Assistant Professor Vaike Haas, who has instructed him in three courses. In his classroom and on projects, Vaike has observed Tyler exploring creative solutions and incorporating feedback from peers and instructors.

"He's not afraid to take a chance or to learn from constructive criticism, and he is always willing to refine a concept to a finished design—markings of a strong designer in the making," Vaike wrote in his recommendation for Tyler.

After graduation, Tyler hopes to find a position that will lead to a project manager job or perhaps toward starting his own firm as a licensed landscape architect in West Virginia.

"Being born and raised in West Virginia, I believe there are many opportunities to incorporate design elements and enhance a variety of locations across the state," he said.

We wish Tyler well and congratulate him on being named the 2020 Marcus W. Rennix Scholar.



CPH Success

Congratulations to **Lisa McDavid**, owner of Lisa's GardenScapes in Cross Lanes, WV, who was awarded the designation of Certified Professional Horticulturist on February 13, 2020.

The next Certified Professional Horticulturist exam will be given in July at a date and location to be announced.

Update Your WVNLA Listing to Help Potential Clients Find You

It's spring, the time when homeowners and business owners begin their annual search for landscapers. Not only do they ask their friends and consult Yelp!, but, in West Virginia, they also visit WVNLA's website and use the Find A Landscape Professional function to search for services near them.

If your listing isn't up-to-date, you may be missing business. Most of the listings have been populated internally, but only you can say if your

business is accurately represented.

It's easy to check and make changes. Just visit our website, wvnla.org, click on Resources at the top of the page, and then click on Find A Landscape Professional. Your user name is your email address. If you've forgotten your password, you can reset it.

Be sure to take advantage of this member benefit by updating your listing!

WVNLA Welcomes New Members

Bible Center Church

Associate member

Steven Corbin

100 Bible Center Drive

Charleston, WV 25309

304-543-7991

scorbin@biblecenterchurch.com

Landscape and lawn maintenance

HighLine Nurseries & Landscaping

Active

Brent Mitchell

166 Glade Street

Shady Spring, WV 25918

304-578-7400

highlinelandscaping@gmail.com

Landscape and lawn maintenance, retail garden center, wholesale nursery

Kotalic Landscaping

Active member

George Kotalic

2828 N. Staunton Road

Huntington, WV 25902

304-522-7279

gkotalic@hotmail.com

Landscape architecture or design, landscape construction and maintenance, nursery, nursery supplies, perennials, and wholesale nursery

Patriot Gardens—Jobs & Hope

WV National Guard

Chris Postalwait

810 Kanawha Terrace

St. Albans, WV 25177

304-437-4226

postalwait001@gmail.com

Educator

Rich Farms Inc.

Associate member

Mark Rich

2043 Springhill Furnace Road

Smithfield, PA 15478

724-564-9792

laura@richfarms.com

richfarms.com

Wholesale nursery

RiverSide Lawncare, Inc.

Active member

Daniel Gonzales

P. O. Box 676

Bradley, WV 25818

dangonzales83@gmail.com

riversidelawncarebeckley.com

Landscape designer, landscape construction, landscape and lawn maintenance, hardscape design and installation, landscape lighting

U.S. Lawns of Winchester

Active member

Austin Elliott

11232 Winchester Ave.

Bunker Hill, WV 25413

540-877-8883

austin.elliott@uslawns.net

uslawns.com/locations/va/winchester

Landscape and lawn maintenance

WVU

Affiliate member

Andrea Landis

1201 Evansdale Drive

Morgantown, WV 26506

anlandis@mail.wvu.edu

304-293-4480

Greenhouse manager

H-2B: More Visas Announced, but Many Strings Attached

By Craig Regelbrugge

On March 5, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that it plans to make 35,000 supplemental H-2B visas available this fiscal year. Unfortunately, while the 35,000 visas would mark the highest number of supplemental visas that the Administration has chosen to release over the past few years, the number still falls woefully short of the needs of the landscape and horticulture industry. Further, the Administration has proposed adding redundant reviews by the Department of Labor (DOL) and other restrictions that will severely limit the ability of many of our members to access these visas. DHS has announced that it will soon finalize these announced visas and policies in a temporary final rule. DHS also said that it plans to increase workplace compliance visits.

As of February 26 (the date on which DHS announced that the second 33,000 visa cap was reached was February 18), seasonal employers requested a total of 160,803 H-2B workers for fiscal 2020, 106,547 of which have been approved by the

DOL, with an additional 54,256 H-2B workers still pending. The first 33,000 visa cap was reached on November 15, 2019.

According to the DHS announcement, the supplemental H-2B visas will be made available in two tranches: 20,000 for companies with a date of need of April 1 and 15,000 for companies with a date of need after May 15. Additionally, 10,000 of the “first tranche” visas will be earmarked for nationals of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, countries whose workers have not traditionally participated in the H-2B program. The second 10,000 visas in the first tranche will be limited to returning workers.

The second tranche of 15,000 visas will be limited to employers whose date of need is after May 15, despite the fact that the majority of seasonal employers have an April 1 date of need. The new restriction that requires matching the start date on an H-2B petition and the employer’s start date of need would likely require employers to begin the H-2B labor certification process over again and designate a new date of need, even though their existing DOL-approved temporary labor certifications continue to be valid for post-April 1 work. These visas will also be limited to returning workers. This has not been a requirement in the previous three years that the Administration released supplemental visas.

Until a final rule is released, AmericanHort and the H-2B Workforce Coalition will continue to urge the Administration to eliminate the proposed restrictions on the supplemental visas. We will also continue to urge Congress to pass H-2B reform legislation that ensures that the number of annual H-2B visas reflects the actual economic need for these visas.

Craig Regelbrugge serves as the American Horticultural Industry Association’s Vice President for Government Relations and Research. He holds several leadership positions in the green industry and in labor and immigration reform. As national cochair of the Agriculture Coalition for Immigration Reform (ACIR), he is working to secure an affordable and legal workforce for nursery and greenhouse growers. In 2008, he was elected vice chair of the Board of Directors of the National Immigration Forum. He also represents agriculture and the green industry on the management team of the Reform Immigration FOR America campaign.



Spring beauties – A variety of hellebores seem to bow their heads in this border planting.

It Has Already Appeared in Canada: Box Tree Moth

By Jill Calabro

USDA-APHIS announced new requirements for *Buxus*, *Euonymus*, and *Ilex* entering the United States from Canada in response to box tree moth presence in Ontario.

Effective immediately, these plant species, including propagative material, must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate, with an additional declaration certifying that the plants have been produced in a facility officially recognized by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) as being free of box tree moth, or that the shipment has been officially inspected and found to be free of box tree moth.

Box tree moth (*Cydalima perspectalis*) was first identified in the Toronto, Ontario, area in August 2018 by a photo enthusiast. This was the first observance of this pest in North America. CFIA later confirmed box tree moth presence and deployed pheromone traps throughout southern



Adult box tree moth

Ontario. In 2019, over 300 residences were found with box tree moth in the landscape, most in the Etobicoke area. Over 400 additional

“suspect finds” were documented but remain unconfirmed.

APHIS has also made pheromone traps available to state departments of agriculture wishing to monitor for box tree moth in 2020.

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs currently does not mandate that infested landscapes be treated. The only pesticide treatment available in Ontario for this purpose is *Bacillus thuringiensis*. While very effective, few homeowners with positives or suspect finds (less than 10 percent) have chosen to have their landscapes treated; the vast majority remain untreated.

Box tree moth overwinters as larvae that emerge when temperatures warm in the spring. A female lays about 400 to 800 eggs over her lifetime on leaf undersides. The eggs are very difficult to see. The lifecycle from an egg to an adult takes about 45 days. Adult moths can fly an estimated six to twelve miles per generation, with anywhere from two to

five generations per year expected in the United States. However, human-mediated movement is the likeliest way this pest is spread long distances. Host material includes *Buxus*, live or dead plants, and greenery. Asian researchers have implicated *Euonymus* and *Ilex* as



Box tree moth caterpillar

two other hosts; however, researchers in the EU have not confirmed this.

APHIS recently announced funding of research projects aimed at plant pest and disease management,



Box tree moth pupa

including a study to evaluate sterile insect technology and mating disruption of box tree moth.

The EU first reported box tree moth in 2007 in Germany. It spread quickly from there throughout all of the EU within 10 years—primarily through the plant trade. Boxwood producers, retailers, and landscape installers and managers need to be vigilant in scouting. If an unusual caterpillar and/or webbing is visible on boxwood, please contact your county extension agent as soon as possible.

Jill Calabro serves as AmericanHort's research and science programs director. She provides strategic direction and oversight to research funded by the Horticultural Research Institute, the research affiliate of AmericanHort, and to research initiatives carried out in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and others who share an interest in advancing horticulture industry progress through research.



Boxwood shows damage caused by box tree moths.

Jobs & Hope WV Launches Landscape Tech Training Program

Recently, WVNLA members received an email asking what curriculum should be included in a new landscape technician training program being offered through Jobs & Hope WV. This was an opportunity for employers to shape free training for potential employees.

Jobs & Hope WV is the state's comprehensive response to the substance use disorder crisis. This program offers support through a statewide collaboration of agencies that provides linked services to participants. As Jobs & Hope WV is providing support to West Virginians transitioning out of recovery or for any individuals with a barrier to career employment, employers are utilizing this program to build their pipeline of employees during a time that industry is desperate for a consistent and qualified workforce.

The WV National Guard-WV Military Authority, as one of the program partners, has developed a group of training courses that specifically target the agriculture and horticulture industries. The first three courses offered are the Landscape Worker, Greenhouse Worker and Equipment Operator Courses that can be utilized to assist in workforce training. In addition, employers may be eligible for work opportunity tax credits, free drug testing and 100% wage reimbursement for up to six months when hiring Jobs & Hope WV graduates.

The first Landscape Worker course is being offered at the Eleanor Armory in Putnam County,



Students participate in a Greenhouse Worker course earlier this year taught by Chris Postalwait.

April 20-25. The next Greenhouse Worker course, planned in Lewisburg in Greenbrier County, will begin April 7 (tentative). At Camp Dawson in Preston County, an Equipment Operator course is currently underway with a group of graduates that will be ready for interviews on April 5 with the next Equipment Operator course occurring at Camp Dawson, May 10-16. The final day of training will include an opportunity for employers to meet and interview the course graduates as potential new, job-ready hires.

For more information about Jobs & Hope WV employer incentives, opportunities to conduct interviews or participant registration, please contact David Shafer at david.p.shafer.mil@mail.mil or 304-561-6488 and Brad Cochran at bradford.f.cochran.nfg@mail.mil or 304-561-6733.

Industry Feels the Effects of Coronavirus

There has been much in the news about the coronavirus (COVID-19). The National Association of Landscape Professionals (NALP) is closely monitoring how this developing situation might impact landscape and lawn care companies.

The industry takes the safety of its employees and clients seriously, so we wanted to share the following guidance with all NALP members:

Companies should monitor and comply with all federal, state, and local advisories and precautionary measures.

The CDC advises that companies monitor employee health and actively encourage sick employees to stay home and notify their supervisors if they have had close contact with someone who has contracted COVID-19.

COVID-19 is a recordable illness. OSHA record-

keeping requirements 29 CFR Part 1904 mandate that covered employers record certain work-related injuries and illnesses on their OSHA 300 log.

Note that while 29 CFR 1904.5(b)(2)(viii) exempts recording of the common cold and flu, COVID-19 is a recordable illness when a worker is infected on the job.

Be extra vigilant about disinfecting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Many industry jobs require the use of PPE. Ensure that the equipment is properly disinfected.

For more information from the CDC about business planning and preparedness, or for links to CDC and OSHA resources (some are provided in English and Spanish), visit the coronavirus page on the NALP website. The webpage will be updated as new information and resources become available.

Longtime Board Member Norman Cole II Honored

At WVNLA's annual members meeting in February, President David Hill announced the board of directors' unanimous decision to award Honorary Membership to **Norman Cole II**, now retired from Cole Nurseries in Pipestem, for his significant contributions to the industry. Norman served as WVNLA treasurer for 29 years.

"Perhaps Norman's most significant contribution to the Association was in 1971, when he had the foresight to urge WVNLA's board to invest \$500 in a fledgling trade show called the Mid-Atlantic Trade Show. Today, that show, co-owned by West Virginia's, Virginia's, and Maryland's nursery and landscape associations, returns hundreds of times annually the original investment to the owner associations," said Dave, as he presented the honor. "We are truly grateful that Norman Jr, along with his father, Norman Cole Sr., encouraged WVNLA's participation in this endeavor."

In other business, members in attendance voted to adopt proposed changes to the bylaws that broaden the terms of member qualifications. The description for Active Member now reads, "Any person who is a resident of the state of West Virginia, and who owns and operates a West Virginia-licensed business to grow and/or sell ornamental nursery stock and/or provide services to the nursery and landscape industry, may apply to become an **Active Member**. Active Members are

entitled to one vote on each matter and may be elected as an officer or board member of the Association."

The adopted changes to the bylaws also include two new member categories: **Student Member** and **Individual Professional Member**. Any student currently enrolled in a horticultural or landscape program in high school or college in West Virginia may apply to be a **Student Member**. Student members have no voting rights and may not be elected as an officer or board member of the Association.

Any person who is professionally engaged in the horticulture industry, or anyone who has retired from a professional nursery and/or landscape position, may apply to be an **Individual Professional Member**. These members are entitled to one vote on each matter and may be elected as an officer or board member of the Association.

Association leaders also welcomed new member **Bobby Gompers** of Highland Landscaping in Buckhannon to the board and thanked outgoing member **Michael Bartholomew** of Premier Professionals in Huntington for his five years of service.

The annual members meeting was then adjourned so board members could attend a board meeting scheduled to follow.

WV Barberry Ban to Take Effect in July

The time is drawing near! As of July 1, 2020, it will be illegal to grow, sell, transport, or install Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii* DC) in West Virginia.

In 2018, the West Virginia Legislature placed Japanese barberry on the state's noxious weed list, acting on a proposal made by West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) Commissioner Kent Leonhart's staff. West Virginia Department of Agriculture nursery inspectors will enforce the ban as they travel the state and make their inspections.

When the proposal first arose in 2017, some WVNLA members met with both legislators and WVDA representatives to protest the proposed placement of barberry on the noxious weed list, which essentially banned a plant commonly used in landscaping. Barberry is prized for its colorful branches and prolific berries, and, perhaps most importantly, because deer don't like it. It is one of the few landscape plants that even the hungriest deer will not touch.

On the flip side, because it has thorny branches and no animals will eat it, it is especially prolific and almost indestructible, once it is established in untended fields and meadows.

When it became clear that the ban was on the fast track to legislative passage, WVNLA pushed for a three-year grace period before it took effect, to allow growers and landscapers to turn over current barberry stock and minimize negative financial impacts. Additionally, we asked for language that permits the WVDA to exempt noninvasive cultivars. We succeeded in getting that language inserted, and the rule now reads as follows:

"Effective July 1, 2020, Japanese Barberry, *Berberis thunbergii* DC, shall be declared to be a noxious weed. However, the Commissioner of Agriculture may exempt certain cultivated varieties of Japanese Barberry upon determination that those varieties are sterile and pose no threat to agriculture in West Virginia."

WVNLA NEWS

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Happy Spring!

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