



Growing Great Landscapes

Winter Symposium

February 18, 2026

Embassy Suites Hotel

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Schedule

8 a.m. Check-in for WVNLA Members Annual Breakfast Meeting
Pre-registration is required for Members Annual Breakfast Meeting

8:30 - 9:30 a.m. Members Annual Breakfast Meeting – Salon C

9 - 9:30 a.m. General Check-in/Registration
Refreshments in Pre-Conference Area

9:30 a.m. "Horticulture Hot Takes: Trends Shaping the Green Industry"
Salon C, Dr. Juile Campbell, University of Georgia, Consumer Horticulture and Consumer Behavior

Great Design Session Salon D

10:45 a.m. "New Flowering Shubs and Evergreens," Jane Beggs Joles, Proven Winners® ColorChoice®

Great Profit Session Salon E

10:45 a.m. "Building an Effective Multi-Generational Workplace," Jeff Butler, Workplace and Technology Speaker

Noon - 1:15 p.m. Lunch

Salon C

Great Design Session Salon D

1:15 p.m. "Exquisite Plants and the Botanical Names that Describe Them," Kirsten Stephan, West Virginia University, Forest Resources and Conservation

2:15 p.m. Break

2:30 p.m. "Green Roof Design, Maintenance and Success," Michael Gagne, Riverbend Green Roofs - Live Roof Sales

Great Profit Session Salon E

1:15 p.m. "Being Human in the Age of Digital Innovation," Jeff Butler, Workplace and Technology Speaker

2:15 p.m. Break

2:30 p.m. "Keys to Successfully Bid on Government Contracts," Mark Totten, WV Division of Purchasing

Combined Sessions Speaker

Dr. Julie Campbell is an assistant professor at the University of Georgia in Horticulture. Her emphasis is consumer horticulture and consumer behavior.

Dr. Julie H. Campbell's research and Extension work revolves around various issues, including consumer preferences, buyer perceptions, marketing strategies, and best management practices. By leveraging her expertise, she fosters collaboration among consumers, retailers, and producers, skillfully integrating multiple disciplines for comprehensive solutions.

She is the advisor for UGA's Horticulture Club and the student chapter of the National Association of Landscape Professionals. She currently teaches Sustainable Plant Production, Professional Horticulture Practices, International Horticultural Perspectives and Practices, Agriscience and Environmental Systems Study Tour, and Principles of Floral Design.

She lives in Bogart, GA, with her husband, Ben, and their three children. During her free time, she enjoys traveling, being outdoors, and cheering on her children at their sporting events.

Design Session Speakers

Jane Beggs-Joles holds a B.S. in Horticulture and an M.S. in Agricultural Economics, both from Michigan State University. She has 30 years of experience in the wholesale nursery industry, and continue to learn something new every day. My husband and I enjoy exploring the great outdoors both at home in beautiful West Michigan and in our National Parks. We have two college-aged daughters who sometimes join us on our adventures.

Dr. Kirsten Stephan is a botanist and ecologist dedicated to understanding the intricate workings of forest ecosystems. Her research delves into the diverse world of understory plants, exploring their responses to natural and human-induced disturbances. By exploring the effects of factors like fire, herbivory (the act of animals eating plants), and forest management on plant communities, Dr. Stephan's work contributes to the conservation and restoration of forests. Her passion for teaching and sharing knowledge inspires future generations of scientists and environmental stewards.

Kirsten is a teaching professor in Forest Resources and Conservation at West Virginia University. She is pursuing her passion of plants inside and outside the classroom. Kirsten enjoys igniting the spark in future plant enthusiasts by teaching students how to identify woody and non-woody plants.

Her current research focuses on the most diverse stratum in forests—the herbaceous layer—and how it responds to natural disturbances (like fire), deer browsing, and forest management. A native of Germany, she has studied and worked in Sweden, Idaho, and Missouri.

Michael Gagne, GRP, is the project anager and regional sales manager for Riverbend Greenroofs by Riverbend Nursery, LLC. He strives to bring the knowledge he has learned in the classroom and the experience gained in the field to benefit his clients. Michael holds a B.S. in civil engineering from Morgan State University and a B.S. in mathematics from Bowie State University. He coaches high school baseball and football in Baltimore County Public Schools.

Great Profit Speakers

Jeff Butler is an author and workplace strategist who explores what organizations need to do to navigate uncertainty. His experience spans over 40 industries in 4 continents on how different cultures and employees interact with each other. He studies common threads of behavior in industries such as IT professionals, underground utility workers, police officers to clothing retail chains.

In addition, Jeff has also worked with various Fortune 500 companies to mom and pop shops. His ideas have made it to TEDx twice, appeared in dozens of media outlets including two books on human behavior:- **The Authentic Workplace** and **The Key To The New You**. Currently, he lives in Dallas, Texas as an out of place Californian.

Mark Totten is the Technical Services Manager for the West Virginia Purchasing Division, administering state programs like vendor registration; supplier outreach; Small, Women-, and Minority-Owned Businesses (SWAM) Certification; and providing input on procurement technology.