



2026 WVNLA Committees Compilation

Certification Committee

Chair: John Jett

Current Members: John Jett, Bud Cottrill, Dave Davis

Mission Statement-*To uphold professional standards in West Virginia's green industry by maintaining an accessible, credible Certified Professional Horticulturist (CPH) program that supports member excellence and promotes industry knowledge.*

Committee Goals

1. Maintain a High-Quality, Relevant Certification Program

Ensure the CPH exam and study materials reflect current horticultural practices and industry needs.

Priority Actions:

- Review and update exam content and the CPH manual annually
- Coordinate with the Education Committee to align certification topics with educational offerings

2. Increase Participation and Visibility of the CPH Program

Promote the value of certification to members, emerging professionals, and statewide partners.

Priority Actions:

- Collaborate with Communications and Membership Committees on outreach
- Highlight certified professionals and promote exam opportunities at WVNLA events

3. Support Ongoing Professional Development (Voluntary CE)

Encourage continuing education without requiring administrative CEU tracking.

Priority Actions:

- Recommend professional development opportunities
- Publicize WVNLA programs that strengthen member skills



4. Strengthen Certification Administration

Ensure consistent, well-organized processes for applications, manuals, and exam delivery.

Priority Actions:

- Standardize exam day procedures
- Evaluate the option of offering additional exam dates and sites
- Maintain clear communication regarding eligibility, registration, and materials

Certification Committee Focus Areas

- Exam Development & Content Review
- Study Material Management (Manual updates, digital access)
- Outreach & Promotion of Certification
- Optional Continuing Education Support
- Collaboration with Education, Workforce, Membership & Communications Committees
- Enhancing CPH Program Visibility at Events

Measuring Committee Success

The Certification Committee will track:

- Number of CPH exam applicants and successful pass rates
- Usage and feedback on the CPH manual (print & digital)
- Engagement with certification promotions (website, email, events)
- Growth in the number of certified professionals statewide
- Member satisfaction with the clarity and accessibility of the certification process



Education Committee Mission & Goals

Chair: Bobby Gompers

Current Members: **Bobby Gompers, Julie Robinson, Zach Crede, Michael Biafore, Betsy Raines**

Mission Statement: *To advance the West Virginia green industry by providing accessible, high-quality education that builds skills, strengthens businesses, and cultivates the next generation of industry professionals.*

Committee Goals

1. Deliver Relevant, High-Quality Education

- Provide timely, practical, and industry-focused training that addresses the technical, safety, regulatory, and business management needs of WVNLA members.

Priority Actions:

- Winter Symposium educational programming
- Regional workshops and field events
- Core business and horticultural skill development

2. Strengthen Workforce Development

- Support recruitment, training, and retention of a skilled workforce aligned with industry certifications, professional standards, and career pathways.

Priority Initiatives:

- Promote industry-recognized credentials and licensing preparation
- Entry-level training tracks and mentorship support
- Career pathway materials linking education to employment



3. Expand Access to Education Statewide

- Increase educational participation across all regions of West Virginia while introducing future professionals to green industry careers at the high-school level.

Priority Initiatives:

- Rotating regional events and virtual learning options
- Partnerships with WV high schools, career-tech centers, and FFA programs
- Student workshops, presentations, and job-shadowing experiences

4. Promote Professional Excellence & Industry Standards

- Elevate the reputation of West Virginia's green industry by advancing safety practices, ethical standards, and environmental stewardship.

Priority Initiatives:

- Safety and regulatory compliance training
- Best management practices instruction
- Recognition of professional achievement and certification, Education Committee Focus Areas
- Continuing Education for Industry Professionals
- Workforce Pipeline Development (High Schools, Career-Tech, Colleges)
- Certification and Licensure Support
- Safety Training and Best Practices
- Business Development and Leadership Skills
- Environmental Stewardship

Measuring Committee Success

- **Track**

- Educational program attendance growth
- Number of training sessions delivered annually
- High school and student outreach engagement
- Certifications or continuing education completion achieved by members
- Regional participation reach



NOMINATING COMMITTEE

CHAIR: Bud Cottrill

MEMBERS: Budd Cottrill Brett Merritt; Betsy Raynes

MISSION STATEMENT: *To recommend Officers and/or Members of the Board of Directors of the Association as determined by the existing term limits; or by the appropriate section of the Association's Bylaws.*

Committee Goals:

- 1. Maintain the Association's Officer structure by:**
 - Interest of the Vice President to advance to President;
 - If the Vice President advances to President, identify a Board Member to fill the Vice President position;
 - In the event the Vice President cannot fill the Presidency, identify an existing Board Member to fill the President position;
 - Identify a Board Member to fill the Secretary/Treasurer office as needed.
- 2. Maintain at a minimum quorum of the Board of Directors as determined by the Association's Bylaws and/or by a vote by the Board of directors:**
 - Identify potential Board Members from the General Membership when existing Board Members exit by resignation or term limits.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Chair: Michael Biafore

Current Members: Michael, Zach, Lisa, Bobby, Jason, Julie, Betsy, **Caleb Davis** (Pierpont Community and Technical College), **Stacy McCoy** (Buckhannon Upshur High)

Mission Statement *To Frame the workforce development mission around empowering the landscaping industry in West Virginia through education, training, and career pathways. We strive to train, not only our membership, but Junior High, High School, Community College and College/University Students, AND the General Public.*

Objectives

Foster a culture of continuous learning so professionals can grow their skills and advance in their careers.

Connect individuals with industry-specific education that equips them to succeed in landscaping, lawn care, and related fields.

Strengthen the talent pipeline by promoting landscaping as a rewarding, sustainable career choice.

Committee Goals

1. Connect with High School Tech Programs to offer training, speaking and engagement through various vehicles.

Priority Actions:

1. Schools
2. Community Colleges
3. Colleges and Universities

2. Work with Education Committee to better communicate with education levels listed above

Priority Actions:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3. Explore non traditional areas for education of the landscape industry

Priority Actions

1. 4H
2. FFA
3. National Guard
4. Challenge Academy
5. Other



4. Reach out to other state associations and NALP to see what they are doing in terms of Workforce development and determine if we can apply their methods
5. Engage legislative representatives in Charleston and open doors of communication as to need and want.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Chair: Mark Springer

Current Members: Mark, Zach, Michael, Julie, Dave

Mission:

Goals:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

New Committees

MEMBERSHIP - NEW

Chair:

Current Members: Steve Saunders

Goals:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



COMMUNICATIONS - NEW

Chair: Jason Testman

Current Members: Hayden Swain

Mission:

Goals:

- 1.
- 2.

AD HOC Committees

By-Law Committees

Chair: Lisa McDavid

Members: Lisa McDavid, Jason Testman, Julie Robinson, Bud Cottrill

MISSION: *The mission of this committee is to ensure that the West Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association (WVNLA) bylaws are compliant with WV Code and shall contain the rules that govern the internal operations and affairs of the WVNLA.*

Committee Objective: The committee members will be responsible for keeping all bylaws up- to- date and relevant to the association's mission.

Committee Goals

1. Committee members will approve a final draft of the bylaws which is currently in progress on or before January 31, 2026, or as soon after as is practicable for presentation to the general membership during the annual meeting on February 18, 2026.
2. Committee members will approve a final draft of WVNLA's Articles of Incorporation which is currently in progress on or before January 31, 2026, or as soon as is practicable.
3. From time to time, the committee shall review compliance issues that exist and anticipate those which may arise in the future.

4. The committee may advise upon suggested or necessary revisions brought forth by membership or its directors.
5. The committee may, on an as - needed basis, work with a legal professional/firm who is versed in West Virginia by-law code as pertaining to non-profit organizations.
6. The committee may request funds allocation or expenditure approval from the board of directors as pertaining to item five, above.
7. The committee shall submit a report of committee activity, findings and recommendations to the Executive Director two weeks prior to a scheduled board meeting.

NOTES:

1. Lewis Gianola Is the contracted law firm this committee is currently working with. Mark Sadd and Mark Burdette are our assigned legal professionals.
2. The second revision draft is under consideration at this time, with the goal of obtaining BOD approval prior to February 2026.
3. With BOD approval, a vote at the annual WVNLA membership meeting on February 18, 2026 will be put on that meeting's agenda.

Contacts

- wvnlassoc@gmail.com
- mburdette@lewisgianola.com
- msadd@lewisgianola.com
- westvirginiabud@yahoo.com
- valleygardensjt@gmail.com
- lisascapes@yahoo.com



Website Committee

Chair: Lisa McDavid

Members: Lisa McDavid, Julie Robinson

Mission: *The WVNLAs website is our key interface between visitors (the public) and members. We seek to share information, grow our membership and offer a safe portal for monetary transactions.*

Committee Goal(s)

- 1. Focus on ensuring the absolute essentials required for the mission are implemented.**

- 2. Institute a high-quality digital presence that is well-maintained, ensuring all content is up-to-date, and provide/ensure a consistent user experience across every page.**