

## Statements of Intent for 2025 Western Chapter ISA Board and Officer Candidates

---

### TRACEY TAKEUCHI FOR PRESIDENT 2025/2026:



I found Arboriculture almost by mistake. Like many, I was not originally planning a career in this field. And just as many of you that came to the industry later in life, I was looking for inspiration, fulfillment and opportunity. I have spoken to arborists that described a need for a career that provided constant stimulation, being in nature, while also making a difference in the world. There is a common thread among arborists that I have found- a large number find being with and around trees, with and around others that share their passion for trees, and advocating for trees and our planet a calling, not just a job. They find community among the trees and among others that are passionate about trees. Some, like me, didn't initially realize that Arboriculture could provide both a fulfilling and financially rewarding career. Arboriculture has so many pathways for advancement and so

few barriers to success!

My interest in Arboriculture grew from a natural curiosity for growing plants that was fostered by my father. While not educated in biology, he learned by doing, which is not only the motto of the university where I teach, but also one of the exceptional aspects of this industry. You do not need a formal degree to advance in Arboriculture. What is needed is initiative, perhaps a good mentor, and willingness to learn. A degree doesn't hurt, though! My dad was the first 'green thumb' in my life. He set the stage for me, and now because of him, I stand on a 'stage' where so many of my arboricultural heroes stood before me. I am humbled to be elevated to this position of trust as your President.

In college, my focus was on pest management and agronomy that led to a degree in Agricultural Biology. Following a brief few years of employment with a local company, I felt compelled for personal reasons, to change direction in our industry. That early experience in the industry, though, was invaluable, providing me a foundation for future advancement within Arboriculture.

After achieving a few credentials, gaining much more experience and education, and with the encouragement of an associate, I completed an advanced degree in Plant Science. During that time, I was also encouraged to serve our industry by accepting a position as Board Secretary.

The Board Secretary position was a vital opportunity to learn the more nuanced aspects and responsibilities of Board service. I strongly recommend anyone wishing to serve in the industry, wanting to be a conduit for change, or just to learn more about arboriculture, consider becoming active in a leadership or committee role. I served as Board Secretary for several years before being elected by membership, as a Board Director, and eventually to the succession that leads me to 'speak' to you today, as incoming President. During that time, I also began instructing at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, teaching courses in the College of Agriculture, Department of Plant Science. In this role I have encouraged a number of students to consider Arboriculture as a career path. A fair number of those students have successfully attained not only their basic certification, but more advanced arboriculture credentials and certifications as well. I have found great value in serving as an educational liaison to those wishing to enter our industry as professionals.

## Statements of Intent for 2025 Western Chapter ISA Board and Officer Candidates

---

This year of service for our organization, I hope to continue to lead the way for educational excellence, opportunity advancement and a broader understanding of how trees and science based tree care can aid in mitigating the woes that face our planet due to the unequivocal impact of Climate Change.

### **JULIA GOWIN, PHD. FOR PRESIDENT ELECT 2025/2026:**



Julia is excited to continue her service to the Western Chapter ISA as President-Elect. She started her involvement with the WCISA in 2015 as Chair of the Women in Arboriculture Committee, a few years after moving to California from the East Coast. As WIA Chair, she reinvigorated the committee and led the organization in hosting their first WCISA WIA Women's Climbing Workshops in 2016. Together with WIA Committee Co-Chair J.E. Jones, she received the Chapter's Award of Commendation in 2018 for having made "outstanding contributions in support of progressive arboriculture". In 2021, Julia was elected to the Board of Directors to continue her support of WCISA's inspiring and rewarding work within the tree care industry.

Julia is an ISA Certified Arborist, California Registered Professional Forester, and holds an MS and PhD from Virginia Tech where she focused her research on Urban Forestry. After a short gig as post doc at UC Davis, during which she collaborated extensively with the USDA Forest Service Southwest Research Station, she worked as a Consulting Urban Forester/Utility Forester before joining the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Urban and Community Forestry Program in 2017 as Regional Urban Forester. She is now the Urban Forestry Supervisor for Northern California, where she has supported the implementation of dozens of urban and community forestry projects throughout the State of California, ranging from tree plantings and outreach and education efforts to urban forest management planning in various cities. In 2022, Julia's efforts helped pave the way for an historic \$150 million investment in California's Green Schoolyard Grant Program, helping schools convert asphalt to green spaces and create cooler spaces essential to protecting kids from dangerous extreme heat. She is a member of the California Schoolyard Forest System Initiative, led by Green Schoolyards America, and the California Environmental Literacy Initiative, led by Ten Stands. Her dream is that one day, everyone, including every child, will benefit from tree shade and all the other amazing benefits trees provide and this can be achieved with research, education, and partnerships.

As the Candidate for President-Elect, Julia's goal is to improve partnerships and collaboration within the Chapter to help create better and more equitable urban forests for communities, including schools, with a focus on disadvantaged and underrepresented communities. Julia believes that through partnerships and collaboration, we can benefit from everyone's expertise, skills, and strengths and grow a more sustainable future for all.

---

## Statements of Intent for 2025 Western Chapter ISA Board and Officer Candidates

---

### ALISON LANCASTER FOR VICE PRESIDENT 2025/2026:



Three years ago, I set out to deepen my commitment to the Chapter as a Director on the Board - now as Vice President I want to demonstrate that any of us can enact change by participating in the Chapter organization and hope to encourage my fellow members to express ownership of their industry by engaging in leadership roles. I believe that each of us deserves to play a part in shaping our industry and making it a community that we are happy to belong to. By working together and creating an inclusive and welcoming space for all, we can elevate not only ourselves, but each other.

I earned a bachelor's degree in political science from UC Irvine and an associate's degree in Wildland Resources and Forestry from Citrus College. Following an internship at the City of Pasadena Urban Forestry, I began training and working as a consulting arborist. Over the last 9 years, I started my own arboricultural consulting company, became an ASCA Registered Consulting Arborist, and obtained my ISA Board Certified Master Arborist credential. I've been Chair of the WCISA Women in Arboriculture and TREE Fund Committees, I've given three presentations at WCISA events, and in 2019 I received the WCISA Young Professional Award.

**There are three nominees for one position on the Board of Directors, 2025-2029  
(VOTE FOR ONE CANDIDATE)**

---

**BRANDON ELROD:** My name is Brandon Elrod, and it has been my pleasure to serve the profession of arboriculture by volunteering on the WCISA Spanish Committee and by speaking and educating over the years. I hope to earn your vote toward the next step in volunteerism on the board of directors.



I am the Urban Forester for Disneyland Resort, where I manage several departments: Tree Assessment, Arborists, Integrated Pest Management, and Horticulture. Previously I owned and operated a commercial arboriculture company, where I was introduced to the challenges and opportunities facing consultants and contractors in the tree industry.

I've worked to cultivate a well-rounded education across multiple specialties. To this end, I have earned or participated in: ISA Certified Arborist, ASHS Certified Professional Horticulturist, SAF Certified Urban and Community Forester, DPR Agricultural Pest Control Adviser, ASCA, Tree and Plant Appraisal Qualification. Graduate, Municipal Forestry Institute, Yale University, Environmental Leadership Training Initiative, Cal Poly Pomona, BS in Ornamental Horticulture.

One of my goals as a Director will be to emphasize the interconnectedness of trees with their surroundings. I believe in taking an ecosystem perspective toward tree management, and that means stewarding the trees as part of their surroundings, not in spite of them. This approach encourages collaboration with other disciplines and professions, leveraging all our collective passion, energy, and skill to help trees thrive in the urban environment. Thank you very much for considering me for the WCISA Board of Directors.

## Statements of Intent for 2025 Western Chapter ISA Board and Officer Candidates

---

**JOSH GEVERTZ:** My name is Josh Gevertz. Over the past five years, I have served as Arboretum Director at Cypress Lawn Arboretum and Memorial Park, a historic cemetery just south of San Francisco. Since 1892, Cypress Lawn has thrived as a meaningful place of trees. During my tenure as the inaugural Director, our Arboretum mission is growing to embrace the multifaceted value of trees as living assets throughout the grounds of the cemetery, a rich cultural and educational landscape layered with both human and botanical heritage. Our Arboretum story continues to branch out, with the planting of hundreds of trees, seasonal proactive stewardship, a burgeoning wood reclamation program, and the autumnal tree celebration holiday now known throughout the City of Colma as Arboretum Day.



As Co-Chair of the WCISA Education Committee in recent seasons, I have and will continue to strive to bring diverse events and programs to enrich our regional arborist industry, both at Cypress Lawn and beyond. In just the past few years, the Arboretum has hosted a Tree Care for Birds and Wildlife workshop, several full TRAQ courses, the Britton Fund annual meeting, full-day regional conferences, and immersive indoor and outdoor learning lecture series, and even the inaugural CypressFest tree climbing competition this past fall. If elected to serve as a WCISA Board Director, I pledge to advocate for and bring more innovative educational programming to our Chapter, and to leverage my experience in planning and hosting events to raise the standard of excellence that WCISA offers as a leading Chapter in the global profession of arboriculture.

More than anything, I love trees and know that my professional purpose is to foster kinship between people and trees. I am deeply grateful to be in consideration for WCISA Board candidacy, to further my own passion in service of the greater good of our amazing community of arborists throughout California, Arizona, Nevada, and Hawaii. I promise to be an open ear to your professional wants and needs, to help make tomorrow's chapter of our WCISA story even brighter than yesterday's... we will grow stronger, and go farther, together.

**RYAN SUTTLE:** I'm Ryan Suttle, a Consulting Arborist and Urban Forester at HortScience | Bartlett Consulting (H | BC) in Berkeley. I hold a Master of Science degree from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and am certified as a BCMA by ISA, as well as a Registered Consulting Arborist with ASCA. My consulting work focuses mainly on tree preservation during development, tree risk assessment, and collaborating with municipalities on urban forest master and management planning. At H|BC, I also work with several local municipalities as a consulting City Arborist.



I serve on the ISA Educational Products and Services Committee, the ISA Board Certified Master Arborist Test Committee, the WCISA Tree Care For Birds Committee, and I'm a board member of the Bay Area Urban Forest Ecosystem Council. I'm particularly passionate about the intersection of wildlife and arboriculture, especially in urban settings. In my spare time, I enjoy caring for my small bonsai collection, creating art, and working on my birding skills.

Becoming more involved in the Western Chapter as well as ISA as a whole over the years has been an incredibly rewarding experience. It would be an honor to serve on the Board of Directors to continue to serve



## Statements of Intent for 2025 Western Chapter ISA Board and Officer Candidates

---

our WCISA community. If elected, two of my main goals would be to promote science-based arboriculture and urban forestry, and to promote an ethical and holistic approach to the industry. As stewards of the urban forest, I believe we have a moral obligation to make decisions that are science-based, meet the needs of the greater community, and are ecologically responsible. I'm very excited by the opportunity and consideration!

---

### **Proposed Bylaws Change 2025**

*Submitted by Dennis Yniguez, Chair*

In accordance with the motion at the January 24<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, we have prepared a Bylaws Update to agree with the changes at the ISA level in the Council of Component Representatives.

In summary, the proposed changes in the name of the Council, the name of the representative to the Council, and the tenure of the elected representative fit seamlessly into the existing Bylaws without contradicting or detracting from the rest of the Bylaws.

Tracked Changes Bylaws Document is available for review.