

UCFS Board Member Profile: Drue Epping

Name: Drue Epping

City, State/Province, Country: Seattle, WA

Place of Employment: Facet NW

Job Title: Urban Forest Planner

Educational level and major field: Associates of Applied Science – Horticulture

List any professional certifications: ISA Board-Certified Master Arborist, ISA Urban Forest Professional, TRAQ



List any other urban forestry, arboriculture, or related organizations you're involved with: PNW-ISA Board – Director of Member Services

- City of Seattle Urban Forestry Commission – Chair
- Seattle Arborist Association – Member
- ANSI Z133 Committee – alternate

LinkedIn profile link: [Drue Epping | LinkedIn](#)

Brief bio:

Drue is an urban forestry professional and ISA Board-Certified Master Arborist working in data-driven urban forestry planning, policy development, and program growth with Facet NW. Prior to joining Facet, she led regional urban forestry initiatives for American Forests and served as a municipal forester for the cities of Bainbridge Island and Lake Forest Park. Drue lives in Seattle with her husband and 2 senior cats. In her free time, she enjoys reading fantasy and sci-fi novels, searching for the perfect ice cream and camping all over the PNW.

What makes you happy about being an UCFS member?

Everyone I have met through MFI and UCFS has been so great to connect with. This is a profession where people typically deeply care about the work we are doing and the forested, equitable communities we are trying to build. It is infectious to be around that type of energy, and even when things get tough there is a strong community to lean on for support. I learn something valuable from someone else every time I attend a UCFS event.

What got you interested in the field of urban forestry?

Growing up, my grandparents owned forestland in Wisconsin that they managed for decades. We were always up there helping to clear trails, plant trees, collect firewood and enjoy nature. It definitely instilled a sense of

stewardship and placemaking in me at an early age. I originally started my journey in the green industry in the world of greenhouses and horticulture, then pivoted to production arboriculture when I realized how cool trees were. I did groundwork, climbing, and safety management for years before finally landing in the world of urban forestry. The opportunity to look at trees on such a large scale, and navigate complex problems and community priorities brings me a lot of joy. I love that I can bring my perspective from so many sides of the industry into my current work and to UCFS.

In what ways do you want to contribute to the [mission](#) and [strategic direction](#) of UCFS? Are you particularly interested in a certain area of board service such as governance, policy, outreach, financial oversight, etc.? Do you see any of your strengths being especially helpful to leading the organization?

I am deeply motivated to advance the field and profession of urban forestry through policy, partnerships, education, and outreach, and I would welcome the opportunity to support these efforts through UCFS. I care deeply about the long-term growth of our profession and spend significant time considering how to create accessible, inclusive pathways into urban forestry while providing meaningful support, training, and leadership opportunities for professionals throughout their careers. My career has spanned nonprofit, academic, consulting, and local government settings, giving me a broad perspective on the opportunities and challenges facing urban forestry organizations and practitioners.

As a former arboriculture instructor at South Seattle College, I have experience supporting education, workforce development, and mentoring emerging professionals. I also consider myself a connector who enjoys building relationships across organizations, sectors, and disciplines to advance shared goals. One of my strengths is identifying opportunities for collaboration and helping diverse groups work toward common outcomes.

In addition, I have supported urban forestry policy efforts at the state level and regularly think about how our work aligns with broader local, state, and federal priorities related to climate adaptation, public health, community resilience, workforce development, and environmental stewardship. I believe this perspective can help UCFS continue expanding its impact and demonstrating the value of urban forestry to decision-makers and the public.

Ultimately, I would be excited to help UCFS strengthen the profession, support its members, and advance a diverse, connected, and forward-looking urban forestry community.

Favorite tree and why?

I would have to go with swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*). As someone with Midwest roots, oaks will always hold a special place in my heart. There are such stately sentinels in the landscape and have so much biodiversity. I particularly like swamp white oak because of its lovely bark and bicolored leaves. Also, after Dutch elm disease and emerald ash borer came through my grandparents' forest in Wisconsin, swamp white oak was the tree that started to move in naturally and take over to provide new canopy. My hero!