



### **Gold Leaf Award:**

The *Gold Leaf Award* is designed to recognize an individual, organization, or community in the Midwestern Chapter area for outstanding Arbor Day programs or community landscape beautification projects.

Aaron Thiessen, Central Community College, Hastings, NE

Turning destruction into growth has been the underlying theme of Aaron Thiessen's time as Head Grounds Keeper of Central Community College. Within two years of him taking on this position he was faced with storm damage to over 50% of the campus trees. With his knowledge of trees, leadership and vision, Aaron has rekindled a campus wide appreciation for trees.

Revitalizing the Tree Campus Higher Education Committee, organizing student tree plantings, grant writing and being a steward for a diverse canopy with long term rewards has been a mark of achievement for both the College and Aaron. Aaron's impact extends beyond Central Community College as he hosts workshops and educational outreach to community members and arborists from across Nebraska.

Congratulations and thank you to Aaron for his outstanding efforts in arboriculture and the impact he has made on his campus and community.



### **Honorary Life Membership:**

The Honorary Life Membership is bestowed upon members of the Midwest Chapter that have contributed materially and substantially to the progress of arboriculture in the Midwest Chapter and have given unselfishly in their efforts to support and advance arboriculture.

Sarah Crowder, Heartland Tree Alliance, Greater Kansas City

What started as a volunteer role turned into a position to empower communities with trees. Sarah joined Heartland Tree Alliance (HTA) in 2016. With a background in urban forestry, Sarah was well equipped for the task of supporting the HTA mission of 'Stronger Communities Through Healthy Trees'. Her dedication in this non-profit role has led to planting more than 21,000 trees in the Greater Kansas City area with 11,000 hours of volunteer help! This doesn't happen without passion and selfless commitment. Branching out and involving multiple municipalities, HOA's, and other tree advocate groups, Sarah has built a network of tree support that continues to grow. Sarah's willingness to share her knowledge and educate the community will have a lasting impact for generations to come.

Congratulations and thank you to Sarah for her life dedicated to arboriculture, community, urban forestry and the Midwest ISA.



### **Award of Merit:**

The Award of Merit recognizes outstanding meritorious service in advancing the principles, ideals, and practices of arboriculture.

Mark Halpin, forestry manager for Forest ReLeaf of Missouri

As the forestry manager for Forest ReLeaf of Missouri, Mark helps set the standard for collaborative community forestry efforts throughout the region. Outreach and education are made possible through Mark's weekly articles as well as his fortification of the Tree Keeper class. Teaching volunteers the vital tree care components and the benefits of trees has nurtured a dependable group of passionate tree care enthusiasts. With a passion for trees and an unselfish willingness to share his knowledge, Mark continues to reach beyond his daily role into the community around him.

Congratulations and thank you to Mark for his efforts in perpetuating a tree minded community and leading the way in urban reforestation.



### **President's Award:**

The President's Award recognizes an individual, group, company or agency that has provided a significant impact in the field of arboriculture.

Lyle Minshull, Parks Superintendent, City of North Platte, NE

Lyle Minshull has been Parks Superintendent for the City of North Platte since 1979 and has diligently worked to maintain and expand both the scope and the quality of its urban forest in a part of the state where that's particularly difficult. He appreciates the value in tree species that most people look down on. Without trees like Hackberry, Siberian Elm and Silver Maple, Western Nebraska would not have much tree canopy in its cities. It takes passion and fortitude to manage the challenges of these species and remember the benefits they offer to North Platte residents and all the other organisms that depend on those trees being there.

Lyle has also been a fixture on the Nebraska Community Forestry Council since 1998 and a leader in the organization for most of that time. He was instrumental in the Council's successful anti-topping campaign and raised the bar of tree care throughout the state through that project and many others. The Council is made up of citizen volunteers that use their own time and resources to give programming input to our Forest Service staff, keep us connected with communities statewide and work with elected officials to advocate for our community forests. The time and input that Lyle has contributed to these ends is hard to quantify and we are so lucky to have him on our team. Congratulations Lyle!

### **Award of Achievement:**

The Award of Achievement is granted to members of the Midwest Chapter ISA only; this award recognizes sustained outstanding effort in arboriculture or contribution to the advancement of ISA within the Chapter.

Doug Seely, Beyond Housing, St. Louis, MO

Doug Seely has served as the community forester for Beyond Housing in north St. Louis since 2016. Being a community forester within a non-profit community driven organization has created great success. In Doug's case, success is the community he serves, success is the people and the trees they enjoy. Trees in under privileged areas are often the last to be promoted, often neglected. Doug, through Beyond Housing, has been able to support an initiative that educates on the benefits of an urban canopy to community properties. Education, funding for maintenance, Tree Resource Improvement and Maintenance (TRIM) grants, tree planting and care have become a part of growing a canopy that supports generations of families. Promotion of the benefits of trees for health and well being, noise reduction, water and air quality has propagated a previously overlooked value. Doug has fostered the new found priority of trees as a community asset.

Congratulations and thank you to Doug for his dedication to the 24:1 community, Beyond Housing and promotion of keeping healthy trees in our urban landscapes, now and in the future.

### **Author's Award of Excellence:**

The Author's Award of Excellence recognizes authors of outstanding publications, news stories, radio and television programs for sustained excellence in the dissemination of timely information pertaining to the field of arboriculture.

Dr. John Ball, Professor of Forestry, South Dakota State University

Dr. John Ball is well known in the world of arboriculture for his presentations and hands on approach to education. However, behind all those outdoor seminars and entertaining presentations is an accomplished author who has dedicated countless hours of research for his publications. Books like *Trees! An Illustrated Field Guide* and *Trees for the Northern Plains* help inform and educate on the hardiness, diversity and adaptability of trees to the Northern Midwest. His numerous articles and publications with the University Extension and TCIA have kept people in-tune with invasive pests, new cultivars and tree safety. In addition, Dr. Ball has dedicated himself to standardizing and defining safe work practices in arboriculture through his contributions to the Z133 document.

Congratulations and thank you to Dr. Ball for his outstanding publications and dedication to keeping our arborists prepared, safe and well educated.