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## University retains Tree Campus USA title

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The University of Louisiana at Lafayette's forest management and its conservation practices have helped it retain the designation of Tree Campus USA.

UL Lafayette recently earned its seventh consecutive title, for efforts in 2015.

The Arbor Day Foundation coordinates the national Tree Campus USA program. It recognizes colleges and universities for sound management of campus trees.

To earn the Tree Campus USA distinction, UL Lafayette met the five core standards for effective campus forest management:

- a tree advisory committee;
- a campus tree care plan;
- dedicated annual expenditures for its campus tree program;
- an Arbor Day observance; and
- service learning projects for students.

One key project involved updating an inventory of campus trees.

Students in UL Lafayette's Community Design Workshop surveyed the campus to create a database and digital map of campus trees and large shrubs. They photographed each plant, noted its common and Latin names, the dimension of the trunk and canopy and its location. Each specimen is identified with a unique number.

The project, which was completed in 2013, was updated last year, said Tom Sammons, director of the School of Architecture and Design, who leads the CDW.

"Trees planted last year in the University's Quadrangle were added to the inventory," Sammons explained.

The Quad received a makeover last fall that included a central fountain and plaza, as well as new walkways and landscaping.

Mike Hess, the University's grounds manager, said trees and large shrubs, such as Japanese maples and crape myrtles, were planted throughout grassy areas of the Quad.

As a result, the campus now holds about 2,000 trees and large shrubs. That amount continues to grow.

"The majority of our plantings are done in the fall, a time of year that ensures better survivability," Hess said.

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