



Cultivating Diversity in Urban Forestry Leadership

LEADERS GROWING LEADERS FOR URBAN FORESTRY

Diversity in MFI Scholarships – Corporate/Organizational Sponsors

You and your company or organization have the opportunity to be at the forefront of increasing the diversity and inclusion of leaders in our urban and municipal forestry workforce.

The Municipal Forestry Institute (MFI) is an exciting and challenging leadership training for professionals working in all aspects of urban forest management. This week-long intensive educational program delivers an opportunity to grow a more successful community tree program and to grow professional and community leaders.

Over 750 leaders have graduated from MFI in 15 successful years. In 2019, recognizing the need to step forward and address the need to diversify the MFI class and to better represent the people and communities we serve, The Society of Municipal Arborists (SMA) and partners embarked on Diversity in MFI.

Diversity in MFI is a collaborative effort between SMA, Southern University Department of Urban Forestry and Natural Resources, and the USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program, to engage ethnic and racial minorities, women, and underserved communities in urban and community forestry education and leadership development to build a diversified and inclusive green workforce. The partnership has generated 66 diversity scholarships in the last two years which has significantly increased the diversity of our MFI classes.



Diversity in MFI Corporate/Organizational Sponsor Opportunities

It is now time to expand the partnership to include company and organization support for Diversity in MFI scholarships. Here are several ways to sponsor diversity scholarships to MFI, and to be recognized for your industry leading efforts. Please contact Jerri LaHaie, Executive Director of SMA, at smaurbanforestry@gmail.com, to discuss how you can sponsor one or more of these scholarships, or other ways you can support Diversity in MFI.

1. Sponsor a scholarship to be administered by SMA.

Provide funding of \$2,900 (\$2,300 registration, \$600 travel costs) for an attendee to be chosen by SMA through a call for diverse candidate applications, like the existing Diversity in MFI process. You will be recognized in MFI materials, on the SMA website, and in *City Trees Magazine* as a Diversity in MFI Corporate/Organizational Sponsor.

2. Sponsor a scholarship to be administered by your organization.

Provide the full \$2,300 registration cost for an attendee chosen by your organization through a process that identifies diverse candidates outside of your organizations. You are encouraged to also provide funding for travel costs for the candidate. The candidate must meet the application requirements for all MFI participants. You will be recognized in MFI materials, on the SMA website, and in *City Trees Magazine* as a Diversity in MFI Corporate/Organizational Sponsor.

3. Sponsor one or more of your employees to attend MFI as a diversity candidate.

Send one or more of your employees who are diversity candidates to MFI, covering the cost of registration and travel. The candidate(s) must meet the application requirements for all MFI participants. You will be recognized in MFI materials, on the SMA website, and in *City Trees Magazine* as a Diversity in MFI Corporate/Organizational Sponsor.

Please join us in leading the way to increase the diversity and inclusion of the workforce leaders in our green industries!

Contact Jerri LaHaie at:
smaurbanforestry@gmail.com