



UW-Stevens Point news release

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ISA awards 2005 Arboriculture Fellowship

In early June, 22-year-old urban forestry major Andrew Koeser trekked to central Illinois from the Dairy State—Wisconsin—to take part in the prestigious International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) summer fellowship program.

Koeser had attended an ISA conference early in his academic career and joined the Student Society of Arboriculture, which gave him a favorable impression of arboriculture and a desire to apply for the fellowship.

When asked about Koeser, UWSP Instructor of Urban Forestry Les Werner said, “At Stevens Point, I deal with one of the largest undergraduate populations of students in the world who are studying urban forestry, and I say without hesitation that Andrew is in the top five percent of students who have gone through the program during my tenure.”

Koeser served an internship as a grounds supervisor at UWSP, developing and installing landscape designs, culminating in the restoration and replanting of the science building courtyard.

He initially selected forestry management as a major but quickly realized that he had a much more specific interest in trees.

“Forestry management wasn’t quite what I expected. I was more interested in individual tree health, and the physiology and biology part of urban forestry,” Koeser says.

While taking a class on tree structure and function, Koeser was assigned certain chapters in “A New Tree Biology,” by Alex Shigo, the father of modern arboriculture. Dr. Shigo’s writings sparked his enthusiasm for arboriculture.

“I wasn’t actually asked to read the entire book, but I wound up finishing the whole thing,” Koeser recalls.

The following semester, he went to Durham, New Hampshire, to hear Dr. Shigo lecture in person.

Koeser believes that Shigo's book, which has been proclaimed by foresters and arborists as the "bible of tree biology," was responsible for helping him focus his studies on topics such as tree wound responses to repeated injection treatments and the impacts associated with planting trees in urban soils.

He sees his fellowship at ISA as a way to get behind the scenes in the arboriculture community, led by his belief that "education and public involvement are vital for the continued existence of an organization."

Koeser expects to graduate this December and continue on to graduate school to earn a master's degree. He eventually hopes to earn a Ph.D. and teach tree physiology or arboriculture.

"Andrew is a student who not only will develop into a productive professional, but in my opinion, will likely become a future leader in arboriculture education or research," says Richard Hauer, UWSP instructor of urban forestry.