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University celebrates annual Arbor Day tree planting ceremony

FEBRUARY 15, 2017



Students from Dr. Saha's sustainable forestry class planted trees at the Shooting Sports Education Center on Feb. 15.

The Center for Sustainability (CfS), Division of Facilities Services and the campus community celebrated the fifth annual Arbor Day tree planting at the Shooting Sports Education Center on Wednesday, Feb. 15.

Fifteen students from the Sustainable Forestry Class taught by assistant professor Subrajit Saha, Ph.D., left their legacy when they planted elm, swamp chestnut and swamp white oak trees in the green spaces surrounding the Center. University President Jaimie Hebert, Ph.D., also left his mark by planting the first tree of the day. Additional trees will be planted where they are needed most across campus in celebration of Georgia's Arbor Day.

Georgia celebrates Arbor Day on the third Friday of February each year. While the national celebration takes place in April, the subtropical climate in Georgia is far more hospitable to plant-life earlier in the year.

"It's important on our campus to remain dedicated to sustainability," said Hebert. "It's part of who we are. If you look at our fundamental principles, one of those is wellness. Part of wellness is maintaining an environment that not only provides clean air and greenery but also provides a wholesome environment where people can live well. In my mind, sustainability is a significant part of our educational initiatives."

Not only are these trees impacting the University's wellness, but they are also offering financial sustainability to the campus community. Lissa Legee, Ph.D., director for the CfS, noted the \$5,000 savings annually the tree planting offers in value in terms of carbon dioxide that is sequestered, amount of oxygen available, pollution deterred, and shade provided.

Saha was proud to bring students from his class to participate in the initiative.

"The importance of Arbor Day is promoting a 'green revolution' of sorts," said Saha. "Students are helping the Georgia Southern community in a special way by planting these trees. When they pass by Statesboro in future years, they'll see these grown trees and remember their part in this process."

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers more than 125 degree programs serving 20,673 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu.