

## Presenter: Mike Brady

This year's nominees are:

### Garrett Ferry

Garrett was hired in 2015 as the Stormwater Coordinator at Facilities Services. He is passionate about stormwater management and the environment, and it shows in the performance of his job. Garrett has implemented stormwater re-use systems across the university for laundry, toilets, and irrigation, which greatly conserves water resources.

### Lauren Wood

Lauren is the Director of the International House at the Center for Global Engagement. Lauren's exceptional dedication and innovative initiatives have significantly contributed to promoting sustainability and environmental consciousness within our community. In 2023, Lauren spearheaded efforts to transform the International Festival into a zero-waste gathering. Lauren also aligned the International House's practices with the Sustainable Development Goals.

### Barbara Tallent

Barbara has been systematically finding furniture from offices that are moving out, and setting it aside for other locations that can use it on projects that she is coordinating. She was able to completely furnish the new offices at the Cherokee Mills location from the furniture that she saved. She has created her own system for tracking it and using it where it is needed, rather than sending it to Surplus. This system reduces the need to buy new furniture when offices are moved or created, which is a truly commendable sustainability practice.

### Gavin Ramsey

Gavin has been a strong voice for energy efficiency and sustainability in the Facilities Services Department since he started. He has been reading all the electric meters on campus each month to try to help UTK track energy usage. He has pointed out many ways to save energy, and he has advocated for electric vehicles as well. Gavin tracks his mileage in his work vehicle to try to demonstrate the need and desire for an electric version.

### Sammy Parcell

Sammy has been an active participant in pursuing alternative fueled and electric vehicles on campus. He has had to provide a lot of information for groups working on those aspects and is always helpful and willing to do whatever is necessary.

**AND THE WINNER IS: Garrett Ferry. Congratulations, Garrett.**

Garrett was hired in July 2015 as the Stormwater Coordinator at Facilities Services. He is passionate about stormwater management and the environment, and it shows in the performance of his job. In 2023, Garrett was seriously concerned about shoreline erosion in the Holston Unit, a part of the ag campus. He put together a grant application, won the grant, and restored 1000 linear feet of shoreline. The manner in which he did this is what deserves attention. Rather than use rocks and other materials to curtail the shoreline loss, Garrett used compost from our compost facility and cuttings from black willow, silky dogwood, buttonbush, and other native species to create what he called “plant mattresses.” In the Spring, these cuttings bloomed and not only saved and restored the shoreline, but also made it a significantly more beautiful space, all while reintroducing native species to these areas. In addition, the adjacent rivers’ water quality is drastically improved in this process. UTK owns about 12 miles of shoreline, and the method that Garrett created will be used to restore them all. Other cities, counties, and universities are aspiring to use his model for shoreline restoration.

In addition to this project, Garrett has implemented stormwater re-use systems across the university for laundry, toilets, and irrigation, which greatly conserves our water resources. His efforts in other areas have helped prepare the university for a changing climate by helping to mitigate the effects of possible flood-inducing rain events.

These projects led by Garrett are excellent examples of innovations and creative thinking that make the field of sustainability such an exciting area in which to work and participate. We would like to thank Garrett for his brilliant ideas, his hard work, and his dedication to the living environment.

Garrett Ferry could not be with us tonight, so Ted Murphy will be accepting the award on his behalf.