

Presenter: Jay Price

I'm pleased to present the **Community Environmental Leadership Award**, which is given to an individual who has made a lasting impact on the Knoxville community.

Here are this year's nominees:

Michaela Barnett

Recently recognized by Knoxville's 40 Under 40, Michaela holds a Ph.D. and continues to fight for a greener Knoxville. She runs an informative Instagram page to educate the public through casual channels. She also is the founder/owner of Knoxfill, Knoxville's bulk refill store. Michaela is responsible for initiating the Free Store and Grow Lab on campus, both of which continue to grow. She has made a massive impact on thousands of lives in this city and on the future of sustainability in our community.

Kasey Krouse

Kasey is the Urban Forester for the City of Knoxville. During the past year he has led a steering committee and a 75-member advisory group of community members to carry out the Knoxville Urban Forest Master Plan.

Lauren Bird

Lauren has been a tremendous partner to the Office of Sustainability and all community partners with AmeriCorps members. Lauren troubleshoots issues and puts her heart and soul into recruiting quality members, ensuring they get placed in the best possible spots, and that they have the support they need to be successful. A lot of what she does is behind the scenes, but she is the very heart of the CAC AmeriCorps office and their entire program. UTK has 10 or more AmeriCorps members across different entities, and Lauren is a key reason why the university has been so successful at getting and keeping quality AmeriCorps members, who are critical and instrumental to the sustainability efforts on this campus.

Mayor Indya Kincannon

Mayor Indya Kincannon is committed to working toward a clean and resilient city. She formulated the Mayor's Climate Council to focus on effective strategies to reduce community emissions to meet the City's 80% reduction of GHG emissions by 2050. She understands this scale of change requires partnerships at all levels to drive down GHG and identify priorities that will result in desirable community outcomes and a better quality of life for residents and visitors to our City.

AND THE WINNER IS: Kasey Krouse. Congratulations!

Kasey is the Urban Forester for the City of Knoxville. During the past year he has led a steering committee and a 75-member advisory group of community members to carry out the Knoxville Urban Forest Master Plan. This is a community-driven master plan with project partnership between many organizations, including the City of Knoxville, non-profit organizations, the University of Tennessee, KUB, and the State of Tennessee Department of Agriculture. The UFMP will guide the City and County to maintain, preserve, and expand the urban forest and tree canopy. Kasey also co-led the initiative to submit the Master Plan, and has received a large grant from the Inflation Reduction Act. This grant will provide funding and staff, including workforce development, as well as tree plantings, education and outreach in underserved communities in Knoxville.