



## Campus changemakers Ron Engle and Scott McClure on energy engineering and designing a more sustainable campus



Rob Engle



Scott McClure

Rob Engle and Scott McClure both work as energy engineers for the Facilities Department of Utilities and Energy. The central concern of their work is to ensure that the university is using energy as efficiently as possible. Though this task may seem straightforward enough, they have found that maximizing energy efficiency means having a holistic knowledge about all the ways energy is expended in a dynamic and sprawling campus.

For instance, Engle and McClure have to manage the energy use of a variety of buildings, some of which are quite old and others which are more modern. McClure describes how this can add an additional challenge to their work, as some modern elements of energy efficiency are not possible in older buildings. However, they both added, even small changes such as adjusting thermostats and powering down computers can make a significant impact in any building.

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## Auburn receives 12th consecutive Tree Campus designation

Auburn University recently pushed its streak to 12 consecutive years of receiving the Tree Campus Higher Education designation, previously known as Tree Campus USA.

This year university arborist Alex Hedgepath and Auburn's Tree Care Team, including two new ISA-certified arborists, are expecting to add more than 100 new trees and 24 new species to help bolster Auburn's canopy.

Pandemic or not, keeping the campus forest safe is their top priority and expanding its greenery is an additional priority.

"We plan to maintain the Tree Campus Higher Education designation by continuing to fulfill the five core standards required through Arbor Day," Hedgepath said. "Last year, we were able to add three additional full-time members to the department solely devoted to tree care on campus. The future of tree care on Auburn's campus is bright."

Each year, the Facilities Landscape Services Department on average plants 100 trees, not including trees planted for capital projects. As part of the designation, an advisory committee helps make management recommendations for the trees located on main

campus, more than 600 acres, comprising more than 8,500 trees that house more than four million pounds of carbon dioxide and remove thousands of pounds of carbon from the atmosphere each year. Expanding the canopy and diversifying the species located within it not only helps ensure the campus forest's longevity, but furthers wildlife resources and decreases storm water runoff.

Hedgepath was selected as Auburn's first university arborist in 2015. At that time, about 50% of campus trees were comprised of

*Story continues on pg.4.*

# Employee Communications *from the Office of Employee Engagement*

## General Announcements

**April 22 is Earth Day!** Earth Day is an annual event created to celebrate the environment and demonstrate support for environmental protection. More than one billion people in 192 countries participate in Earth Day activities each year. Join us as we celebrate at the university's Earth Day Extravaganza, Thursday, April 22, from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. on the Student Center green space, featuring activities and games, student and university organizations and more.

**Congratulations to the following employees** who received a cash award for February 2021:

- Michael Cobb
- Patricia Cole
- Junior Decker
- Anthony Green
- Michael Hood
- Jecorius Johnson
- Barbara Lengsfeld
- Gabriel McKenzie
- Wesley Miller
- Marcus Moore
- Scott Olin
- Oscar Preston
- Margrit Tate
- Robert Whittaker

## New Employees/Welcome

**Jasmine Pressley** | TES University Mail Tech, Mail Services | *February 15*

**John Raiford** | TES University Mail Tech, Mail Services | *February 15*

## Retirements/resignations

**Marvin Smith** *retiring effective April 1.*

**Joey Vickers** *retiring effective April 1.*

**Greg Jones** *resigned effective February 26.*

## Facilities Training

### Ongoing Training

- Journeyman Electrician Training
- Beginner Electrical Training
- Project Management Fundamentals

### Safety

- Fall protection training classes for Zones 1-4 and In-House Construction can be found on the Facilities training calendar.

*For more details on these and other training events, please check the Auburn University facilities training calendar.*

Contact for training sessions:

*Kathleen Jones | [ktj0004@auburn.edu](mailto:ktj0004@auburn.edu) | 334-844-9411 | Building 1, Room 1173D*

*The training calendar can be found at <https://aub.ie/trainingcalendar>.*

## Employment Opportunities

### Maintenance

- Roofer I/II, Heavy Construction (two positions) (*Close date March 29, 2021*)
- Carpenter, Zone 2 (*Close date March 31, 2021*)

### Landscape Services

- Landscape, Technician I (two positions) (*Close date April 1, 2021*)

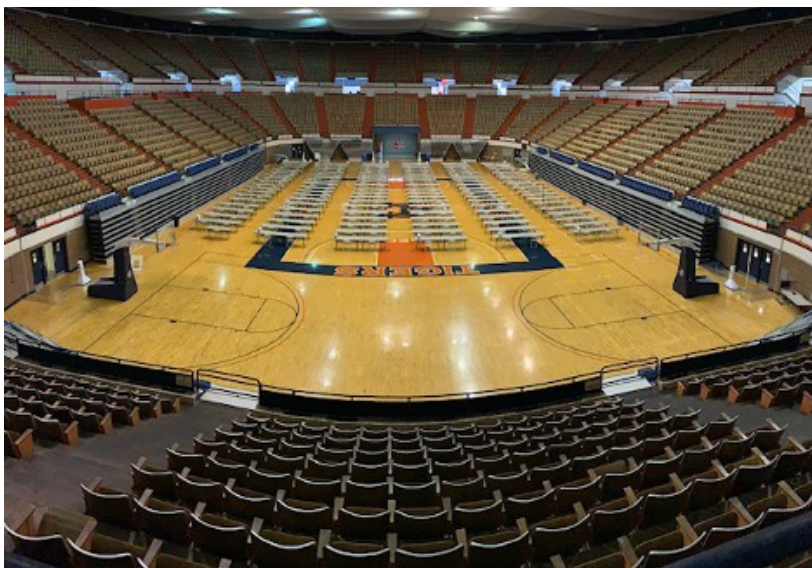
### Planning, Design and Construction

- Campus Architect III/IV/V (*No close date*)

*For more information about, or to apply for, one of the jobs listed above, visit the Auburn University online employment site at [auemployment.com](http://auemployment.com).*

**These announcements are gathered by the Facilities Management Office of Employee Engagement. Submit announcements via email to Cynthia Baccus at [geercyn@auburn.edu](mailto:geercyn@auburn.edu).**

## Facilities prepares Coliseum for COVID-compliant testing



A team of Facilities staff worked closely with the Provost's Office and Student Affairs to prepare the Coliseum for COVID-compliant testing this semester. Special thanks goes to Michael Hood (and his team), Bruce Arnold, Nolan Torbert, Brad Prater and Tyler Caldwell for:

- Designing a COVID-compliant seating layout that works for all groups, including Wheelchair Basketball
- Doing Beard-Eaves-Coliseum reconnaissance on parking, access/egress and restrooms
- Working with Student Affairs on the floor schedule
- Setting up the floor and arranging the tables

All of this was done within a very short timeframe with a lot of coordination needed.



# Facilities Feature — Mary Melissa Taddeo '12

## Campus Architect, Office of the University Architect



*Mary Melissa Taddeo and her husband, Peter*

Mary Melissa began working at Facilities Management in October 2020 after spending three years with Nashville-based architecture firm Gresham Smith as an architect and associate and four years with Tuck-Hinton Architecture and Design, also in Nashville, as an intern and an architect.

She is a registered architect with the state of Alabama and is active in the American Institute of Architects and the Urban Land Institute, as well as a board member for non-profit group Rebuilding Together Nashville and former co-director of programming for Nashville Design Week.

She married Peter Taddeo in 2018.

### **Why did you want to return to Auburn University to work?**

My parents and grandparents met at Auburn, and my family moved back here when I was five, so Auburn is in my blood! For me, the campus architect role requires the perfect blend of technical and creative thinking, and it allows me to hone my skills in project management. The icing on the cake? Being able to do all of this in Auburn, within the community I know and love.

### **What is your favorite part about working at Auburn University?**

The people. I've been blown away by our Planning, Design and Construction group and the Facilities Management staff as a whole. We have an incredible team with a huge depth of knowledge and experience, who are more than willing to offer insight to my many questions!

### **What has been your favorite project to work on in your career?**

Two projects, because it's too hard to choose: On a mega scale – Nashville Yards was a standout. Eighteen acres, over 3.5-million square feet of class-A office space; 1,000 residential units; 400,000 square feet of retail and entertainment; and 1,100 hotel rooms, all situated alongside a new stacked street and rail front park in the heart of downtown Nashville. It was the largest, most intense team I've ever worked on, for a fast-paced, forward-thinking client with the highest expectations. I was in San Diego meeting with the developer when we found out Nashville Yards had landed Amazon as a building tenant. Nothing can describe that joy — that feeling knowing the hustle really paid off, but the work was just getting started. It was a marathon adventure, and I worked harder and learned more on that one project than any other in my career. On the micro scale, a temporary beehive play structure, installed at Cheekwood Botanical Gardens. Our team won a design competition and fabricated the whole thing on-site. Seeing kiddos play on something I'd sketched and brought to life was incredibly rewarding.

### **What has been your biggest challenge working in Facilities?**

Stepping into a high-profile project well into construction! I was up against a steep learning curve, but our team is stellar, and the communication is top-notch, so they've made my job easy!

### **What do you enjoy doing outside of work?**

I have an online vintage clothing shop, and love going to estate sales, antique shops and thrift stores with my husband to refresh my inventory. I'm also a big reader, and I love live music and walking with our dog Hazel, and someday will complete the training for my private pilot's license.

**Continued from pg. 1.** Engle describes how Energy Management goes about targeting energy reduction in existing buildings. “Depending on what month it is, our [water] chillers are around 25% of the campus’s electricity bill. So, if you can go in there and save about 1-2% in electricity for those chillers and make them just a little more efficient, you will make a significant impact on campus electricity use.”

Engle lights up in describing how small tweaks in opportune locations can have massive impacts on energy use, citing this large-scale impact as part of his draw to this work. Through simple but strategic solutions, he believes that significant ground can be made towards electricity efficiency.

When it comes to modern buildings, Energy Management is actually involved in the design and construction process itself. They work alongside building and landscape architects in order to make choices for the design elements of the building that will allow energy to be conserved and effectively used in the building. Though using motion-activated lights and natural lights are two expected ways to conserve energy, McClure also pointed out that innovative water use is a tactic that has risen in popularity lately. For instance, while helping in the design of the new Advanced Structural Engineering Lab (ASEL), the energy engineers suggested collecting rainwater for use. Now, ASEL uses rainwater to run its restroom facilities.

One fascinating aspect of Energy Management’s work is their webpage that gives anybody open access to valuable data about energy use in every building on campus. This information is laid out clearly on performance graphs that chart how much electricity and water Auburn buildings use, as well as how much water they draw from Auburn’s chilled and hot water plants. Engle and McClure were

excited to be a part of the development of this website, as this information used to not be so readily accessible to the public. Their hope is that by making this energy consumption data available, students and faculty will begin to take an interest in how we use energy on campus.

Both Engle and McClure are Auburn alumni, and their love for Auburn University and the surrounding community is a big part of their work. Engle expressed how motivating it is to feel as if he can give back to the university that gave him an education, family and a wealth of memories. Working on Auburn’s campus makes him feel that he can do good both for the university and the surrounding community. To this point, Engle says, “When we work to make sure nothing runs off into the creek, I think to myself ‘that’s the same creek my kids play in.’ I am very interested to make sure the things we do don’t negatively impact our neighborhoods.”

McClure feels similarly, stating that even as an employee, he feels very plugged into the Auburn Family. “There is a certain amount of enjoyment I get, coming to work here and knowing I made a difference. Nobody else will even have any idea that we did it, but it help set [the campus] up for the next 25-50 years.”

McClure’s statement sums up the work of energy management well. Though their work is seldom recognized, they do the humble, steadfast labor that continually pushes Auburn to be a more efficient and sustainable campus.

**Post Contributed by Chloe McMahon, program coordinator, Office of Sustainability**

**For more stories about AU employees making a difference at Auburn, check out the Office of Sustainability blog. [sustain.auburn.edu/blog/](https://sustain.auburn.edu/blog/)**



*University Arborist Alex Hedgepath recently added several additions to the university’s tree care team. Shown, from left, are Tree Care Supervisor Dalton Sconyers, Arborist Daryl Roe, Arborist Wesley Farrow and Hedgepath.*

**Continued from pg. 1.** three species: crape myrtles, willow oaks and overcup oaks, when 5-8% is generally considered an ideal amount per genus in terms of disease outbreak resiliency.

“Our canopy is expanding, and this year we have hopes of further updating our campus inventory,” he said. “This will help us to process data and better manage our trees going forward knowing which areas of campus have the most demand for risk mitigation as well as which areas have the highest demand for canopy expansion by way of tree planting and soil remediation.”

The state of Alabama celebrates Arbor Day the last full week of February, culminating with a number of events on Saturday, Feb. 27, including a city of Auburn free tree distribution.

The Arbor Day Foundation changed the name of the Tree Campus program to Tree Campus Higher Education in 2020 to unify the various other programs under its umbrella, including Tree Campus K-12 and Tree Campus Healthcare.