

**“Native (trees) are really important, because they contribute to the overall natural ecosystem.”**

—Nate Dubosh  
MUSC arborist



It can be a classroom without walls, with recuperative powers not even the most acclaimed physician can possess, promoting wellness and even allowing man-made structures to be more energy efficient.

The Medical University of South Carolina campus – specifically its trees and shrubs – can do all this and more with appropriate planning and maintenance, according to Nathan Dubosh, university arborist. To that end, MUSC applied for and recently received designation as a Tree Campus USA, which would make it the fifth such university in South Carolina, joining Clemson and Furman universities and the University of South Carolina campuses in Columbia and Spartanburg.

Dubosh has painstakingly devised a tree care plan calling for more trees native to the Lowcountry to replace non-native trees as they die out or are removed due to campus development and landscaping changes. The benefits, he explains, are obvious.

“A healthy tree canopy provides a sense of security and has a calming effect on the human psyche,” he stated in his 20-page proposal for care and maintenance of MUSC’s trees. “Trees are effective in reducing air pollution by trapping both solid and gaseous substances from the air and converting some of these gases into oxygen for us to breathe. Noise pollution can be reduced with trees and other vegetation by planting buffers or islands of trees to absorb unpleasant sounds.”

Capturing and filtering storm water runoff is an important benefit, especially in areas in close proximity to wetlands and other sensitive habitats.

To the untrained eye, and in terms of dendrology – the study of trees – that would probably include almost everybody frequenting MUSC on a daily basis, the campus would appear to be in good shape. Dubosh wouldn’t necessarily disagree with that assessment, but says things could be better. Rather than plant a haphazard assortment of trees regardless of origin, he would prefer