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Naskali Earns 2007 Distinguished Alumni Award



Dean Bob Moser presents Dr. Richard Naskali with the 2007 CFAES 2007 Distinguished Alumni Award.

An educator and botanist, **Dr. Richard J. Naskali** (BS 1957 Horticulture, MS 1961 Botany, Ph.D. 1969 Botany) created a living legacy by establishing the University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden. In recognition of Dr. Naskali's efforts, The Ohio State University [College of Food Agriculture and Environmental Sciences](#) has honored him with the 2007 Distinguished Alumni Award. Naskali was recognized at the Award Banquet Program held on Saturday, March 3, 2007 on the OSU Campus at the Fawcett Center.

Richard Naskali began his teaching at OSU, but in 1967 he took a position with University of Idaho. Now retired, Professor Emeritus Naskali taught botany, plant anatomy and advised students in the University of Idaho [Department of Biological Sciences](#) from 1967 to 1987. In 1987 the University President appointed Naskali the first Director of the University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden. He held this position until his retirement in 2003.



CFAES Alumni Award winner Richard Naskali celebrates with brother William Naskali and Jean Naskali, William's wife.

After 20 years of teaching, research and greenhouse management, Director Naskali undertook the initiation and development of the 63 acre [University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden](#), which now houses over 5,000 trees and shrubs, 80 dedicated trees, 60 dedicated groves, a xeriscape garden and several endemic Palouse species. His driving goal was to fulfill the master plan for the arboretum to become a living-learning classroom. Today, plants from Asia, North America and Europe, display gardens, ponds, pathways, benches and commemorative groves and

plantings fill the site. Most of the early funding came from private donations Richard helped to raise.

In 2002 Naskali was recognized with the President's Medallion from the University of Idaho. Among other awards, he twice received the Daryl E. Snyder Alumni Award for Outstanding Service to the University of Idaho - 1973 and 1981. He has authored many papers, holds a plant patent, and has lectured extensively worldwide.



Dr. Naskali developed a living-learning classroom by creating the University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden.

Raised on a farm in Ashtabula County, Naskali began working with plants early on. He earned his B.S. in Floriculture/Ornamental Horticulture and his M.S. and Ph.D. in Botany from OSU. As an undergraduate, he was a member of the 1956 Flower Judging Team, which won first place recognition in intercollegiate competition in Denver, Colorado.

R.J., as his friends call him, is also a passionate student and collector of botanical art, traveling around the world to view, learn about and collect works of botanical art. In the fall of 2003, R.J. was responsible for bringing over 100 selected works from the Hunt Institute's 10th International Exhibition of Botanical Art & Illustration to the Prichard Art Gallery. He includes among his prized personal collections an 1837 folio album of watercolors from Singapore.

Richard currently resides in Moscow, Idaho.

Story and web publishing by [Victor van Buchem](#). Photos courtesy CFAES Alumni Society.

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