



Ohio State HCS News

HORTICULTURE & CROP SCIENCE IN VIRTUAL PERSPECTIVE - THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

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OSU Students Excel in Green Industry Competition



The OSU Horticulture & Crop Science team that competed in the 2007 PLANET Student Career Days event in Lansing, Michigan.

Many of the nation's best and brightest green industry students traveled to Lansing, Michigan this past March 28 through April 1 to compete in the Professional Landcare Network's (PLANET's) [31st Annual Student Career Days](#). The Ohio State University Horticulture & Crop Science Department (H&CS) sent a team of students to demonstrate their green industry knowledge and skills and to be awarded scholarships and job offers. The annual competition drew 700 students from 54 colleges and schools.

Ohio State was well represented by the 12 member team which recorded a number of high placing individual and team finishes. Outstanding event performances were turned in by **Aaron Tournoux**, who placed 1st, and **Jason Parrish**, who finished 3rd, in the *Turf and Turf Pest ID* competition. The 2-person team of Tournoux and **Joe Rickard** placed 2nd in *Truck & Trailer Operations* event. Parrish also earned 3rd place in the *Pest Management* event.



OSU student Louis Foster demonstrates his equipment skills during PLANET's 2007 Student Career Days in Lansing, Michigan.

In the individual total score competition **Louis Foster** took home 13th place and Tournoux earned 14th place out of the 700 competing students. Rickard, **Dan Burcham** and **Toby Simpson** also scored well in a number of events and finished in the top 200 of the student total scores.

Accompanied by two advisors, **Laura Burchfield** and **Peg McMahon**, the H&CS students competed in 20 of the 24 individual and team competitions that included tree climbing, skid steer operation,

patio installation, wood construction, plant identification, personnel management, sales presentation, exterior/interior design, irrigation troubleshooting, equipment operation, and others. These events are directly related to the varied skills necessary for careers in the green industry.



H&CS students Aaron Tournoux and Louis Foster teamed up in the Paver Installation competition during Student Career Days.

Other notable 2-person team performances include: **Erin Wells** and Burcham finished 8th in *Personnel Management* and the team of Tournoux and Foster placed 10th in *Landscape Maintenance Operations*. Many of the OSU students scored well in other events, including:

Toby Simpson 12th in *Exterior Landscape Design*
Jason Ray 13th in *Sales Presentation*
Toby Simpson 18th in *Interior Landscape Design*
Louis Foster 25th in *Compact Utility Loader*
Louis Foster 25th in *Construction Cost Estimating*
Burcham 27th in *Leadership Skills*
Wells 28th in *Annual and Perennial ID*
Anna Leis 34th in *Pest Management*
Melinda Hoffman 38th in *Annual and Perennial ID*
Zach Baker 46th in *Woody Ornamental Plant ID*
Mike Reder 59th in *Business Management*

In addition, this year's PLANET Student Career Days drew the largest national gathering of landscape, lawn care, and interior plantscape employment recruiters. The on-site Career Fair offered students the opportunity to interview with green industry companies for full-time positions and internships. Many students received job offers on site.



OSU students Joe Rickard and Jason Ray team up in the Wood Construction event during PLANET's 31st Student Career Days.

[PLANET](#), the Professional Landcare Network, is an international association serving lawn care professionals, landscape management contractors, design/build/installation professionals, and interior plantscapers. PLANET emerged on January 1, 2005, when the Associated Landscape Contractors of America (ALCA) and the Professional Lawn Care Association of America (PLCAA) joined forces to become a more encompassing network of green industry professionals.

The 2008 Student Career Days competition will be hosted by North Metro Technical College in Atlanta, Georgia.

Story by Laura Burchfield and Victor van Buchem. Photos by Laura Burchfield. Web publishing by [Victor van Buchem](#).

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