Arbor Day 2017 Celebrated at UMD

April 7, 2017

On April 4, staff and students met to celebrate Arbor Day 2017 at the University of Maryland. For the past several years, this occasion has been celebrated with tree planting. This year, a Willow Oak was planted on the Mall in front of Symons Hall. Attendees also celebrated the campus’ ninth yearly recertification as a Tree Campus USA.

Introductory remarks were provided by Karen Petroff of the Arboretum staff and Dean Craig Beyrouty of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Students Dyani Frye and Mark Santamari related what Arbor Day means to them, and Harry Teabout, Executive Director, Department of Building & Landscape Maintenance, added his observations.

Dan Hayes, Department of Facilities Planning, reviewed the career of Symons Hall’s namesake (see below). Then the crew of honorary shovelers (the above speakers plus Kathy Lopez, Department of Design & Construction) were put to work.

History of the Symons Building

Dr. Thomas Symons (1880-1970) earned undergraduate and graduate degrees from what is now the University of Maryland. Starting in 1902, Symons served as Maryland State Entomologist, Dean of the School of Horticulture, first Director of the Co-operative Extension Service, and Dean of the College of Agriculture.

Recalled from retirement in 1954, he served briefly as interim University President, then as a member of the Board of Regents until his death in 1970. In total, Dr. Symons served the university in an active academic position for 52 years, and an additional 16 years as emeritus faculty. The former Poultry Building, now Symons Hall, was named for him in 1958.